

Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Notes

November 17, 2021

Attending from the council:

Jeff Bissonnette, NW Energy Coalition
Roger Kainu, Oregon Department of Energy
Matthew Tidwell (for Jason Klotz), Portland General Electric
Kari Greer, Pacific Power
Rick Hodges, NW Natural
Tina Jayaweera, NW Power and Conservation Council
Kerry Meade, Northwest Energy Efficiency Council
Lisa McGarity, Avista
Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility Commission
Tyler Pepple, Alliance for Western Energy Consumers
Becky Walker, NEEA
Tim Hendricks, BOMA

Attending from Energy Trust:

Hannah Cruz	Julianne Thacher
Tom Beverly	Kenji Spielman
Greg Stokes	Wendy Gibson
Tracy Scott	Amanda Zuniga
Elizabeth Fox	Sue Fletcher
Fred Gordon	Cameron Starr
Elaine Dado	Dan Rubado
Jackie Goss	Jeni Hall
Shelly Carlton	Andrew Shepard
Quinn Cherf	Ashley Bartels
Kate Wellington	Ryan Crews
Steve Lacey	Oliver Kesting
Michael Colgrove	Melanie Bissonnette
Susan Jowaiszas	Quinn Parker
Amanda Thompson	
Marshall Johnson	
Amber Cole	
Hannah Levy	
Alex Novie	

Others attending:

John Molnar, Rogers Machinery	Alder Miller, CLEARResult
Alan Meyer, Energy Trust board	Clark Korbisch, Power TakeOff
Jenny Sorich, CLEARResult	Jake Wise, PGE
Chris Smith, Energy350	Joe Marcotte, TRC
Brooke Landon, CLEARResult	David Beaulieu, TRC

1. Welcome and Announcements

Hannah Cruz, senior communications manager, convened the meeting at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. The agenda, notes and presentation materials are available at www.energytrust.org/about/public-meetings/conservation-advisory-council-meetings.

Hannah opened with a summary of the agenda and led a round of introductions among the Conservation Advisory Council and board members. Hannah invited feedback on notes from the September meeting and pointed out that they were slightly revised. They will be reposted online after this meeting.

2. Board of Directors Recruitment

Topic summary

Greg Stokes, organizational development manager and staff liaison to the board, discussed board recruitment.

The board is seeking two board new members. A recruitment announcement was released on Friday, November 5. Candidates are sought with energy experience in the industrial/manufacturing sectors and experience working effectively with, and understanding the needs of, culturally and ethnically diverse or underrepresented communities. The deadline to submit the online nomination form is December 10, 2021.

Discussion

There was no additional discussion.

Next steps

Council members are encouraged to share the [online announcement](#) with potential candidates in their networks.

3. House Bill 3141 Implementation Update

Topic summary

Hannah Cruz provided an update on implementation related to House Bill 3141, the public purpose charge modernization bill. This bill was recently enacted after the 2021 legislative session.

House Bill 3141 extends the public purpose charge through 2035 and expands the renewables scope to focus on grid resiliency and to benefit low- and moderate-income customers. Energy efficiency funding is removed from the public purpose charge and funding for all achievable, cost-effective energy efficiency is now included in standard Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC) ratemaking processes. This will allow Energy Trust to work with utility partners to plan for and acquire all cost-effective energy efficiency. There is effectively no longer a sunset date for energy efficiency. It also establishes joint coordination with utilities for planning and budgeting. Equity metrics will now be required for all the ratepayer funds Energy Trust receives. The equity metrics are to be set by the end of 2022.

The OPUC is the lead agency for implementing the majority of changes from House Bill 3141 that impact Energy Trust. Pacific Power and Portland General Electric are changing tariff filings now to ensure changes are in place by January 1, 2022. (See presentation slides for additional details.)

Discussion

Council members asked whether energy efficiency funding will be removed at the beginning of 2022 (Elee Jen). Staff responded that efficiency will continue to be funded; however, the

mechanism for funding will change as efficiency funding is removed from the public purpose charge and standard OPUC ratemaking processes used to fund all cost-effective energy efficiency. This is similar to how Energy Trust currently determines supplemental electric funding. Council members also pointed out that there are many decisions and items still in process, much of which will be determined in 2022 (Anna Kim). Members asked if there will be a unified docket for energy efficiency instead of building it into separate tariffs (Kerry Meade). A council member responded that there may not be a single docket, but the process will be discussed (Anna Kim). Tariffs are likely to be filed utility-by-utility, which will be consistent with Energy Trust's budget by utility. Staff also pointed out that Portland General Electric and Pacific Power have filed for collections starting in 2022 (Steve Lacey).

