

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Environmental Board**

6:30 PM
September 13, 2023

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.
NW, Issaquah

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Board Members:

Jamie Finch, Chair
Nancy Davidson
Anne Newcomb
Prajakta Ghatpande
Tom Anderson
Ashwin Kannan*

Administration/Staff:

Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability
Manager
David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator

Janet Wall, Alternate
Joy Lewis, Alternate
Dixie Bair, Alternate

Don McQuilliams, Vice Chair – excused
absence
Alix Lee-Tigner – excused absence
Ashwin Manoharan* - unexcused absence

*Youth/young adult members.

CALL TO ORDER

JAIMIE FINCH called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair introduced the minutes, which were included in the agenda materials. The minutes were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

- a) Minutes of August 9, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ANN FLETCHER thanked Sustainability staff for work on the Sustainable Purchasing Policy and Municipal Buildings. FLETCHER provided feedback on the new Environment element of the Comprehensive Plan. FLETCHER noted the absence of one of the ICAP targets within the Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Buildings & Energy target #3 which reads “reduce natural gas and other fossil fuel use in existing buildings by at least 20% by 2030 and 80% by 2050, compared to a 2017 baseline. FLETCHER recommended adding policies to the Comprehensive Plan that specifically address existing building emissions with actionable targets.

CONNIE MARSH provided feedback and comments on the Comprehensive Plan. MARSH noted that the Comprehensive Plan should have guiding language to support code and functional plan implementation. MARSH recommended that staff do not strip guiding language from the comprehensive plan that would be needed for implementation. Specifically, MARSH asked for policies that provide details on how the City expects to achieve goals. MARSH explained that a strengthened Comprehensive Plan would enable

the City to provide a clearer vision to use in collaboration and negotiations with other entities such as the Issaquah School District.

JONATHAN SMITH requested that the Environmental Board advocate to the Washington State Legislature on two issues. First, SMITH noted that the statewide plastic bag ban needs to be strengthened as the heavyweight reusable plastic bags are leading to additional littering in the community. SMITH additionally noted that the State needs a statewide container deposit bill. SMITH highlighted that there are a lot of containers littering our community and these types of bills are common on the West Coast.

AGENDA ITEMS

a) **Municipal Building Decarbonization Resolution (A)**

Presented by:

David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator

REEDY reviewed the four different building assessment efforts that are currently underway or that would begin soon. The four assessments were put in context with how the work would put the City on a path to decarbonize existing buildings and prioritize investments in the near future. REEDY provided additional information regarding water infrastructure energy audits and the process for selecting buildings for energy audits based on questions received at the end of the Environmental Board meeting on August 9th.

Board Member DAVIDSON noted the importance of having the Decarbonization Assessment look at all buildings, including those associated with water infrastructure. Board Member DAVIDSON highlighted that the language of the resolution seemed to include pump stations and that there were no exceptions within the resolution itself for pump stations and water infrastructure. Following clarifications, REEDY noted that the current language of the Decarbonization Assessment would cover City buildings including any buildings used for water infrastructure. Board Member LEWIS asked if there were any other exceptions to the Decarbonization Assessments. REEDY clarified that the Decarbonization Assessment would cover City Buildings and therefore would exclude public service buildings not owned by the City. Board Member LEWIS requested a list of buildings that are excluded from the assessment. Board Member NEWCOMB noted her appreciation for the strong language included in the resolution and asked if there was going to be a separate resolution to address infrastructure not included within the Decarbonization Assessment. REEDY noted that no separate resolution was planned at this time.

Board Member LEWIS voiced support for the resolution. Additionally, Board Member LEWIS noted that not all electricity is green and so recommended staff continue exploring opportunities for securing electricity from renewable sources and identify tracking opportunities to understand where our electricity is coming from. REEDY noted that even though the resolution would include water infrastructure, there would likely be a small handful of buildings excluded from the Decarbonization Assessment based on reasons including the expected future use and possible surplus of those buildings. Board Member DAVIDSON asked for clarification whether there was a timeline associated with the buildings excluded based on future use. REEDY noted that these would be buildings that are expected to be surplus soon.

Board Member ANDERSON asked for clarification on the target highlighted in the ICAP which directed the City to use renewable energy for all municipal buildings by 2025. REEDY noted that currently the City get roughly 98% of its building electricity through the Green Direct Program which provides renewable credits for electricity consumption at City buildings.

Board Member FINCH asked if insulation would be included in this work. REEDY clarified that insulation and efficiency is not part of the Decarbonization Assessment but that this work is included within the Energy Audits. Board Member FINCH noted that insulation and energy efficiency is an important part of this process and therefore wanted to ensure that the City was doing this work even if it is not included in the resolution itself. Board Member FINCH also asked if the City was prepared to do cost and GHG emission reduction comparisons between normal equipment replacement and energy efficient or all-electric equipment replacement. REEDY noted the City will get information on both equipment replacement costs and energy efficient or all-electric equipment replacement and that some comparisons

on bigger equipment are likely. There are no plans for comparisons on all equipment that needs to be replaced due to staff constraints. Board Member FINCH noted that it would be valuable for the City to consider the “green” premium of more environmentally friendly equipment replacements.

Board Member NEWCOMB proposed that Council Adopt the Municipal Building Decarbonization Resolution as is. Board Member PRAJAKTA seconded the motion. All regular Board Members presented voted to approve the recommendation to Council.

b) Sustainable Purchasing Policy (D)

Presented by:

David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator

REEDY provided an update on the Sustainable Purchasing Policy and Implementation Guide drafts. REEDY gave an overview of how the policy and the implementation efforts would impact procurement across the City, providing additional detail about a handful of specific types of purchases. REEDY asked for feedback from the Board Members on the Environmental guiding principles which would be used by staff seeing to apply the policy and which will be integrated into procurement documents.

