

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Agenda Sustainability Commission

Officers: Chair Katie Riley, Vice Chair Aurora Taylor, Secretary Erik de Jong

Members: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope

Staff Liaison: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator

Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

Monday, September 9, 2024

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the August 6, 2024 minutes.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda*)

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy Fall Engagement Strategy

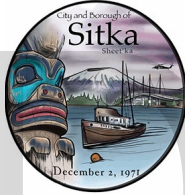
B. Discussion on Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Goals

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda*)

IX. REPORTS (*Staff, Chair, Assembly, Commissioners*)

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

XI. ADJOURNMENT



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Minutes Sustainability Commission

Officers: Chair Katie Riley, Vice Chair Aurora Taylor, Secretary Erik de Jong
Members: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope
Staff Liaison: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator
Assembly Liaison: Kevin Mosher

Tuesday, August 6, 2023

6:00 P.M.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 P.M.

Present: Kaite Riley (Chair), Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope, Aurora Taylor (telephonic),

Absent: Erik de Jong (excused), Kevin Mosher (Assembly Liaison)

Staff: Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator)

Public: Barb Bigham, Andrea Mott (Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy Technical Team),
Scott Saline

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

No changes.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the June 3, 2024 minutes.

Hope moved to approve June 3, 2024 minutes.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by roll vote.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda)*

None.

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve Draft Letter of Support for Alaska Heat Smart

Gabel summarized the Sustainability Commission's previous support efforts for Alaska Heat Smart, a non-profit that helps Alaskans acquire heat pumps, and their request for a generalized letter of support. Bagley expressed appreciation for the language that could be applicable to multiple funding opportunities.

Hope moved to approve the Letter of Support for Alaska Heat Smart's Grant Funding Efforts as written.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by roll call vote.

B. Discussion/Direction/Decision on Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory**Scope 3 Methodology**

Gabel and Andrea Mott, Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) technical team member, updated the Commission on the progress made for the Community GHG Emissions Inventory and explained areas that were particularly challenging to find data for that was available and useful for the SCRES work. Bagley stressed the importance of replicability of the assumptions so that the inventory could be updated in future years and that emissions inventoried were used to inform action. Riley requested that areas not typically included in inventories, such as the cruise industry, be incorporated as they were a major contributor to Sitka's economy, and shipping. Hope inquired about the cruise emission assumption making process; Mott explained that Commissioner de Jong had helped shape those based on his expertise in the maritime design industry. Taylor advised on where more detailed data could be acquired for sport fishing, specifically Alaska Department of Fish and Game, which kept logbooks. Commissioners continued to propose ways the technical team could better refine the assumptions to better fit Sitka's unique situation while remaining accurate and actionable.

Barb Bingham commented on the accuracy and scope of inventory as presented by the technical team. Larry Edwards and Kay Kreiss submitted comments on the inventory via email.

Bagley moved to approve the assumptions and methodology for air travel, shipping, cruise ships, and transportation, as proposed by the Pacific Northwest National Labs and refined and directed via Commissioner discussion.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by roll call vote.

C. Recommend Approval of the Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement Policy

Gabel introduced the Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement Policy and explained its intent and direction it provided in the City's integration of electric vehicles into the fleet. Bagley inquired what the process would be to see a similar policy come forward for motorized equipment such as leaf blowers. Gabel explained it would likely be a very similar document to the policy presented. Hope, Taylor, and Riley expressed support for the direction the policy gave and looked forward to the impact it would have. Gabel inquired if the Commission had suggestions on whether gasoline or diesel should be preferred; The Commission advised to keep the proposed hierarchy as written and approach the concern on a case-by-case basis.

Hope moved to recommend the Municipal Administrator approve the Municipal Fleet Management and Procurement Policy as written.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by rollcall vote.

D. Recommend Approval of the Decarbonizing and Right-sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group Charter

Gabel introduced the Decarbonizing and Right-sizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) Advisory Group Charter as a follow-up document that indicated who and how would be responsible for executing the policy once signed. She asked the Commission for their input on how the membership was structured as it would likely serve as a model for outlining Commissioner integration into other areas of City work. Riley and Bagley expressed their thanks for the attention to longevity and accountability the document had as it served to ensure momentum remained between City leaders.

