

Board Orientation Meeting Minutes—174th Meeting

April 7, 2020

Board members present: Erik Andersson, Susan Brodahl, Melissa Cribbins, Ernesto Fonseca, Lindsey Hardy, Eric Hayes, Elee Jen, Mark Kendall, Alexia Kelly, Henry Lorenzen, Alan Meyer, Anne Root, Roland Risser, Letha Tawney (Oregon Public Utility Commission ex officio), Janine Benner (Oregon Department of Energy special advisor)

Board members absent:

Staff attending: Michael Colgrove, Cheryle Easton, Wendy Bredemeyer, Emily Findley, Hannah Cruz, Lizzie Rubado, Scott Clark, Steve Lacey, Debbie Menashe, Amber Cole, Pati Presnail

Others attending: Anna Kim (OPUC), Jeff Harris (Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance), Sarah Hall (OPUC)

Business Meeting

Melissa Cribbins called the orientation to order at 1:04 p.m. and welcomed recently inducted board members.

Overview of Energy Trust (Michael Colgrove)

Energy Trust Executive Director Mike Colgrove reviewed the agenda and presented a high-level overview of Energy Trust, providing context about core aspects of the organization including: eligible customers; vision and purpose statements; service territory; Energy Trust's creation through SB 1149 and history of working with partner utilities; board of directors bylaws; current funding sources; reporting and accountability; and cumulative results.

The board asked if there are additional reporting activities or other efforts that communicate Energy Trust's successes more broadly than annual reports to Oregon Public Utility Commission. Staff mentioned other ways Energy Trust promotes its value: a presentation of the annual report to the OPUC; a public version of the annual report that focuses on customer stories; public relations efforts to promote this public annual report to local media and online; and fact sheets showing cumulative results for legislative districts, counties and cities that are used in outreach to legislators and city leaders.

The board discussed whether SB 838 funding would be expanded to include conservation if SB 1149 sunset occurred. While that is a possibility, the legislative process can take unexpected directions. SB 1149 is also the only bill that contains language enabling the OPUC to work with a nongovernmental entity to deliver energy programs.

Mike Colgrove reviewed the board calendar with key dates, meetings and a summary of other events the board engages in during a typical year.

History of Energy Policy in the Northwest (Hannah Cruz)

Hannah Cruz, Energy Trust senior communications manager, presented context on how energy policy was developed regionally and a broad overview of the current state of energy policy in the Northwest. Oregon's energy landscape is based on a foundation of least-cost planning and conservation and incorporates renewable energy, greenhouse gas reduction and state energy goals. The state's energy policy has more recently expanded into modernization and equity concerns. Hannah Cruz spoke about how the Northwest Power Act came to be developed as a bedrock policy in the Northwest, then how Energy Trust was created in response to a regional recommendation to stabilize conservation funding in the 1990s.

The board asked if Washington and California passed similar legislation to SB 1149 around the same time. Those states took a different approach and did not adopt the comprehensive review recommendation as written.

Hannah Cruz reviewed some of Oregon's current renewable energy policies, energy efficiency policies and programs and other related policies such as transportation electrification and demand response.

The board commented that despite Oregon's economy developing as a result of cheap, plentiful power from the damming of the Columbia River, this can be experienced differently throughout the state as incomes and energy usage vary and urban and rural customers may have different priorities regarding energy.

NEEA and Market transformation Overview (Jeff Harris)

Jeff Harris, chief transformation officer at Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, presented an overview of NEEA and how its work to achieve market transformation complements Energy Trust's mission. The alliance is a nonprofit made up of diverse funders across four states, including Energy Trust and Bonneville Power Administration. Its purpose is to accelerate energy efficiency adoption by supporting and advancing new technologies, leading to market transformation that benefits Northwest consumers.

Jeff Harris provided a foundational definition of market transformation and how it is strategically deployed in the Northwest. NEEA's activity influences markets to adopt efficient technology products such as LEDs by identifying and removing barriers. Successful market transformation leads to changing baselines and drives down the cost of new technology.

The board discussed the process of handing off a more matured technology to Energy Trust to begin supporting through participant incentives. Jeff Harris stated the two organizations collaborate throughout the entire process. NEEA looks for moments early in the market transformation stage where there is an uptick in market demand that may signal opportunity for Energy Trust to pilot a new product incentive.

Overview of Oregon Public Utility Commission (Anna Kim)

Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility Commission senior utility analyst, presented an overview of the OPUC and its oversight of Energy Trust. The commission aims to ensure utility customer have access to safe, reliable and high-quality utility services at reasonable rates. It regulates electric, natural gas, telecommunications and water utilities. The commission has a grant agreement with Energy Trust that includes requirements related to areas like performance measures, reporting and budgeting.

OPUC Commissioner Letha Tawney spoke about her unique role as an ex officio member of Energy Trust's board of directors and clarified aspects of the relationship between the OPUC and the board as entities.

The board and commission discussed Energy Trust's role as steward of ratepayer dollars to benefit Oregonians, while the commission is a regulatory body that helps oversee those funds but is not itself a funder. It discussed how Energy Trust may work with the commission to increase its role in technology adoption and market uptake.

2020-2024 Strategic Plan Presentation (Lizzie Rubado and Hannah Cruz)

Staff presented Energy Trust's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan that will guide Energy Trust's work over the next five years. Strategic plans are required in Energy Trust's grant agreement with the OPUC. Staff reviewed the process to develop this strategic plan and how it guides staff thinking, annual business planning and annual budgeting. The plan is organized into five focus areas with progress indicators identified for each area.

The plan is now in implementation mode and metrics are being developed for each progress indicator. Metrics and associated targets will be presented to the board at its May meeting. Progress toward the focus areas can then be tracked on a quarterly basis at the board Strategic Planning Committee level. The full board will receive updates through that committee's meeting notes as well as from an annual presentation from staff that draws from strategic plan progress reporting in Energy Trust's annual report. Staff will also be closely monitoring developments that could affect the plan, such as the 2026 sunset of SB 1149 and the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Energy Trust Board of Directors will be held Wednesday, April 8, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. virtually via GoToMeeting.

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Signed: Mark Kendall, Secretary
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5/7/2020
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Date