

Diversity Advisory Council Meeting Notes

February 20, 2024

Attending from the council:

Terrance Harris, Drexell University
Indika Sugathadasa, PDX HIVE
Rhea Standing Rock, Sunlight Solar
Rebecca Descombes
Christopher Banks, Urban League of Portland
Martin Campos-Davis, Oregon Human Development Corporation
Dolores Martinez, EUVALCREE

Attending from Energy Trust:

Michael Colgrove	Kate Wellington
Emily Findley	Andi Nix
Elaine Dado	Kirstin Pinit
Elizabeth Fox	Alanna Hoyman-Browe
Melanie Bissonnette	Isaiah Kamrar
Tracy Scott	Taylor Ford
Alicia Li	Sloan Schang
Any Coles	Bayo Ware
Danielle Rhodes	Shelly Carlton
Betsy Kauffman	Matt Getchell
Cody Kleinsmith	Amanda Thompson
Lindsey Diercksen	Maddy Otto
Michael Hoch	Maddie Norman
Themba Mutepfa	Amber Cole
Monica Williams	Amanda Zuniga

Others attending:

Melissa Cribbins, Energy Trust board	Jessica Dover, AlmaLuna Language Services
Henry Lorenzen, Energy Trust board	Alder Miller, CLEAResult
Ezell Watson, Oregon Public Utility Commission	Jenny Sorich, CLEAResult
Lauren Rosenstein, Oregon Department of Energy	Shelly Beaulieu, Dragonfly Consulting
	Ivonne Saed, Saedgraphic

1. Welcome and introductions

Mike Colgrove, executive director, convened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. The agenda, notes and presentation materials are available on Energy Trust's website at <https://www.energytrust.org/about/public-meetings/diversity-advisory-council-meetings/>.

He reviewed the meeting agenda and provided instruction regarding available interpretation services for meeting attendees to hear content in either English or Spanish. He led a round of introductions among the council members, attendees representing Oregon Public Utility Commission and members of Energy Trust's board of directors. He then reviewed a set of ground rules originally established when the council was founded and invited current members to suggest updates on an ongoing basis.

Mike introduced a new member joining Diversity Advisory Council. Martín Campos-Davis is the executive director of the Oregon Human Development Corporation, which primarily serves farmworkers in agricultural areas and functions as a community action organization.

Energy Trust board member Melissa Cribbins provided an update on recent activity from the board's ad hoc DEI committee. The ad hoc DEI committee meets quarterly, and its work is guided by a consultant who also does one-on-one coaching with individual board members. Board members are currently reading and discussing "The 1619 Project," a long-form journalism endeavor developed by Nikole Hannah-Jones from The New York Times that aims to reframe United States history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the center of the national narrative. The council asked if its members could also have access to "The 1619 Project (Rhea Standing Rock)". Energy Trust staff will follow up to make that available for council members.

2. Multi-year planning and proposal for modified 2025 budget process

Topic summary

Senior project manager Melanie Bissonnette and project manager Alanna Hoyman-Browe presented Energy Trust's plan to shift to a multiyear planning framework to replace its existing annual planning and budget development process, which includes building a two-year budget and action plan each calendar year. Multiyear planning is a key strategy the organization is using to accelerate savings in support of utility decarbonization goals. It will also add efficiency and flexibility to the overall planning and budgeting process. The first multiyear plan will cover 2026-2030 and include multiple time horizons and milestones throughout that period to evaluate progress to goals.

Energy Trust will develop its first multiyear plan during 2025, and the process to do so will be created in the first half of 2024. Building blocks of the multiyear plan include a five-year business plan to establish high-level priorities; a five-year staffing plan that forecasts long-range staffing and resource needs; and a five-year financial plan that includes projected expenditures and revenues needed to achieve goals. Energy Trust is exploring how it could introduce the concept of a rolling budget within its multiyear planning framework. A rolling budget is a tool that can be used to manage performance against milestones in the overall financial plan. Staff is currently considering aligning a rolling budget with heating and cooling seasons and updating it every six months.

There will be modifications to the budgeting process in 2024, which will produce a one-year budget for 2025 only. Early engagement that happens in a typical budget year will not occur because Energy Trust is already engaging stakeholders to inform strategic planning. In October, all advisory council members will be invited to a joint engagement where they can hear and weigh in on Energy Trust's budget for 2025.