Council members stated they didn't see a difference in having to file tariffs and that there have always been multiple streams of funding for Energy Trust. Senate Bill 838 funds were additional under a different tariff and added to the funding of the original public purpose charge. Pacific Power has filed, backtracking from the commission's calendar and the filing deadline to avoid any disruption in Energy Trust's funding. Pacific Power stated it is looking forward to working with the OPUC and Energy Trust on how the budgeting and funding process will look going forward (Kari Greer). Staff also stated that program forms will be updated as a matter of course in 2022 (Steve Lacey).

Next steps

Staff will continue to bring periodic updates on implementation of House Bill 3141 over the next year.

4. In-progress Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2022

Topic summary

Tracy Scott, energy programs director, discussed Energy Trust's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2022. This will be a living plan with the ability to evolve as stakeholders and advisory councils provide feedback.

In 2021, Energy Trust launched a summit series to hear from communities, customers and contractors, and finalized the supplier diversity policy statement. Community engagement will be a key focus in 2022, based on feedback received from community leaders.

Energy Trust is seeking input from the Conservation Advisory Council, specifically on how to have the greatest impact, how to measure success, how to hold the organization accountable, where the organization should aim to be by the end of 2022 and how to develop community-informed and community-led programs.

Discussion

Council members asked what is meant by community engagement principles and whether they have been drafted (Kari Greer). Staff referenced [The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#), which ranges from "ignoring" to "deferring" to communities. Energy Trust is working toward the level of "involving" as shown in the slides. Members asked what gaps Energy Trust sees that were in the presentation (Elee Jen). Staff responded that the biggest gap is needing to engage communities throughout the entire process, in order to design the right offers.

Council members asked which targets weren't achieved and how they'll be incorporated into the new plan (Tina Jayaweera). Staff explained that there are links to all the results, but Energy Trust is on track to reach 18 of the 22 targets (Tracy Scott). The most important takeaway is that Energy Trust needs to engage communities when establishing goals and get their input on how to measure success. Staff also added that as part of this process, Energy Trust will be engaging with staff who have been involved with the targets over the last four years. Their input can be used in the new plan to address gaps (Sue Fletcher).

Council members also stated that Energy Trust would need to look at its staffing and what can be achieved. There will be organizations on different parts of the continuum, so Energy Trust will have to see where they are with different organizations. A council member asked what “bridge the divide between community and governance” means under the heading of “engagement with communities and governance” (Lisa McGarity). Staff explained that it’s about allowing initiatives that are important to the communities to be the goals - it’s not about Energy Trust or the group governing each other (Tracy Scott). Staff also added that it’s similar to the role we have with Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund, where Energy Trust provides support and seeks ways to align with its objectives (Mike Colgrove).

Members asked how Energy Trust is working with the utilities in their initiatives. Portland General Electric has done a lot through their smart grid test bed to leverage communities. One member asked how Energy Trust will build those relationships (Tina Jayaweera). Staff elaborated that Energy Trust is working closely with utilities as it moves forward with engaging communities and will be in discussion with the OPUC and many strategies will be developed through collaboration (Tracy Scott).

Next steps

Council members were asked to share any additional thoughts going forward.

5. Exploring Energy Trust Strategic Plan Focus Area 2: Targeted Utility Partnerships

Topic summary

Energy Trust staff Steve Lacey, Quinn Cherf and Jeni Hall presented a deeper look at Energy Trust’s targeted efforts with utilities.

Targeted Load Management (TLM) is a response to utilities’ desire to use energy efficiency and renewable energy to address grid and system constraints. Pacific Power and NW Natural collaborated with Energy Trust on pilots to test this approach. Energy Trust is exploring opportunities with the City of Eugene and NW Natural to reduce emissions and reach their targets in this way. Staff described the TLM efforts, approaches and results used with Pacific Power and NW Natural, as well as Energy Trust’s role in Portland General Electric’s Smart Grid Test Bed.

Pacific Power TLM Pilot – Phoenix, OR

Energy Trust identified offers with the greatest impact during peak periods with a focus on residential, solar and commercial. Cobranded direct mail pieces and bill inserts were sent out and included in our other marketing plans to avoid conflicting messages. Trade allies in the area were trained in order to help customers appropriately.

Participation was strongest in existing homes, followed by commercial buildings. Annual and peak savings were measured against baselines. Peak savings were 35% greater than expected. Overall savings were also better than expected.

NW Natural TLM GeoTEE Pilot – Creswell and Cottage Grove, OR

The NW Natural GeoTEE pilot is a three-year, three-phased project. NW Natural is working to build its toolbox of options to alleviate capacity constraints and determine a dollar per peak therm value. The goal for the pilot is a replicable process within NW Natural’s system.

