

Renewable Energy Advisory Council Agenda

The RAC has moved to Thursday afternoons:

Thursday, April 18, 2024; 1:30 pm – 4:10 pm

Meeting is hybrid: in person at 421 SW Oak St, Suite #300 and online using Zoom link below.

Please register in advance:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrdeGsqTstHtxDu5mF8HCbOLBMGAI6mXOB>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you arrive later than 1:40 pm, please reach out to [Renita Lamberth](#).

1:30 Welcome and announcements

1:35 RAC engagement and recruiting *(presentation, feedback)*

Betsy Kauffman and Bayo Ware will share a set of draft recommendations for engagement, membership, and recruiting to help RAC become more inclusive and evolve to be a forum that leads with race. This is based on work done with Kheoshi Owens from Empress Rules Equity Consulting who will also present her thoughts about the RAC.

2:15 Solar for All *(presentation, questions)*

Dave McClelland (Energy Trust), Rob Del Mar (ODOE), Evan Ramsey (BEF) and Clair Scribner (BEF) will present the preparation work and progress regarding the Solar for All federal grant program. This will include roles, EPA updates on funding awards (if any) and next steps. *Note: at the time of publishing this agenda, awards have not been announced; the joint application status is "Applied".*

2:55 Break

3:00 Draft energy resilience strategy and expected offers *(presentation, feedback)*

Staff will present on the development of an energy resilience strategy and potential near-term areas of focus. Staff will also provide information on progress on deploying incentives for battery storage systems.

3:30 Dee Bridge In-Conduit PRV Hydroelectric Project *(presentation, questions)*

Kyle Petrocine from the Custom Solutions team will review a proposed renewable energy installation incentive for the city of Hood River's pressure reduction valve project.

3:55 Revision of grant agreement *(Q&A)*

The Oregon Public Utility Commission is modernizing its grant agreement with Energy Trust, through which Energy Trust receives and is held accountable for investment of ratepayer funds in cost-effective energy efficiency, small-scale renewable energy and market transformation. The update will occur within OPUC docket UM 1158. Debbie Menashe will provide an overview of the OPUC schedule and process.

4:05 Public comment

4:10 Adjourn

You can view this agenda and notes from previous meetings at: energytrust.org/about/public-meetings.
If you have comments on meeting notes, please email [Bayoan Ware](mailto:Bayoan.Ware@energytrust.org).

Next meetings:

- The next regular meeting of the RAC will be Thursday, June 20 at 1:30 pm.



Advancing CAC and RAC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Recommendations Report

January 25, 2024

Problem Statement

- The Conservation Advisory Council and Renewable Energy Advisory Council (CAC/RAC) are to advise the board and staff on strategic matters and achieving organization objectives; however, the current charter, membership recruitment and retention processes, and meeting management techniques present some barriers to having conversations in the organizational focus areas of diversity, equity and inclusion, which are integral to meeting those objectives.

Purpose and Objectives

- Advisory councils with diverse perspectives and viewpoints improve the ability of the bodies to advise staff and/or the board on areas of diversity, equity and inclusion, including organizational achievement to DEI goals and equity performance measures
- Staff worked internally and with a consultant (Kheoshi Owens, CEO of Empress Rules Equity Consulting) to examine CAC/RAC to improve their ability to provide effective feedback, and to create councils that are more welcoming and inclusive spaces for all members
- This Recommendations Report summarizes the work of CAC/RAC facilitators and presents takeaways and recommendations for the board/executive team to consider

Background

- Staff
 - Developed and ran a recruitment process based on the Foundational DAC method
 - Contracted with a consultant to execute elements of the recruitment process (DAC identified that staff needed additional expertise to advise in the process)
 - Supported the board Nominating & Governance Review committee and CAC/RAC board liaisons in discussions on purpose/role of CAC/RAC (2023 charter and role conversations with the board have since been left unresolved)
- Staff worked with Kheoshi Owens of Empress Rules Equity Consulting on:
 - Reviewing current council skills and perspective matrix
 - Meeting facilitation skills
 - Recruiting new council members
 - Developing interview questions and conducting interviews of prospective council members that lead with race
 - Developing lessons learned for future recruiting efforts
 - Conducting an anti-racist training for council members
 - Updating the “welcome process” for onboarding new council members
 - Reviewing inclusiveness of meeting processes
 - Developing community agreements for CAC/RAC meetings

Key takeaways

- The councils have evolved from being advisors of the board to being advisors to staff
 - Initial discussion with N&G committee in January 2023, and full board in February/March 2023, indicated agreement
- CAC/RAC recruiting needs to be done regularly
- CAC/RAC need increased and more diverse membership
- Open calls may not result in the diversity of voices needed
 - Intentional efforts are needed to find people who can represent diverse communities and provide needed perspective and expertise
- Serving on the CAC/RAC is a professional development opportunity and needs to be viewed as such
- Onboarding CAC/RAC members needs more attention and time
 - A warm welcoming environment should be created and maintained
- An anti-racist training was well-attended and successful yet singular trainings are not sufficient
- CAC/RAC are administered and used primarily by staff, but altering the foundational document for the councils requires board action
- Staff resources for supporting CAC/RAC are limited and true change requires dedicated time

Staff Recommendations

Governance

1. Complete governance discussions and settle on role of board and staff in managing CAC/RAC. Allow for staff to have full oversight of purpose, role of councils.
2. Assess the charter, last changed in 2007,
 - Including clarifying how and who councils advise
 - If board connection is retained, identify specific council input that would help the board and strengthen or change the channels of communicating between the councils and the board
3. Explore a new council structure to meet present and future needs of Energy Trust
 - Examine the assumptions underlying the creation of three councils and whether they still apply today

Staff Recommendations (cont.)

Membership

1. Institute term limits, e.g., a set amount of years or require reapplying
2. Create stipend policy based on DAC's policy
3. Define membership criteria
4. Define specific expectations for what it means to be a council member, e.g., attendance expectations, engagement/participation expectations
5. Prioritize achieving council composition that includes multiple lived/professional experiences from customers and communities Energy Trust has underserved
6. Ensure balance in perceived and real power dynamics

Recruitment

1. Get support from HR resources and DEI services to enhance recruitment pool in line with membership criteria identified above
2. Maintain documentation, including of decision making and outcomes
3. Be specific in recruitment needs, and from there, expand channels used for recruitment

Staff Recommendations (cont.)

Member and Meeting Management

1. Host welcome meetings and exit celebrations
2. Share welcome packets
3. Continue use of community agreements

Resourcing CAC/RAC

1. Facilitators should be dedicated resources who have facilitation training and training in creating an inclusive environment
2. A dedicated budget and staff resource should be assigned to support and coordinate council needs
 - Budget to accommodate stipend policy, welcome process and ongoing support of members
 - Resourcing to allow for onboarding meetings with new members, regular check-ins with existing members, exit celebrations for members leaving the council
3. Provide ongoing professional development for facilitators, staff, CAC/RAC members
 - Examples: facilitating through conflict and difference, anti-racism, implicit bias, language access, working with people with disabilities

Next Steps

- Review and invite feedback (including on priorities for implementation) on this Recommendations Report from
 - RAC
 - CAC
 - Executive Team or designees
- Create an implementation team to develop a list of priorities and a plan for moving forward that includes timeline and resources
- Host discussion with board or its designees to seek agreement with the implementation plan or resolution on areas of disagreement

Thank You for Valuing Priority Communities



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