

Diversity Advisory Council Meeting Notes

November 19, 2019

Attending from the council:

Oswaldo Bernal, OBL Media LLC
Charity Fain, Community Energy Project
Kheoshi Owens, Empress Rules

Attending from Energy Trust:

Ashley Bartels
Kathleen Belkhatat
Wendy Bredemeyer
Shelly Carlton
Karen Chase
Amber Cole
Michael Colgrove
Phil Degens
Becky Engel
Sue Fletcher
Matt Getchell
Andy Griguhn
Mana Haeri
Betsy Kauffman

Oliver Kesting
Steve Lacey
Debbie Menashe
Alex Novie
Amanda Potter
Dan Rubado
Lizzie Rubado
Thad Roth
Amanda Sales
Art Sousa
Julianne Thacher
Kate Wellington
Amanda Zuniga

Others attending:

Emma Cisneros, Empress Rules
Ernesto Fonseca, Energy Trust board
Chad Gilles, Stillwater Energy
Roger Hamilton, Energy Trust board
Greg Harr, Evergreen Construction Group
Eric Hayes, Energy Trust board
Mark Kendall, Energy Trust board
Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility
Commission (phone)

Henry Lorenzen, Energy Trust board
(phone)
Joe Marcotte, TRC
Alan Meyer, Energy Trust board (phone)
Anne Root, Energy Trust board (phone)
Chad Gilles, Stillwater Energy
Angel Swanson, ICF
Letha Tawney, Oregon Public Utility
Commission (phone)

1. Welcome

Art Sousa, senior operation program manager, convened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. The agenda, notes and presentation materials are available on Energy Trust's website at www.energytrust.org/about/public-meetings/diversity-advisory-council-meetings/. The meeting was recorded on GoToMeeting. If you'd like to refer to the meeting recording for further detail on any of these topics, email info@energytrust.org.

Art introduced the agenda and reviewed the recruitment process to fill the open seats on the council. Currently five members are on the council. Energy Trust aims to have 11 council members.

Ernesto Fonseca delivered a statement on behalf of Energy Trust's board of directors regarding the board's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and its next steps following an incident at the board's September 5 Policy Committee. Among other things, the board has committed to

establishing a code of conduct. Council members asked who would be involved in the development of the code of conduct. Ernesto said that the council would have a role in its development.

2. Community Solar & Solar Within Reach

Topic summary

Lizzie Rubado, renewable program strategies manager, provided information on two new solar offerings aimed at making solar more accessible.

Solar Within Reach provides increased incentives to income-qualified homeowners and is delivered by top-rated solar trade allies. Solar Within Reach aims to make rooftop solar accessible to moderate-income homeowners by providing incentives that are nearly four times higher than standard solar incentives.

Community Solar Development Assistance incentives support early development activities of small, public or nonprofit-led projects participating in the Oregon Community Solar Program. Public and nonprofit organizations can build community-led community solar projects that will serve, benefit and be sited in underserved communities. Community Solar Development Assistance incentives help get these projects off the ground and increase their chances for success.

Discussion

Kheoshi Owens asked about the organizations that worked with Energy Trust through the Low-to Moderate-Income (LMI) Solar Working Group. Staff provided a list of participating organizations, which can be seen on the [LMI Solar Working Group website](#). Charity Fain commented on the success of the working group and the benefits it provided to Energy Trust and participating organizations. She said it helped her organization build internal capacity and grow their work. She recommended that Energy Trust consider something similar for energy efficiency.

In response to several questions about the Oregon Community Solar Program, staff provided additional details about participation and project structure. Additional information can be found on the [Oregon Community Solar Program website](#).

Responding to follow-up questions, staff discussed some concerns that were taken into consideration during the design of Solar Within Reach. A primary principle was to do no harm. Even with greater incentives, rooftop solar is a major investment, and it is critical that customers understand all the costs, risks and benefits. This is a key educational and service requirement, and also an area where there is room for growth and improvement in partnership with other organizations.

Next step

Staff will bring new offers aimed at improving access and inclusion to the council earlier in the development process to seek input and feedback.

3. Multifamily program assessment and 2020 activity

Topic summary

Kate Wellington, commercial program manager, and Amanda Zuniga, commercial project manager, provided an overview of and key learnings about a recent multifamily program assessment and previewed upcoming activities related to a 2020 request for proposals.