Phase one raised awareness through targeted marketing, cobranded materials and a hidden website. Phase 2 included increased incentives and achieved better-than-expected results: Annual therm savings were significantly higher than expected and peak savings were almost double the expectation. Phase 2 occurred largely during pandemic restrictions. The highest savings came from gas furnaces, thermostats and windows.

Currently in Phase 3, localized avoided costs being applied to provide higher incentives with NW Natural providing the avoided cost value. The focus continues to be on providing offers with the highest peak impact. A funding agreement is in place.

Portland General Electric Smart Grid Test Bed – North Portland, Milwaukie and Hillsboro, OR

The Portland General Electric (PGE) Smart Grid Test Bed pilot is a multi-year coordinated pilot launched in 2019. The purpose is to accelerate development of demand response and acquire it at scale. Phase one will conclude this year and includes an opt out peak time rebate offer.

The pilot is an opportunity to leverage existing Energy Trust offers and delivery infrastructure to gain customer insights. It also looks at acceptance of new technologies and distributed energy resources. For residential customers, it focuses on a ductless heat pump controls pilot, retrofitting previous controls, direct install of smart thermostats. The pilot was supported through Community Energy Project heating and cooling workshops. PGE's residential smart battery pilot and residential direct install smart thermostat offer are ongoing opportunities.

PGE has filed for phase two of the Smart Grid Test Bed, beginning in 2022 and lasting five years. Three pilots were proposed to plan and launch after approval: a flexible feeder non-wires alternative project, a solar smart inverter pilot and managed electric vehicle charging.

PGE, Energy Trust and National Renewable Energy Laboratories were also awarded a federal Department of Energy Connected Communities grant which will provide more services in the North Portland test bed area. Energy Trust has established a cross-program coordination team to support this and other work that affects more than one program group, which has been truly beneficial.

Discussion

Council members asked when Pacific Power's peak load occurs (Tina Jayaweera). Staff responded that Pacific Power defined the peak period as June - August weekdays from 1 – 9 p.m. (Alex Novie). Members also asked how Energy Trust accounted for homes and businesses lost in the fires when determining savings (Lisa McGarity). Staff explained that Energy Trust made estimates for everything installed during the pilot. If participants did not notify Energy Trust, it is unknown what happened at buildings that were destroyed.

Council members asked if some expected typical participation was included (Becky Walker). Staff responded that it was included, but Energy Saver Kits were removed (Quinn Churf). Members also inquired about lessons learned around customer communications (Lisa McGarity). Staff stated that Energy Trust developed processes to deal with questions from outside the targeted areas, but that hasn't been an issue. Energy Trust used very focused marketing based on its customer relationship management system. Customers targeted in phase two were re-targeted in phase three, avoiding people outside of the eligibility area (Ashley Bartels). An attendee asked if there were other local avoided costs identified or incorporated in addition to distribution (Jake Wise). Staff responded that they were (Quinn Churf).

Council members asked what an opt-out peak time rebate is (Kari Greer). Staff explained that it is not an installed device. Customers receive a text and can voluntarily reduce their usage during peak periods (Jeni Hall). Staff members asked about isolating any of the various pilots and interventions to measure the impact of any one of them (Hannah Cruz). Other staff members explained that market and equipment tests are being conducted to see the result of specific interventions. The focus is on framing the effort and engaging the community, along with the technology, to deliver mass benefits at scale (Fred Gordon). Some of the benefits of TLM have been learning how to accurately define an eligible area. Cottage Grove and Creswell were simple because of the zip codes. With the test bed Pacific Power Phoenix project,

boundaries needed to be set, resulting in some potential gray areas that would not be counted (Quinn Cherf).

Council members stated that when looking at distribution system planning, Energy Trust appears as a critical partner to engage communities in the right spots. Utilities provided to the OPUC detailed maps with circuits and pinch points on the systems. They asked how Energy Trust envisions fitting into that role moving forward (Kari Greer). Staff responded that in the work with utilities on integrated resource plans and the pilots, it's driven by the utilities to define areas where they can use Energy Trust help. There is now a process and methodology ready to go (Steve Lacey). Council members added that distribution system planning is relatively new, as are the maps and layers that go with them, along with reports. It takes time to filter through all the information. Energy Trust has the potential to provide very high value as this moves along (Kari Greer). Staff added that the process has been tracked. Energy Trust's role is to develop the tools (Fred Gordon).

