

Clean Energy Partnership - Meeting Notes

Minneapolis Energy Vision Advisory Council

2022 Q1 Meeting Notes

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

February 8, 2022

4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Meeting attendees:

EVAC members present: Patty O’Keefe (Co-chair); Beth Tomlinson (Incoming Co-chair); Timothy DenHerder-Thomas; John Farrell; Mauricio Leon; Marcus Mills; Jamez Staples; Margaret Cherne-Hendrick; Elizabeth Turner; Ansha Zaman; Jon Kuskie; Katie Jones; Natalie Townsend; Molly Smith.

Staff/Guests present: Kim Havey, City of Minneapolis; Luke Hollenkamp, City of Minneapolis; Kelly Muellman, City of Minneapolis; Emma Schoppe, CenterPoint Energy; Al Swintek, CenterPoint Energy; Amber Lee, CenterPoint Energy; Sara Barrow, Xcel Energy; Dan King, Xcel Energy; Nick Martin, Xcel Energy; John Marshall, Xcel Energy; Lee Samuelson, Community Power; Christe Singleton, CenterPoint Energy; Martin Kapsch, CenterPoint Energy.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Meeting Protocol

Roll was called and meeting instructions for Microsoft Teams relayed. Introductions included a welcome to new EVAC members and recognition of the engagement of all EVAC members by board members Amber Lee and Christe Singleton from CenterPoint Energy and John Marshall from Xcel Energy.

2. New CEP Board Members

Luke Hollenkamp provided an update on the new CEP board members from the City. Mayor Jacob Frey will continue as a board member and will act as Chair of the board. Interim City Coordinator Heather Johnston will also serve on the board. The City Council elected Council Members Lisa Goodman and Aisha Chughtai as board members. An EVAC member asked if an alternate would be appointed as had been done in the past. Luke responded that the City Council has not appointed an alternate at this time.

Review and Approve Agenda and Minutes (added to the agenda)

Patty O’Keefe asked for a motion to adopt the Q4 meeting minutes and the Q1 meeting agenda. Both were MOVED and both motions CARRIED.

3. Co-chair discussion/vote

Patty O’Keefe described that she is the co-chair appointed by the CEP board, but another co-chair is to be selected by EVAC. Nominations/volunteers were solicited. An EVAC member raised the question of the length of the term and Luke and Patty responded that it is a two-year term. Beth Tomlinson volunteered that she is willing to help fulfill the role. No other volunteers came forward. A motion was MOVED and CARRIED to appoint Beth Tomlinson as an EVAC co-chair.

4. Consider EVAC endorsement of City’s science-based CAP goal

Luke Hollenkamp reminded EVAC of the City’s science based GHG reduction goals for the upcoming update to the climate action plan that was presented at the last meeting and the follow-up special meeting on the topic in late 2021. Patty O’Keefe presented [proposed language providing EVAC’s endorsement of the new goals](#). A brief discussion followed with multiple EVAC members voicing support for the endorsement. Luke added that a potential next step following an endorsement would be for staff to present and recommend the science-based target to the City Council along with the endorsements from EVAC and the Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) and a staff recommendation. The adoption could then represent the beginning of the process of updating the climate action plan to include equity and the science-based target. A motion was MOVED and CARRIED to adopt the language endorsing the science-based fair share GHG reduction goals.

5. Community Voices Update

Marcus Mills provided an overview of a document (circulated by email after the meeting – not part of the meeting materials) outlining a proposed plan (*Proposal for Community Engagement on Workplan Priorities*) from the Community Voices Working Group to gather community input on the CEP workplan. The proposed plan outlines an approach to work with community based organizations and community leaders as trusted channels to gather feedback from communities in Minneapolis. The plan emphasizes using non-technical framing to gather input and to address community health, economic development, affordability, resilience, workforce development, and environmental needs. Marcus did not go through the whole document. Marcus and Patty invited questions and opened a discussion on the process for what comes next. An EVAC member asked if the document had been sent out already and Marcus and Patty responded that it had not been sent, but that it would be shortly. The EVAC members who worked on this proposal are looking for immediate reactions in this meeting and EVAC members could review the document when it is sent and provide additional feedback later. Marcus and Patty reminded EVAC that the Community Voices Working Group (Marcus, Timothy, Patty, and occasionally Mauricio and

