

Diversity Advisory Council Meeting Notes

April 9, 2024

Attending from the council:

Oswaldo Bernal, OBL Media
Indika Sugathadasa, PDX HIVE
Dolores Martinez, EUVALCREE
Susan Badger-Jones, special projects consultant
Christopher Banks, Urban League of Portland
Terrance Harris, Drexel University.

Attending from Energy Trust:

Michael Colgrove	Hannah Cruz
Emily Findley	Sloan Schang
Any Coles	Laura Schaefer
Chris Lyons	Thad Roth
Abi Sloan	Jeni Hall
Natalia Ojeda	Elizabeth Fox
Lindsey Diercksen	Patrick Urain
Caryn Appler	Michael Hoch
Sue Fletcher	Themba Mutepfa
Cody Kleinsmith	Andi Nix
Kate Wellington	Kirstin Pinit
Mia Deonate	Adam Bartini
Lexi Brunelle	Taylor Ford
Alyson McKay	Maddy Otto
Cameron Starr	Maddie Norman
Bayo Ware	Amber Cole
Lidia Garcia	Amanda Zuniga

Others attending:

Melissa Cribbins, Energy Trust board	Lauren Rosenstein, Oregon Department of Energy
Henry Lorenzen, Energy Trust board	Ashnie Butler, Inner Work, Outer Play
Ezell Watson, Oregon Public Utility Commission	Shelly Beaulieu, Dragonfly Consulting
Benedikt Springer, Oregon Public Utility Commission	Alder Miller, CLEAResult
	Ivonne Saed, Saedgraphic

1. Welcome and introductions

Mike Colgrove, executive director, convened the meeting at 9:04 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/>.

Mike Colgrove reviewed the agenda and led a round of introductions among the council members and attendees representing Oregon Public Utility Commission and Oregon Department of Energy. He then introduced Ashnie Butler, a consultant for Energy Trust's board of directors for diversity, equity and inclusion development since 2023. She provided an overview of her background and experience and an update on work she has been doing with the board. She has since facilitated surveys, one-on-one

meetings and cohort meetings. There will be extended workshops later this year to dive into more challenging conversations.

Mike Colgrove noted a recurring topic with the board is how the Diversity Advisory Council might contribute more directly to its development work. Council member Susan Badger-Jones serves on the board's ad hoc committee, but other council members are also invited to get involved.

2. Energy Trust's tribal workgroup

Topic summary

Staff members Caryn Appler, Mia Deonate and Kate Wellington provided an update on Energy Trust's tribal community workgroup and lessons learned so far. They shared a purpose statement developed by the group to define its scope and activities: "To support Energy Trust's strategies to improve Energy Trust outreach, coordination, understanding, and service to Tribal communities and customers to increase program participation and make recommendations to Energy Trust staff on assessing and measuring progress in this work."

The group was formed in 2022 and worked to recruit members with a goal of members from each of the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon. In 2023, it focused on developing a charter and goals and adapting to changes in membership. In 2024, staff is building awareness of the group's activities and impact. Other priorities include expanding membership to include representation from more tribes, members of non-federally recognized tribes and organizations that serve tribes; hiring a tribal outreach manager; creating a policy around meaningful engagement; and developing a cross-program strategic initiative to create a consistent experience for tribal members who participate in Energy Trust programs. The group provided input to improve Energy Trust's programs and strategies. For example, it suggested opportunities to engage with tribal members and provided feedback on Energy Trust's DEI metrics, 2024 budget and annual goals. There is also an effort underway to build a comprehensive set of data on tribal projects.

Caryn Appler shared examples of recent tribal energy projects including Klamath Tribes' participation in a no-cost ductless heat pump program; Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs participation in Community Partner Funding offer, which it used to complete home energy assessments and attic insulation upgrades for its members; Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde participation with the new homes program, leading to new efficient, resilient housing built for tribal elders; and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, which recently worked with the new multifamily program to build efficient apartment units, with energy use offset by a solar array that also received incentives.

Discussion

Mike Colgrove asked the presenters how they see the tribal community workgroup's relationship with Diversity Advisory Council, and how the groups might intersect. Caryn Appler said the workgroup would welcome council members' input and support on recruitment for additional members to get more tribal communities represented. She added they would appreciate insight and experience from Diversity Advisory Council members to inform the strategic, cross program initiative that's under development, which will incorporate opportunities for tribal communities to leverage federal funding.

The council asked if Energy Trust has a one-pager on the tribal workgroup available (Lauren Rosenstein). Caryn Appler answered that is under development and can be shared with the council once complete. The council said it would appreciate a quarterly update by email on the workgroup's progress, especially information about what's going on "on the ground" or opportunities to visit tribal communities (Martin Campos-Davis). The council asked what tribes are currently represented in the workgroup (Lauren Rosenstein). Caryn Appler said it currently has members representing the confederated tribes of Grande Ronde, Umatilla and Warm Springs, and Klamath tribes. The council

suggested staff should share in-person engagement opportunities that council members might be interested in, such as ribbon-cutting events (Susan Badger-Jones).

Next steps

Diversity Advisory Council members are encouraged to let Energy Trust know if and how they want to stay informed about this work, or if they would like to be involved, by emailing Elaine Dado.