Members asked if Energy Trust believes more tests and pilots are needed, or if sufficient information has been collected (Becky Walker). Staff explained that part of this was delivered during a pandemic and a major wildfire. There were key takeaways in how the processes were set up and how definitions were created - and Energy Trust isn't there yet (Quinn Cherf). Energy Trust is looking at moving this out of the project management office into programs. It will transition from pilots into a mainstream effort (Steve Lacey).

Next steps

None.

6. 2022 Budget Update

Overview

Tracy Scott, energy programs director, discussed changes being made from the draft budget to the final proposed budget. The final proposed budget will be posted on December 9, and the board will vote on December 17. There is potential to increase gas savings across sectors. More outreach to customers, more incentives for smart thermostats and new bonuses for commercial projects will be included. In addition, a slight increase in generation due to a small hydropower project shifting into 2022 will be included, along with a small increase in evaluations and the staffing budget due to a market salary survey.

Discussion

No questions or discussion.

Next Steps

None.

7. Budget Workshop Follow Up

Overview

Hannah Cruz discussed the role of Conservation Advisory Council and other advisory councils in the budgeting process. It is important to understand where council members want to give input into the action plans. Members who were able to attend the workshop were asked to give their impressions.

Discussion

Council members stated that the staff breakouts at the end were very good. It would have been even better to have more time to visit more breakout rooms (Lisa McGarity). Additional comments from members included that the workshop was very good and gave a lot of information, but not too much. Attendees appreciated the opportunity to visit staff during "office hours" and have one-on-one time. Council members also shared that it was well structured. One

member stated it was good to hear the results about how the workshops influence what Energy Trust is doing and to learn about the overall process (Jeff Bissonnette).

Next Steps

None.

8. 2022 Residential Program Management Contract Request for Proposals

Overview

Marshall Johnson, senior program manager, discussed the Residential request for proposals for the 2023 Residential contracts.

In the request for proposals, Energy Trust will prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion areas including income qualified customers, communities of color and rural customers. This will be continued through Savings Within Reach, community partner delivery, fixed price promotions, regional initiatives, free services for manufactured homes and manufactured home replacements.

Webinars will occur in January 2022 for bidders and networking across traditional implementers and diverse firms is encouraged. The request will be released in April 2022, with proposals due in June 2022. The selection process will take place in summer 2022, and the transition will occur late in the year. New contracts will begin January 1, 2023.

Discussion

Council members asked if the call center will be located in Oregon (Lisa McGarity). Staff explained that different models over the years have been used, and they are currently in Oregon. Energy Trust has also worked with backup resources in other states (Marshall Johnson). Members stated that Energy Trust should consider its proven customer service track record across the organization and ensure that diverse contracting firms it works with have the initiative and desire to serve well (Lisa McGarity). Members added that work with distributors and location-based providers is important to consider (Becky Walker). Energy Trust should also consider the trade-offs of having a standalone provider focused on community partner work (Jake Wise). Staff explained that community partner funding has helped to serve targeted customer groups. Energy Trust also has designated staff members that develop and maintain relationships with key community partners (Marshall Johnson).

Council members asked if a community partner could serve as a program delivery contractors (Jake Wise). Staff responded that if the contract is structured that way, it could be feasible. Currently, they participate directly with Energy Trust, similar to trade allies. In this bid, one of the activities that falls under the program management contractor scope is to manage the network of community partner allies and is a new component of the program. As Energy Trust considers scaling this offer and the intended target customer groups, it should be designed in a way that encourages this. Staff noted some partners want direct Energy Trust contacts instead of working for an implementer (Marshall Johnson). Members asked if there is a list of community partner allies (Kari Greer). Staff replied that a list can be provided (Marshall Johnson, Tom Beverly).

Council members added that targeted load management is a good proxy for what is to come. Cost-effectiveness is challenging for Residential. The cheap, low-hanging products aren't available anymore. Energy efficiency opportunity remain with customers who have not been served in the past (Roger Kainu). Staff responded that a combination of demographics and participation rates will help reach the right places that haven't been served. It's a key skill set Energy Trust will look for (Marshall Johnson).

Members stated that for both gas and electric, the increasing focus on decarbonization will be an opportunity. NW Natural published its 2050 report recently with technologies it is focused on. Council members added there is system planning across both gas and electric (Matt Tidwell). Staff responded that a combination of heating, ventilation and air conditioning technology knowledge and applying policy framework to those technologies is also inherent to the work. There's a lag between policy topics and Energy Trust's role in implementing them (Marshall Johnson).

Next steps

Staff will promote the request flyer to firms that meet the requirements and keep council members informed with regular updates and related announcements.

9. Public comment

There was no additional public comment.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m. This was the final Conservation Advisory Council meeting in 2021. The first meeting is traditionally in February and will be announced soon. Meetings have not yet been scheduled for 2022.