Kate reviewed existing multifamily market sectors, 2019 budget and savings goals, customer engagement channels and energy-saving offerings. She also discussed 2019 diversity, equity and inclusion goals, such as increased participation from small multifamily properties, customers in non-urban regions, and among low-income and diverse regions in the Portland area.

Discussion

Members asked questions about the program's definition of a project and how the program conducts outreach to diverse trade allies and distributors.

Next step

Staff will provide updates about the program to the council at key milestones.

4. Budget and Strategic Plan updates

Topic summary

Debbie Menashe, director of legal and human resources, discussed the 2020 budget and shared insights from the October 16 public budget workshop. Energy Trust is revising the draft 2020 budget and two-year action plan based on comments received from stakeholders.

Debbie also provided an update on the [2020-2024 Strategic Plan](#), which was approved at the October 28 board meeting. The plan also includes a new vision and purpose statement for Energy Trust. Debbie discussed the management and implementation of the Strategic Plan, including the development of progress indicators for each focus area, setting annual goals and reporting annual progress. Debbie described four OPUC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion performance measures for 2020. Staff plans to discuss these measures with the council in future meetings.

Discussion

Oswaldo Bernal commented on the process and appreciated the opportunity to attend and provide input, noting how important it is to engage with communities in developing strategies that affect them.

Next step

The final proposed budget will be presented to the board on December 13.

5. Customer Insights Study and community-based organization engagement

Topic summary

Sue Fletcher, communications and customer service senior manager, and Shelly Carlton, senior marketing manager, provided an update about the Customer Insights Study. The Customer Insights Study is a survey of households in Energy Trust's service territory. The survey results provide information about customer demographics, awareness of Energy Trust and attitudes related to household energy use. It will also provide information on participation in programs among underserved customer segments.

At its previous September meeting, council members suggested Energy Trust work with community-based organizations to increase participation in the study. At the November meeting, Shelly updated the council about Energy Trust's proposed approach to engage community-based organizations. Energy Trust plans to provide community-based organizations with messaging, the survey, research objectives and research results.

Shelly reviewed the audiences and regions where Energy Trust would like to encourage greater participation, including among Asian-American, African-American and Native American

communities. She also provided a potential list of community-based organizations that may help promote the study.

Discussion

Members asked about the intended survey participants (Charity Fain) and research objectives (Oswaldo Bernal). This survey provides more information about current and potential residential customers. It also provides demographic information about survey respondents. Survey findings inform outreach and marketing efforts and support Energy Trust's data enhancement project, which is an effort to better understand who Energy Trust's customers are.

Oswaldo asked if the Latinx community is not a target audience for additional community-based outreach because the audience in Oregon is large enough to meet the goals. Shelly confirmed this was accurate.

Next steps

Council members asked to receive the survey before it is fielded, so they can advise on messaging. Staff also will gather council members' input about community-based organizations that may be interested in promoting the survey.

6. Stipend, DEI lead and recruitment updates

Topic summary

Debbie Menashe shared updates about a variety of DEI-related topics. Energy Trust is developing a proposal for a stipend for participation in the Diversity Advisory Council. Staff will share an update at the next council meeting.

Debbie also summarized recruiting efforts for the diversity lead staff position. This position will be a staff liaison to the council and will work on Energy Trust's internal DEI committee. The recruitment process is in its final stages, and Debbie hopes to introduce the candidate to the board at its December 13 meeting.

Debbie also discussed recruitment for additional Diversity Advisory Council members. In alignment with the council's charter, four council members must come from outside the Portland Metro area. Energy Trust has received applications from all regions excepts Southern Oregon, although applications from that region are expected. Debbie shared the recruitment schedule.

Next steps

Art informed members that on January 20, they will be invited to provide a remote consensus vote on vetted candidates for Diversity Advisory Council membership. More information is forthcoming.

7. DAC logistics

Topic summary

Art discussed the development of the Diversity Advisory Council Google Documents site and shared the proposed 2020 council calendar. The charter calls for eight meetings. The September meeting will be held outside of Portland, location to be determined. Art asked if the current meeting times of 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. work for council members. Council members support the current time.

Discussion

Charity Fain suggested council members have a greater role in developing future meeting agendas.

Next steps

Energy Trust staff will work with members to develop agendas for future meetings.

8. Public comment

Chad Gilles, Stillwater Energy, asked whether Energy Trust was still seeking DAC applicants and the timeline. Art responded that the application process was open and continuing.

9. Meeting adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 28, 2020, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.