Ansha for feedback) formed last year after a big conversation around the importance of continuing to do engagement with communities and with folks in Minneapolis and feeling there was a lot of room for growth there. The group was formed, but is still trying to figure out: What is the scope of this working group? What do we want to do?

Timothy DenHerder-Thomas made the point that we had some conversation in past EVAC calls about work plan and how community voices tie into it. The Community Voices was given a request as a subcommittee to put together a draft vision or proposal. What that could look like? Fleshing out that plan is something that has to be done in deep coordination with the planning team and the partners as a whole.

An EVAC member raised the point that it is important to consider how this community work ties in with the Climate Action Plan update and the related community engagement work. A meeting guest raised the point that Hennepin County is also interested in community work related to their Climate Action Plan.

Patty noted that the document would be sent out to EVAC and people would be given time to review and edit it, then maybe look at an online vote on approving it. Probably this proposal is going to go through several iterations after feedback from EVAC and also conversations with the Planning Team.

6. EVAC Questions for ECO and NGIA

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick led a discussion providing an [overview of a Q&A on NGIA and the ECO Act](#). The document focuses on NGIA, but Margaret also provided a brief update on the ECO Act that there have been a series of stakeholder convenings to try to talk about implementation that the Department of Commerce has facilitated. There is going to be a report that the department will put together. That report is due mid-March. It's going to be released by the Deputy Commissioner and there are a number of committees that have been formed throughout the stakeholder process. Those committees are sending a report to the department on Friday, which will help the department form their own report. So hopefully we'll have more information by the next time we meet.

7. Work Plan – Continued discussion of EVAC Work Plan Subcommittee Memo

Luke Hollenkamp introduced the topic noting that 2022 is a year of transitions. The City has 3 new board members and the City is considering new GHG emission reduction targets. The City will also be updating its climate action plan. Further, the ECO Act and NGIA are going through rulemaking guidance. Those are transformative pieces of legislation that opened up many new opportunities that we didn't have before. Since the last EVAC meeting we have not had a board meeting, so there's been a lot of digesting of what

EVAC provided in that previous memo, as well as conversations that us as partners have been having internally and externally amongst the partners.

Luke provided an overview of the goals of the theme of decarbonizing homes via energy efficiency and electrification retrofits [outlined in the slides](#). Questions were then posed to EVAC:

- 1) If the activities presented represent crucial steps toward achieving the City's goal of weatherizing 75% of homes by 2025?
- 2) Do you think that that 75% goal or strategy should be updated or further defined in the update of the Climate Action plan? (Luke acknowledged that he is of the opinion that he thinks there should be better definition of a "retrofit", but that he would value the group's feedback on that.)

An EVAC member commented that the plan is currently vague on specifics, but maybe that is what is needed to work on. The member noted that it could be some kind of performance standard that might help define what an updated unit is. The member also noted to the activities presented seem to focus on homeowners and they would like to make sure we don't forget about renters.

Another EVAC member noted that further clarification of a vision would be useful, along with more definition of what counts as a retrofit toward the 75% goal. The member also noted that communication with state agencies is important, especially in light of the possibility of federal funding being leveraged for these activities. Make sure we are not working in silos, but rather feeding off of each other's efforts.

Another EVAC member noted that a hurdle for homeowners is knowing which contractors to go with and having contractors trained to give trustworthy guidance. In light of beneficial electrification (which is wonderful) we can't lose sight of efficiency upgrades such as improving building envelop. Increase energy efficiency first and then electrification. Train contractors to assist in the process of meeting the City goal.