Board Member ANDERSON asked for clarification on how the policy would interface with decisions by the Parks staff which use some chemicals. REEDY noted that there are always going to be tradeoffs in any purchasing decisions and that the policy will not prevent staff from using hazardous chemicals but it will provide guidance for staff on what they should be thinking about when making these procurement decisions. Board Member LEWIS agreed that guidance is a good method for the policy, but that disposal should be included more heavily into the policy guiding principle language. Board Member LEWIS noted that the policy could be strengthened, particularly through additional tracking mechanisms. Specifically Board Member LEWIS suggested adding a reporting requirement that staff would need to fill out if they do not follow the guiding principles to provide transparency on staff purchasing decisions. Board Member LEWIS additionally noted that City staff should provide signage and opportunities for community engagement, especially when hazardous chemical spraying occurs. REEDY noted that there is an evaluation system that is included in the implementation plan that will focus on bigger purchases. Board Member LEWIS noted that it could be helpful to make it easier to do environmentally friendly procurement versus procurement that leads to additional negative environmental outcomes.

Board Member FINCH asked if the social equity and economic sections are new. REEDY noted that the entire policy, including these sections are new. Board Member FINCH noted that it is important to be thoughtful on how we are reviewing purchasing compliance given that the policy adds a lot of items for staff to consider. Additionally, Board Member FINCH recommended adding a financial cutoff that would necessitate more stringent review based on the SPP. Board Member DAVISON asked for more stringent language within the guiding principles such as reducing the use of words such as “support” and “encourage”. REEDY noted that staff can make these changes.

Board Member PRAJAKTA asked if the City has a preferred vendor list. REEDY noted that Issaquah does not currently have a preferred vendor list but that this has come up a few times throughout the process. Additionally, REEDY noted that the development of tools such as the vendor report card will help the City better understand the compliance of vendors with the SPP guiding principles. Board Member BAIR agreed with Board Member DAVIDSON on strengthening the wording of the guiding principles. Additionally, Board Member BAIR noted that it could be helpful to prioritize or order the guiding principles to support staff making decisions without overwhelming them. REEDY noted that the overarching guiding principles is built to support staff with an entry into the policy without overwhelming them. Board Member FINCH asked the staff to be thoughtful on what is included to ensure staff do not get overwhelmed by a list that might be too long to be useful.

Board Member LEWIS asked if this policy would go before the Equity Board. REEDY noted that the policy has been brought before the Equity Board in the past and they would be included in the feedback as well. Board Member BAIR asked to call out end of life of products in the overarching environmental guiding principle. Board Member FINCH asked if the SPP related to infrastructure or just operating costs. REEDY

clarified that the SPP would relate to all procurement but that additional policies will be in the works that drill down into infrastructure in more depth.

c) **Comprehensive Plan - Climate Resilience and Environmental Stewardship Element (D)**

Presented by:

Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability Manager

David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator

VYNNE MCKINSTRY reviewed the work of the Environmental Board on the Environmental Stewardship and Climate Resilience Element of the Comprehensive Plan. VYNNE MCKINSTRY provided additional background about the Comprehensive Plan update and the role of this element in relation to already existing Comprehensive Plan elements. Following this background, VYNNE MCKINSTRY walked through the updates to this Comprehensive Plan element, specifically new policies developed and policies pulled from existing elements into the new Environmental Stewardship and Climate Resilience Element.

Board Member FINCH noted that it was important for all other boards that are reviewing different elements should be up to date on the ICAP goals to ensure everyone is working from the same place. Board Member FINCH asked if the wedge analysis targets align with the targets set with the K4C and asked for staff to review if policies proposed would address emission reduction gaps identified in the wedge analysis. VYNNE MCKINSTRY noted that the ICAP goals were in alignment with the K4C goals and that staff would take a closer look at the wedge analysis.

Board Member LEWIS asked that the Environmental Board goes through proposed policies more in depth in a future meeting. Additionally, Board Member LEWIS concurred with the public comment by FLETCHER regarding adding a policy related to existing buildings and suggested adding language that would support the development of EV charging infrastructure. Board Member LEWIS also suggested adding a policy related to educating the public through the implementation of sustainable systems. Board Member FINCH appreciated specific targets but noted that it could be helpful to add more policies that will provide steps for how we will achieve the targets and goals.

Board Member ANDERSON asked for additional traceability so that the city can ensure that actions taken are leading to the achievement of the goals and targets highlighted. Board Member ANDERSON asked staff to consider additional means to trace action implementation. Board Member FINCH asked for the inclusion of an additional policy that provided more guidance on the impact the City could have via purchasing. Board Member LEWIS asked if it would be appropriate and possible to include a policy related to new and emerging green technologies. Board Member DAVIDSON noted that the City should identify methods to bring other entities to the table and support the sustainability initiatives of others interacting in the community. Board Member LEWIS agreed that the Environment element could benefit from a policy directly related to how we are engaging with stakeholders.

REPORTS

- a) Sustainability Incentives Report from Economic Development
- b) 6PPD Report from Public Works
- c) Updated Environmental Board Workplan

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

VYNNE MCKINSTRY noted that Council had a heat pump grant on the consent agenda. Additionally, Economic Development would be speaking with Council on the Pioneer Program which has information in the form of a written report to the Environmental Board.

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VYNNE MCKINSTRY also highlighted the Salmon on Sunset event and noted that the Sustainability team would be expanding on Monday with the onboarding of Kathleen Hillery, a CivicSpark Fellow with the City.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

INQUIRIES