Discussion

Council members asked if Energy Trust could share the presentation by email so they could review later (Rebecca Descombes, Rhea Standing Rock). Staff will follow up to share presentation materials.

Next steps

Staff will bring a multiyear plan update to Diversity Advisory Council in June or July, including an overview of what the process will look like and when the council will be engaged in 2025.

3. Update on recruitment for DEI services director

Topic summary

Mike Colgrove provided an update on the recruitment process to hire a director of DEI services to serve on Energy Trust's executive team and oversee its DEI services team. Interest in the position was higher than expected, and the hiring process is being extended due to the volume, with over 75 applications to review.

For applications that rise to the top, there will be a four-step interview process and an offer is expected to be made by mid-March. Mike thanked council member Terrance Harris for his participation in the hiring process for this position.

Discussion

No discussion.

Next steps

Council members will receive an update when a director is hired and will be introduced to them at a future meeting.

4. Topics of interest and meeting dates for 2024

Topic summary

Mike Colgrove reviewed proposed council meeting dates for this year. Council members commit to attending up to eight meetings per year, but there are currently nine scheduled for 2024. Mike proposed moving the meeting currently scheduled in person on March 12 to March 13 so the council can join a workshop with Energy Trust's board of directors and other advisory councils where they will continue strategic planning discussions. He also proposed canceling a September meeting to bring the number of meetings back down to eight. There were no concerns from council members or the budget team.

Mike moved on to a discussion with council members about topics they would like to discuss at future meetings and provided some ideas about 2024 areas of work they could hear about. Areas where Energy Trust will make significant investments in 2024 include expanding and supporting its Trade Ally Network, expand delivery through partnerships with community-based organizations and workforce development. Mike suggested staff could share information on ways Energy Trust is supporting trade ally businesses in new ways, including helping with internal business needs like hiring, marketing and accounting.

There will be internal restructuring of Energy Trust's DEI services team and DEI committee to manage work overseeing the DEI plan, which is focused on community engagement.

Discussion

A council member asked if community-based organizations need to enroll as trade allies to work with Energy Trust (Rhea Standing Rock). Mike clarified they do not; community-based organizations are a different type of delivery partner, and we have ways of supporting them that foster mutual benefit built into offers like Working Together Grants and Community Partner Funding.

The council expressed a topic of interest is Energy Trust's engagement with tribal communities, which intersects with their own work. A council member offered to share about their involvement, including providing connections to community-based organizations that work with tribes (Rhea Standing Rock). The council said Black communities in rural areas are often overlooked, but Urban League has been thinking about ways to extend services to rural communities of color that are contributing to Oregon's economy (Christopher Banks).

Mike responded it would be great to have Diversity Advisory Council members present on what their organizations are doing at future meetings. He suggested Ezell Watson could bring DEI updates from Oregon Public Utility Commission and Lauren Rosenstein could do so for Oregon Department of Energy. Other council members agreed with the approach of reserving meeting time to hear from members and their organizations.

The council suggested hearing updates on Inflation Reduction Act and other new funding opportunities, as community-based organizations field a lot of questions about that (Indika Sugathadasa), and updates from Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund including its budget process and future plans (Rhea Standing Rock).

Mike suggested also including perspectives from the Climate Protection Program through Seeding Justice and other organizations and that he could invite Energy Trust's Innovation and Development team to present on new and upcoming funding opportunities periodically.

The council requested to hear updates on special projects that members are engaged in to provide a better understanding of the impact council members have on Energy Trust's work. For example, some members review and give input on request for proposals for contract opportunities and others serve on hiring panels (Rebecca Descombes).

Mike reminded the council there are still two vacancies to fill, and he will be following up with members who previously volunteered to use the skills matrix to assess gaps in skills or lived experience. For example, geographic representation from Southern Oregon and the coast is currently lacking.

Next steps

Energy Trust staff will add a standing agenda item reserved for council members to share the work they are doing. Staff will incorporate the council's topics of interest into agenda items for future meetings, and members are encouraged to share topic ideas by email on an ongoing basis.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m. The next Diversity Advisory Council meeting will take place on April 9, 2024 and [details will be posted on Energy Trust's website](#).