Hope moved to recommend the Public Works Director approve the DRIVE Advisory Group charter as written.

Motion PASSED 4-0 by rollcall vote.

E. Discussion/Direction/Decision on Sustainability Commissioner Recruitment

Gabel explained that the Commission had two open seats and that she had identified some potential ways to address them. Taylor summarized her conversation with a recently resigned Commissioner, and how the lack of clarity of process and role of the Commission may have contributed to their decision to step down. Bagley brainstormed ways to help improve recruitment and retention, such a process document or “skill matrix” to help identify potential candidates for the Commission. Hope suggested that the Commission work on hosting sustainability-themed events. Riley reminded the Commission that recruitment was a group effort and hoped that recruitment would be more successful in the fall.

Bingham spoke in support of prioritizing recruitment of Commissioners. Kreiss submitted comments in support of recruitment via email.

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda)*

None.

IX. REPORTS *(Staff, Chair, Assembly, Commissioners)*

Staff: None.

Chair: None.

Commissioners: Hope invited Commissioners and City Staff to meet with the Tribal Affairs Director and Assistant Secretary – Tribal Affairs of the U.S. Department of Transportation that were meeting with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska later that week.

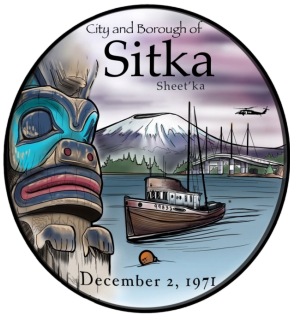
X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, September 9, 2024 at Harrigan Centennial Hall.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riley moved to adjourn the meeting.


Seeing no objection, the meeting ADJOURNED the meeting at approximately 8:15 P.M.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: September 6, 2024
Subject: **Discussion on Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy Fall Engagement Strategy**

Background

The [Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy](#) (SCRES) technical team is preparing to begin community energy education and engagement on building energy scenarios. To facilitate this, the technical team is scheduling a series of webinars and radio segments in addition to in-person workshops and website pages.

Dates are still being finalized for each event, but the general rollout is anticipated as follows:

Module	Website	Webinar	Radio Promotion
<i>(Final Draft)</i>	<i>Module ready 1 week prior</i>	<i>Based on website information 45 minutes, 15 for Questions</i>	<i>Loosely related energy topic/ conversation with an expert (Week prior to webinar)</i>

Promotional materials are anticipated soon. The Sustainability Coordinator has requested to give a special report to the Assembly to update on both the SCRES and Clean Energy to Communities (C2C) project. This is also intended to be a “kick off” of the SCRES engagement push.

Website

The SCRES website is being updated frequently with new pages, information, and graphics as the education modules are completed. The website is intended to serve as the main source of information and interaction for the SCRES.

Webinars

Webinars that cover one or two education modules are being prepared. Self Sufficiency and Independence does not have its own presentation. The module will still be completed, and it will likely still have its own website, but the content contained within that will be communicated via other webinars. All webinars will be recorded and made available on the website. The “Energy Futures” module is not anticipated to have a webinar as it will later once engagement has concluded and the SCRES is approaching finalization.

Radio Series

To further help increase awareness, the team will be working with Raven Radio to talk about a more specific topic related to energy/electricity with an expert and how energy influence their work. These are

intended to be short and help encourage community members to explore the information on the website, participate in webinars and workshops.

Topics include salmon, food systems, emergency preparedness, heat pumps, and greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

Workshops

The technical team has tentatively scheduled early December visits to conduct workshops. These workshops will be open to the public but may also be targeted to smaller groups in different industry sectors. Pilot testing is anticipated to take place in September and an overview presented/ scenario session with the Commission at the October regular meeting.

To help further refine the workshop, the technical team requests the Commission answer the following questions:

What is your understanding of the current situation that this meeting is addressing?

What would make a SCRES workshop successful from your perspective?

What do you hope to have at the end of a SCRES workshop that you do not have now?

What would make a workshop unsuccessful?

