

Renewable Energy Advisory Council Meeting Notes

September 16, 2020

Attending from the council:

Anna Kim, Oregon Public Utility
Commission
Erik Anderson, Pacific Power
Jaimes Valdez, Portland Clean Energy
Benefits Fund
John Cornwell, Oregon Department of
Energy
Josh Halley, Portland General Electric
Suzanne Leta, SunPower
Dick Wanderscheid, Bonneville
Environmental Foundation
Andria Jacob, City of Portland

Les Perkins, Farmers Irrigation District
Josh Peterson, University of Oregon Solar
Radiation Monitoring Lab
Raphaella Hsu-Flanders, Bonneville
Environmental Foundation
Brikky King, All Pacific Mortgage

Attending from Energy Trust:

Kyle Petrocine
Sue Fletcher
David McClelland
Josh Reed
Chris Holloway
Jackie Goss
Jay Ward
Amber Cole
Lizzie Rubado
Spencer Moersfelder
Tyrone Henry
Michael Colgrove
Peter West
Jeni Hall
Quinn Cherf
Hawii Boriyo

Shayna Choulet
Caryn Appler
Hannah Cruz
Mackenzie Kurtzner
Debbie Menashe
Alina Lambert
Robert Wyllie
Shelly Carlton
Dave Moldal
Matt Getchell
Cheryle Easton
Betsy Kauffman
Gina Saraswati
Samuel Girma
Fred Gordon

Others attending:

Frank Vignola, Oregon Solar Radiation
Monitoring Lab Shelly Beaulieu, TRC
Jess Kincaid, BPA
Starlinda Morris, Pence Construction
Alexia Kelly, Energy Trust board member
Lindsey Hardy, Energy Trust board member
Mark Kendall, Energy Trust board member
Kacia Brockman, Oregon Public Utility
Commission

John Reynolds, former Energy Trust board
member
Elee Jen, Energy Trust board member
Zach Sippel, Bonneville Environmental
Foundation
Nancy Morales, OSU student
James Donnelly

1. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Betsy Kauffman, sector lead for Renewables, convened the meeting at 9:34 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/>.

Staff acknowledged this was Dick Wanderscheid's last meeting with the Renewable Energy Advisory Council and introduced Raphaela Hsu-Flanders from the Oregon Environmental Council. John Cornwell from Oregon Department of Energy replaced Rebecca Smith. Josh Peterson with University of Oregon is taking Frank Vignola's place on the council. Briky King, All Pacific Mortgage, was welcomed to the council.

2. Impact of Wildfires

Topic summary

Council members discussed impacts of the recent wildfires with staff and members of the public.

Discussion

Erik Anderson from Pacific Power noted there have been 10 different fires in western Pacific Power territory. The Talent and Gates fire have been catastrophic to customers. Pacific Power is providing support as needed and remains directly in contact with service providers. At the peak, 60,000 customers were out of electric service and 5,000 customers are still out of service. None of the fires were in public safety power shutoff areas in Oregon. Josh Halley with Portland General Electric reported that the utility cut power to eight high-risk fire areas in addition to a safety power shutoff in the Mt. Hood corridor. There are 2,000 customers without power, with 245,000 customers out of power at the peak. Portland General Electric is focused on safety as this is a moving situation in the Clackamas area.

Members and others asked how a community would operate if power systems were designed to be more resilient and equitable. They encouraged Energy Trust to have discussion groups to work proactively on integrating state-of-the-art systems to redesign the power grid and discuss what this would look like, with the consideration that people the most impacted are also the most vulnerable (Alexia Kelly, John Cornwell). Members said most communities are not prepared to have conversations about electrical infrastructure and planning needs to be made a priority, particularly for local governments who are accustomed to dealing with things like roads, sewers and sidewalks, but not electric grid equipment. A base understanding of needs is important (Les Perkins). As conversations on decarbonization and electrification are being paired, as well as moving to electrifying transportation, it's expected there will be pushback from communities when they are asked to be more dependent on the electrical system and it is subject to outages. Every time these discussions happen, they must be paired with resilience (Andria Jacob). The Oregon Public Utility Commission will be conducting distribution system planning soon and is looking for staff's input on opportunities to assist in forward thinking (Anna Kim).

Staff acknowledged outreach and program staff are working as a team to listen and understand what the needs are within communities because of the wildfires, beginning with manufactured home replacement. Energy Trust's existing programs must evolve their current offers to be more responsive. There is a need for expertise and proactivity within communities and a long-range view of work. Small communities have great leadership but often there is fatigue and multiple

levels of outreach to overcome. Energy Trust can help bridge the gap of expertise. Staff is working with Hood River and other communities to obtain Federal Emergency Management Agency grants and requested members' input on these grants.

