

## Renewable Energy Advisory Council Meeting Notes

July 27, 2022

### Attending from the council:

Angela Crowley-Koch, Oregon Solar + Storage Industries Association  
Ryan Harvey, Pacific Power  
Tess Jordan, Portland General Electric  
Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility Commission

Josh Peterson, Solar Monitoring Lab-University of Oregon  
Jaimes Valdez, Portland Clean Energy Benefits Fund

### Attending from Energy Trust:

Emma Clark  
Michael Colgrove  
Ryan Cook  
Cheryle Easton  
Taylor Ford  
Elizabeth Fox  
Matt Getchell  
Fred Gordon  
Megan Greenauer  
Jeni Hall  
Betsy Kauffman  
Jake Kennedy  
Steve Lacey  
Alina Lambert

David McClelland  
Dave Moldal  
Taylor Navesken  
Kyle Petrocine  
Joshua Reed  
Lizzie Rubado  
Greg Stokes  
Amanda Thompson  
Huong Tran  
Jay Ward  
Robert Wyllie  
Austin Zeng

### Others attending:

Susan Brodahl, Energy Trust Board  
Elee Jen, Energy Trust Board  
Alexia Kelly, Energy Trust Board  
Keith Kueny, Farmers Conservation Alliance

Henry Lorenzen, Energy Trust Board  
Noemi Ortiz, Cascade Natural Gas  
Christy Splitt, Oregon Dept. of Energy

## 1. Welcome and Announcements

Betsy Kauffman, renewable energy sector lead, convened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Zoom. The agenda, notes and presentation materials are available on Energy Trust's website at <https://www.energytrust.org/about/public-meetings/renewable-energy-advisory-council-meetings/>. Betsy announced that Lizzie Rubado and Robert Wyllie will be leaving the renewable energy sector to take on new roles within Energy Trust working on the organization's innovation and development team.

## 2. 2023 Action Planning: Deep Dive into Priority Topics

### *Topic summary*

Greg Stokes, organizational development manager, introduced the second of three engagements with the council in 2022 as part of the creation of the 2023-2024 Action Plan for renewable energy services and incentives. The focus of the session was to explore two topics in detail with a focus on solutions.

The following is a summary of the input that was received at the council's deep dive session with two breakout groups for each topic. Staff will review the council's ideas and suggestions and will identify themes and some specific items to incorporate into 2023 action plans.

### **Topic #1 – Equity and expanding access – House Bill 3141 and beyond**

How might Energy Trust provide meaningful benefits to customers experiencing low- and moderate-incomes, communities of color, tribal communities and rural communities to meet both its equity goals and the House Bill 3141 spending requirement?

- Be targeted with resources and strategic in achieving goals
  - Customize program design for specific locations to achieve goals in a targeted way
  - Lower standard incentives, understanding that means more funding to households with low incomes
- Focus more on individuals experiencing low incomes, compared to moderate incomes
- High enough incentives
- Direct personalized benefits
- Target rental properties
  - Work with housing providers/landlords
  - Align incentives with landlords
    - E.g. revolving loan funds for landlords to upgrade equipment and systems both for new construction and retrofitting
- Targeted community solar
- Increase and improve outreach efforts; dedicated outreach to specific communities
  - Seek connections with environmental justice communities
  - Leverage multiple ways to connect with communities
  - Door-to-door outreach from Energy Trust
- Community partnerships
  - Form strong relationships with community leaders to best understand specific needs/goals
  - Ability to be flexible with community-based organizations to help them best meet customer needs

### **How can Energy Trust more deeply serve customers with low and moderate incomes?**

- Low-cost or no-cost offers, by layering incentives
- Solar is best option for bringing renewable benefits to customers with low incomes but look beyond rooftop solar, single-family homes and community solar
- Establish long term relationships with community-based organizations to advance this work
- Be proactive with communities in educating about microgrids
- Continue to diversify and expand the contractor network

### **Innovative program and funding ideas:**

- Cooperative ownership models
- Virtual net-metering
- Meter aggregation for multifamily, manufactured housing, or single-family home development
- Targeted program for community resilience hubs for cooling/wildfire shelters, resilience, grid services

- Solar plus storage clusters
- Dedicated micro-grids for specific communities
- Demand response programs that enable renters to benefit from energy savings
- Explore interaction between air conditioning and solar/storage
- Solar plus storage in new construction
  - Partner with Habitat for Humanity
- Affordable solar housing
- Assist in walking communities through offerings that increase resilience
- Assessing needs & identifying critical facilities within specific communities
- Biopower/hydropower – municipally-owned projects: how can this be adapted?
  - Possible agriculture sector opportunities
- Community access buildings - targeting of funds (schools, etc.)
- Manufactured home park opportunities
  - Resilience; public safety power shutoffs; mini community solar
- Geographic targeting; target communities by heat mapping low solar areas
- Focus more on non-energy customer benefits. E.g., lowering utility bills, energy independence, and possible resilience during outages with a battery
- Identify specific locations or groups you want to reach and customize program design to achieve that goal
- Need to start an efficient cooling program targeting critical services and households with low incomes

#### **What does success look like over the next 2-3 years?**

- Meeting the 25% low- and moderate-income requirement, outlining benchmarks for each year
- Building resilience and cutting cost of bills
- Building programs and pilots that unlock larger sources of state and federal dollars leveraging smaller Energy Trust funds (e.g., what has been done with irrigation modernization)
- Establish long-term relationships with communities that could use help the most (including housing providers, community organizations, etc.)