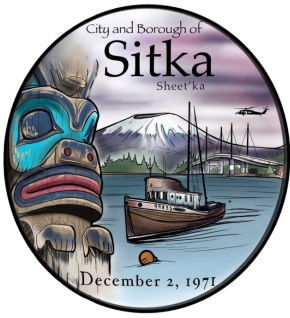
What advice do you have for the team organizing the workshop?

Recommendation

Review the proposed schedule of events and topics and provide any input. If Commissioners would like to act as an expert for a topic or have a topic they would like to talk about, please reach out to Bri directly.

Propose other methods of engagement, groups the Commission would like to see engaged, other ways of promoting the SCRES.


Discuss the requested prompts as they relate to the workshops to further direct the technical team.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: September 6, 2024
Subject: Discussion on Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Goals

Background

On March 26th, 2024, the Assembly [unanimously approved](#) the goals of the [Sustainability Commission 2024-2025 Work Plan](#). These goals are:

1. Continue the development of the [Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy](#) (SCRES)
2. Collaborate with City staff on strategic management of municipal solid waste (MSW)
3. Support electrification of the municipal fleet

Like the 2023-2024 work plan, goals were targeted sequential, and the effort of the Commission was focused on goal 1 until there was a lull, when the Commission would begin focus on the next goal. It was recognized at the Assembly meeting that these goals were unlikely to be accomplished in a one-year timeframe and would likely carry over to the next work plan.

[Sitka General Code 2.31.060](#) states: Annually, the commission will develop, identify, and present goals to the assembly for approval. The approved goals shall be the Commission's primary focus for the following year. Concurrently with presenting goals to the Assembly, the commission will submit a report to the Assembly on progress towards the previous year's goals and other activities which were approved and directed by the Assembly.

The [Sustainability Commission](#) Bylaws Article VI. Section A. Annual Work Cycle outlines suggested dates to begin discussion and planning related to the different phases of work the Commission conducts to remain in sync with City operations.

Goal Progress/Updates

1. Continue the development of the SCRES

This project is anticipated to be completed sometime in Q2 or Q3 of 2025. The technical support provided by the Pacific Northwest National Labs (PNNL) and the Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP), in addition to the Sustainability Coordinator's time have supported the project with guidance and input coming from the Sustainability Commission.

2. Collaborate with City staff on strategic management of (MSW)

The Solid Waste Working Group (SWAG) successfully drafted a municipal solid waste policy that set broad, overall guidance for the direction for MSW. A SWAG charter was suggested as the next step to further solidify the working relationship between the Public Works Department and Sustainability Commission.

3. Support electrification of the municipal fleet

The Sustainability Coordinator, with input from the Chief Mechanic and Public Works Director drafted a municipal fleet procurement policy which the Sustainability Commission recommended to the Administrator, which was signed in August. Additionally, the Commission recommended the Public Works Director sign the Decarbonize and Rightsizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) working group charter to carry out the policy. This was also signed in August. This document also details identified challenges the working group needs to address to help facilitate the municipal fleet integrate electric vehicles.

Analysis

The Sustainability Commission is approaching two years of existence and is nearing completion of some initial projects. As the Commission continues to make ground and establish itself as a more experienced body, there is room for the Commission do discuss potential modifications to operational flow to improve. Similarly, tools originally created to help the Commission initially prioritize project/goals may be reused or revised to help facilitate future discussions.

As of the beginning of September, the Public Works Director, Ron Vinson, transitioned into the Electric Utility Director position. The Public Works Director position is currently vacant. Fortunately, this means the Utility Director is familiar with working with the Public Works Department. However, with the Public Works Director role unfilled and the anticipated learning curve associated, it is likely some progress with certain goals will slow. However, this may bring opportunities to continue to integrate Commission work into operations within CBS as new leadership is brought up to speed.

Recommendation

To prepare for the 2025-2026 work plan and Assembly update, the Commission should reflect on progress on each goal and begin discussion potential new goals and projects for the upcoming year. Staff can then begin to gather any necessary and/or requested information for the Commission to begin deliberation and decision making in upcoming fall and winter meetings. With leadership staffing changes underway and on the horizon, it is recommended the Commission consider goals and projects that can be adaptable to staffing needs to ensure progress can be made.