3. 2021 Budget Themes

Topic summary

Dave McClelland, senior program manager for Solar, provided an overview of the budget schedule and explained the budget will reflect spending, which lags project incentive reservations because solar customers have a year to complete their projects after reserving an incentive. Standard residential and commercial programs will represent less than half of the funds available for new incentive reservations for 2021, with the rest of the budget set aside for low-income customers, rural communities, tribes and communities of color, with a focus on resilience. Solar within Reach, microgrid feasibility studies, PGE's Smart Battery program and custom incentives will continue. Staff requested feedback on this proposed incentive split to ensure that council priorities are reflected. Despite COVID-19, program demand remains high. Wildfires may increase interest in resilience for rural communities after immediate dislocation and rebuilding concerns are addressed.

Dave Moldal, senior program manager for Other Renewables, presented on several projects Energy Trust funded that completed or are scheduled to complete in 2020. The program continues to focus on municipal biopower and hydropower. Activities included in the 2021 budget plan include technical investigation of municipal in-conduit pressure reduction value hydropower potential, evaluation of additional locations where hydropower can power critical facilities, an effort to support Wallowa County in energy planning, collaboration with gas utilities to explore the RNG market and support for Metro to design a food waste processing system.

Ryan Cook, program manager for the Community Solar Program, provided an update on the Oregon Community Solar Program that launched in 2020. Twenty-two projects have been approved and some have begun recruitment and development. The first project will likely become operational in 2020. Energy Trust is a subcontractor to Energy Solutions and is responsible for day-to-day administration of the program.

Discussion

Council members agreed the proposed budget outline is in line with their discussions over the past year (Josh Halley). Some members were curious about how the percentages of funds were calculated (Raphaella Hsu Flanders). The approach staff took in deliberation is meeting the standard program needs while balancing funds for new programs to target new customer segments. There are funds to balance both but may be tougher to balance in years to come. The focus is moving from early adopters to going deeper into communities.

Members suggested equity incentives for emerging nonprofits and groups that need early assistance should be prioritized so that these groups can access the experience and expertise needed to plan projects that can qualify for incentives. The process of planning projects is difficult for many organizations and governments. Energy Trust's support for project development assistance and early-stage support for projects and planning at the local level is enormously valuable. This requires appropriate staffing at Energy Trust to provide support (Andria Jacob). Demand for this type of work will increase after the wildfire season and it is critically important to know how to fund this work (Les Perkins).

Staff appreciated the feedback and is considering additional support for project development in 2021. The program is also supporting communities through professional services funding for

project feasibility consulting and coordination work. The public comment period for the budget is October 7 to 28.

4. Thank You to Frank Vignola

Frank Vignola has been a part of the Renewable Advisory Council since its beginning. John Reynolds, former chair of the Energy Trust board, announced that he's known Frank for at least 40 years and wrote a reference when Frank was nominated for an honor at the American Solar Energy Society. Frank has contributed a tremendous amount of work to solar radiation monitoring stations. Some of these stations have 20 to 40 years of data. Frank wrote a book on solar radiation monitoring that was published in 2012 and a second version released in 2019. John thanked Frank for the honor to work with him and for being a terrific person.

Kacia Brockman, Oregon Public Utility Commission and former Energy Trust solar program manager, thanked Frank for his long commitment and trust in the role of solar in the energy market. In addition to the data collection that Frank was doing, he contributed monitoring information that was invaluable to the program. Frank contributed to the understanding of solar generation month to month and year to year along with the tilt and orientation importance throughout different regions in Oregon. Frank made solar more fun and rewarding.

Peter West, director of energy programs at Energy Trust, said solar in Oregon wouldn't exist without net metering and he and Frank worked on that legislation in 1997. Frank was a leader, a technical expert and a part of supporting the Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association in becoming what it is today. There would be no net metering for solar, wastewater treatment plants or hydro in Oregon without Frank. The amount of carbon saved in Oregon thanks to Frank is astronomical.

Mark Kendall, Energy Trust board member, said Frank has co-authored over 100 scientific articles and has been a solar researcher before many of us were born. Frank has worked on solar since the 1960s and received a bachelor's in physics at Berkeley and then a master's and doctorate from the University of Oregon. Frank is one of the cofounders of the American Solar Energy Society and author and founder of the Solar Spectrum newsletter. Frank has received the Greely Abbot award from the American Solar Energy Society. Frank and Mark met in the 1980s and Frank was referred to as the "solar guy." His enthusiasm for his work has been contagious.

5. Public Comment

Mark Kendall, Energy Trust board member, thanked Dick Wanderscheid, who is retiring from Bonneville Environmental Foundation and from the council, for his commitment and contribution that goes back 40 years with NW Efficiency and Alliance Board, the City of Ashland and Bonneville Environmental Foundation. Council recognized and appreciated Dick's contribution of six years on the council.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.