

Renewable Energy Advisory Council Meeting Notes

July 29, 2020

Attending from the council:

Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility
Commission
April Snell, Oregon Water Resources
Congress
Erik Anderson, Pacific Power
Jaimes Valdez, Portland Clean Energy
Benefits Fund

John Cornwell, Oregon Department of
Energy
Josh Halley, Portland General Electric
Max Greene, Renewable NW
Oriana Magnera, Verde
Kendra Hubbard, Solar Energy Industries
Association

Attending from Energy Trust:

Betsy Kauffman
Michael Colgrove
Dave McClelland
Lizzie Rubado
Matt Getchell
Joshua Reed
Hannah Cruz
Grace Diller
Alina Lambert
Kyle Petrocine
Jeni Hall
Amber Cole
Julianne Thacher
Shelly Carlton

Peter West
Robert Wylie
Hawii Boiryo
Fred Gordon
Sue Fletcher
Jay Ward
Ryan Crews
Cheryl Easton
Caryn Appler
Tyrone Henry
Tara Crookshank
Thad Roth

Others attending:

Alexia Kelly, Energy Trust board member
Susan Brodahl, Energy Trust board member
Susan Badger-Jones, Energy Trust
Diversity Advisory Council member
Angela Crowley-Koch, Oregon Solar Energy
Industries Association
Frank Vignola, Oregon Solar Radiation
Monitoring Lab
Mathew Mills, TRC
Tess Jordan, Portland General Electric
Robert Del Mar, Oregon Department of
Energy
Melanie McKinnon, Douglas County Smart
Energy
Peter Greenberg, Energy Wise Lighting
Jonath Colon, Centro Cultural
Eric Richardson, NAACP
Emily Dougan, NeighborImpact

Suzanne Veaudry Casaus, Portland
Community Reinvestment Inc.
Marissa Johnson, Twende
Josh Peterson, University of Oregon
Raphaela Hsu-Flanders, Bonneville
Environmental Foundation
Thomas Endicott, Bonneville Environmental
Foundation
Dan Janosec, Portland General Electric
Brikky King, All Pacific Mortgage
Shelly Beaulieu, TRC
Heather Moline, NW Energy Coalition
Andrea Estrada, ICF
Erin Fish, Sunbridge Solar
Ryan Sheehy, Fleet Development
Tim Lynch, Multnomah County
Nate Larson, PacifiCorp
Pat Daniels, Constructing Hope

1. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Betsy Kauffman, sector lead for Renewables, convened the meeting at 9:31 a.m. on Zoom. The agenda, notes and presentation materials are available on Energy Trust's website at <https://www.energytrust.org/about/public-meetings/renewable-energy-advisory-council-meetings/>.

2. Community Engagement Guidelines Development

Topic summary

Staff presented work to date on establishing guidelines to be used by staff to determine how Energy Trust can support working with communities on their energy goals. This work came from customers requesting more engagement and Energy Trust learning how to enhance work with communities by being more transparent. An example of this work in the past is the use of census data overlaid with energy access data and sharing this information with various agencies. This led to the development of an LED bulb giveaway program in 2020.

Discussion

Members asked what resources are available to nonprofits, as these are generally who is applying for Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund grants (Jaimes Valdez). Staff said Energy Trust can provide information on incentives, technical guidelines and help with the grant process. Members and meeting attendees said the need for education and making it available in response to COVID-19 is an important role for multiple organizations, as well conversations on equity and access to solar (Rob Del Mar, Jaimes Valdez). Attendees asked how resources are utilized in poorer communities or to benefit renters, since resources previously predominately targeted homeowners (Brikky King). Staff responded there are special rental incentives, regional programs, staff training and referrals to other agencies. Members and attendees suggested working with agricultural research centers in rural Oregon, using real estate professionals as an avenue for outreach and formatting solar workshops to be for people of color (Frank Vignola, Brikky King, Suzanne Veaudry Casaus).

Staff asked members if energy issues are currently seen as a priority within their communities. Communities are interested in climate change and emergency funds as a result of resilience (Suzanne Veaudry Casaus). Building trust with the community, employing the community and having them assist in outreach and putting money back into the community to advocate for resources were all suggested approaches (Oriana Magnera).

3. Energy Trust's Role in PGE Smart Battery Pilot

Topic summary

Jeni Hall, a project manager for Renewables, presented on Energy Trust's role in the residential Smart Battery Pilot with Portland General Electric, part of the organization's focus on energy resilience. The effort stems from a state storage mandate and the Oregon Public Utility Commission pushing to stack benefits and place batteries at homes and critical facilities. The program will launch this fall, limited to 525 units providing 2 to 4 MW of dispatchable battery storage to the grid. Incentives for the program break down to monthly credits plus additional upfront incentives for income-qualified customers. Energy Trust will be an implementation partner, leveraging existing solar program infrastructure including the Trade Ally Network and program staff. Staff will do customer outreach, quality management and application processing.

4. Solar for Service Providers Proposal

Topic summary

Staff proposed an increased solar incentive offer for organizations, tribes and businesses that house, feed or provide other services to Oregon's communities of color, or that are considered low-income and own their building or have a long-term lease. Staff recognizes there are often higher costs associated with these projects due to more work needed in project development and financing. Current incentive rates only cover 15 to 20% of above-market costs.

Discussion

Members asked if the proposed incentive offering would be subject to the same declining tiers of incentives as the standard offering. Staff said the incentives would be similar to other incentives, starting at a higher rate and decreasing over time. Members and attendees asked about tax breaks and the impact on costs (Erik Anderson, Suzanne Veaudry Casaus). Staff said tax credits are not included because not all customers can utilize them.

Members suggest using plain language to make the incentives easy to understand and providing concrete numbers on savings for customers. Attendees suggested reaching out to Community Action Partnership of Oregon and Oregon Energy Coordinators Association to assist with outreach (Suzanne Veaudry Casaus, Raphaela Hsu-Flanders).

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.