#### **Topic #2: Resilience, Flexibility and Expanding Value**

How might Energy Trust help customers understand the full range of benefits that renewable energy projects can provide and help them access resources and funding opportunities?

#### **The full range of benefits (in addition to generation):**

- Resilience (during outages with battery storage systems)
- Energy independence for customers and communities
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Emergency preparedness; critical public safety services
- Grid flexibility; grid resilience; distributed generation

#### **Measuring the full value of Renewables**

- Quantify resilience
- Create “resilience metrics”
- Measure benefits on a spectrum
  - How to quantify energy resilience so that it isn't just for emergency preparedness?

- Measure real world outcomes
  - Impact, not just project completion
- Ask resilience questions for future issues and have metrics developed to assist in studying impacts

**Energy Trust's unique role of value (what it is well-positioned to do, that it should be doing, but is not)**

**Funding**

- Identify key funding gaps at the local level (e.g. match funding with Federal Emergency Management Agency) and raise money to fill them
- Establish a revolving loan fund to provide capital expenditure funding to local governments and nonprofits for critical services
- Grant funding for embedded capacity within local governments
- Assistance for entities/communities, specifically municipalities, to apply for money
- Build fiscal management capability; provide financial services to community-based organizations and partner to administer (receive, disperse, manage funds) expected high volume of federal funds on behalf of communities
- Revolving low-cost loan "green bank" loan program role for Energy Trust
  - Explicit recommendation from the Renewable Energy Advisory Council to board
  - All customers – contractors in particular

**Cooling**

- Focus on equitable cooling
- Start an efficient cooling program that provides subsidies and guidance to communities targeting individuals that are low and moderate income and that provide critical services

**Resilience**

- Start a community resilience network to provide centralized resource administration and distribution
- Emergency management departments – create systematic approach to battery backup and storage
- Resilience = communities being able to manage their own power
- 2-way flow of power through the substation creates opportunities for the grid to operate differently and to be more optimized and resilient.

**Co-ownership and community partnership**

- Community resilience hubs/hub at Energy Trust
- Start a community-based organization community resilience hub accelerator
- Co-owned solar - if more energy is generated, it is donated. This can inspire more energy savings
- Provide sustained capacity building grant support to local communities (both nonprofits and governments) for energy resilience planning and work
- Need to create outreach and engagement on Energy Trust services and programs for Emergency Managers
- Create tailored support and integrated Energy Trust incentive programs across energy efficient retrofits and solar plus storage to create community resilience hubs
- Energy Trust representation at home shows, farmers markets, community meetings, etc.

- Take more proactive role - work with community organizations to identify those in need and to understand microgrids and opportunities available
- Focused approach, more engagement

#### Renters

- Support landlords with access to free or low-cost loans for energy efficient retrofitting, cooling and energy resilience

#### Customer service

- One stop concierge service - coordinate, grant paperwork, hands-on support with knowledge on where funding is, how it can benefit community organizations and help them use those funds to complete a project
- Connecting the dots between programs/offers currently working in silos

#### Building upgrades

- Reduce time constraints for building systems
- Interlinked systemic challenges that Energy Trust can help overcome - reduce friction in the system
- Invest in upgrading existing distributed energy resource infrastructure

#### Community energy planning

- Opportunities for coordination around energy planning
- Proactively reaching out for involvement in regional community energy planning - finding funding if needed

#### Microgrids

- Microgrids, centralized generation. What is Energy Trust's role in promoting microgrids?
- Customer based micro-grid is the way to go for resilience and customer benefit. However, the leaders of communities need to get involved.

#### Education

- Ensure good education on grid and benefits of changes

#### Support grid flexibility/grid management

- Smart battery storage, smart inverters
- Electrification of vehicles and their role in grid management
- 2-way flows of power create opportunities for the grid to operate differently and to be more optimized and resilient.
- Battery/storage backup for cooling shelters and emergency shelters when there is more stress on grid
- Ensure new renewable capacity is "resilience and grid support" enabled and ready
- Work with utilities and interested communities to develop integrated grid and critical services

### **3. Public Comment**

No public comment.

### **4. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.