3. Offers to support Trade Ally Network

Topic summary

Cameron Starr, senior customer service strategy manager, provided an update on a suite of offers that help new BIPOC, woman-owned and rural trade allies to grow their businesses and complete more energy projects. He provided an overview of Energy Trust's Trade Ally Network and the Contractor Development Pathway (CDP), which connects Black-owned, Indigenous-owned, person of color-owned, women-owned, and rural contractor businesses with resources to grow their businesses and complete more projects with Energy Trust. Two cohorts of commercial contractors have completed the pathway since 2022, and a third cohort has just been recruited to participate in 2024. The latest cohort had 17 applicants, the highest application volume to date; combined participation across all three cohorts is 35 contractors. In 2023, Energy Trust added an optional Contractor Connect Mentorship Pathway for participants who want additional support from experienced peer businesses that reflect their own identities and lived experiences. Mentorship matches are determined through looking at skillset compatibility, mentee preferences, personality fit and demographic indicators.

Energy Trust also offers business development funds and resources that trade allies can tap into. All trade allies are eligible to receive up to \$4,000 per year for eligible items to support and promote their business such as marketing, technology, tools and business support. Contractors who participate in the mentorship program are also eligible for support services through a Small Business Trade Ally Resource Network, which launched in late 2023. Services include help with accounting, project estimating, consultation and development, web design and business planning.

In 2024, the Contractor Development Pathway will launch a new cohort that includes both commercial and residential contractors, and the Small Business Trade Ally Resource Network will be enhanced with even more resources.

Discussion

The council asked about Energy Trust's use of the Noodle intranet platform to share resources and foster engagement on workforce initiatives, stating it appears to be a nice platform that could be customized to specific purposes (Martin Campos-Davis). Cameron Starr said they currently use a free version to avoid licensing fees and he would be happy to have the team present on that.

A council member asked if support and resources are still available to CDP participant after they complete the pathway (Susan Badger-Jones). Participants stay engaged and can continue getting support if they need help completing energy projects. With very small operations with only one or two staff members, completing incentive paperwork is a big barrier.

The council asked about the participation of Latino-owned businesses in these programs and whether they are available in Spanish (Oswaldo Bernal). All applications and learning materials are available in Spanish, and all the workshops also have interpretation services so Spanish-speaking participants can hear and participate in their preferred language.

Mike Colgrove said that having a robust Trade Ally Network is critical to accelerating savings through 2030 and asked if there were any plans to expand these offers to include more trade allies. There are

plans to expand and staff needs to evaluate the existing network to identify opportunities because there are many enrolled contractors who are not actively completing projects.

The council noted Energy Trust needs to find solutions to increase capacity in rural areas, stating it is a struggle to find HVAC contractors in small areas; new contractors may be reluctant to join the network in mixed utility areas where only some projects would qualify for Energy Trust incentives (Susan Badger-Jones).

Mike Colgrove suggested some administrative support could be provided virtually, which could be a pathway for Energy Trust to facilitate back-office support at a lower cost. The council suggested Energy Trust could add value by creating a technology solution for contractors to determine all available incentive funding for a given project (Susan-Badger Jones).

Next steps

Council members were invited to share workforce opportunities happening in their spheres on an ongoing basis.

4. Legislative update

Topic summary

Members of Energy Trust's policy services team provided an update on outcomes from the 2024 legislative session and reviewed Energy Trust's non-lobbying stance, which is required in its grant agreement with Oregon Public Utility Commission.

The short legislative session began on February 5 and ended on March 8, during which time nearly 300 bills were introduced. Leadership's top priorities included housing, homelessness, addiction, education and campaign finance. The Senate also confirmed the appointment of new Oregon Public Utility Commissioner Les Perkins during this time.

Energy-related bills were a lower priority this session, but still present. Staff reviewed a list of energy-related bills that Energy Trust monitored. A handful of these passed, including a bill that revises some existing Oregon Department of Energy programs; a bill that adds funding to other existing energy programs; a bill that creates a pathway for large-scale battery storage; a bill establishing a state policy on offshore wind; and a bill adding new reporting requirements for Portland General Electric and Pacific Power for activities taken toward participating in a regional energy market.

Staff also provided detail on a package of housing-related bills that commits \$376 million to address homelessness and support housing development.

Discussion

The council expressed excitement about the appointment of Les Perkins as Oregon Public Utility Commission's newest commissioner (Martin Campos-Davis).

Next steps

None.

5. Director of DEI services update

Topic summary

Mike Colgrove announced that Energy Trust has hired a director of DEI services: Alicia Moore. She brings 15 years of diversity, equity and inclusion experience, and most recently served as senior program manager of DEI at Columbia Sportswear, where she oversaw the creation of its first DEI operating model and infrastructure strategy. In the coming months, she will also take ownership of facilitating all future Diversity Advisory Council meetings.

Discussion

A council member who participated on the hiring panel for this position shared that the panelists collectively thought Alicia Moore brought great energy and a skillset that will greatly benefit Energy Trust (Terrance Harris).

Next steps

Council members will have the opportunity to connect with Alicia Moore soon through one-on-one meetings and at the next council meeting.

6. Energy Trust's 2023 annual report*Topic summary*

Mike Colgrove provided an update on Energy Trust's 2023 Annual Report to Oregon Public Utility Commission, which is published on April 15. This year, Energy Trust is seeking public comments on its annual report contents on its website from April 15 through June 15. Advisory council members can also provide comments on the annual report at their June meetings, which will be attended by an Oregon Public Utility Commission staff member.

Mike Colgrove also shared a related announcement that Oregon Public Utility Commission has commenced its review of Energy Trust's grant agreement, which is the contract between OPUC and Energy Trust that allows the transfer of ratepayer funds to administer clean energy programs. This review will lead to needed changes that modernize areas of the grant agreement to reflect the current energy and policy environment.

Discussion

None.

Next steps

Energy Trust staff will follow up with specific directions on how to submit a comment once the annual report is published on April 15.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next Diversity Advisory Council meeting will take place on June 11, 2024 and [details will be posted on Energy Trust's website](#).