Luke noted that he appreciated the feedback and that part of 2022 is creating the detail and vision together for how to move forward.

Another EVAC member raised the question of if we should consider new construction in addition to retrofits. There are policy roadblocks to doing this, but it could be important to build in such a way that we don't need retrofits for those buildings in the future.

Dan King provided an overview of the goals of the theme of working toward 30% local solar [outlined in the slides](#). He noted that the EVAC memo articulated that this goal had a lot of clarity, but there is still discussion about what types of activities could help bring the City toward this goal. Questions were then posed to EVAC:

- Do the above address the biggest factors within the City and Xcel's power or sphere of influence toward more rapid local solar deployment? If not, what are?

An EVAC member raised the question of where the 30% goal came from. Luke responded that it is from the draft version of the 100% Renewable Electricity Blueprint that was released for comment. In that draft version, the city proposes then that in order to get to 100% that the components needed are 60% renewable electricity come from the grid mix, 10% from green tariffs, and 30% from local solar. The goal is in a similar status as the new science based fair share GHG reduction targets where it is in process, but not officially adopted.

An EVAC member raised a question about the point made that Xcel is in discussions with US Solar about a municipal special operations project. The member raised concern that there are no requirements on that project when we talk about equity and workforce development. The member asked where we are at in the process.

Dan clarified that it is only high level discussion and no decision has been made. There was an action by the City Council setting up the City in exclusive negotiations with US Solar and Xcel Energy engaged in a conversation with US Solar to understand what the proposed project is. US Solar was informed about an upcoming solar request for proposals (RFP) that would accept bids down to 5MW for distribution system connected solar that arose from the recently approved integrated resource plan (IRP). The EVAC member asked when that would hit the streets, and Dan replied that he did not know, but likely in the coming months. Xcel will make sure that this member gets the RFP when it comes out and that it would be sent to EVAC.

Kim Havey provided an overview of the City process of engaging with US Solar and noted that it is for 6 months, but has terms for extension if progress is being made.

Another EVAC member noted that the strategies proposed cover a lot of the bases, but that a big gap is large commercial spaces around the city. The member recognizes the limitations of the City's and Xcel's sphere of influence here, but that there is a lot of opportunity for local ownership and community benefits. The member was asked and agreed to follow up with a memo on the topic to be sent to Xcel Energy and the City.

The EVAC member concerned about discussions with US Solar raised the point that without targeted BIPOC outreach support and intentional employee development, most workers under this contract will likely be white in the RFP process, will not improve economic outcomes with BIPOC communities. U.S. Solar's response to the city's RFP does not include a client to increase workforce diversity, diversity, of course, and contract labor for this project, such as training or prioritizing higher than BIPOC residents from the city, Minneapolis.

Kim provided some further clarifications regarding the agreement, that the City did include workforce considerations in our scoring and ranking of proposals, and offered to discuss this issue more with the EVAC member individually.

Emma Schoppe provided an overview of the goals of the theme of reducing commercial and industrial natural gas use [outlined in the slides](#). Emma invited comments and discussion and asked who would

like to be in the near-term conversation about CenterPoint's quantifiable Work Plan Goal and activity development to meet that goal?

Katie Jones, Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, Beth Tomlinson, Molly Smith, Ansha Zaman, and Elizabeth Turner all volunteered.

An EVAC member asked if there would be small committees or workgroups for all of the themes discussed. Luke responded that in the past by the time a workplan was adopted by the board, the ideas were more fully baked. We're trying something a little bit different this time, recognizing that 2022 is a year of transition and want to incorporate more stakeholder voices. We're putting more things on the work plan that aren't fully baked. That will require more topic specific workgroups. There will still be specific things that can move forward, like the partnership with Hennepin County on district energy. Also, the intent is for there to be a quantifiable goal for C&I gas reduction by the time of workplan adoption even if the specific activities aren't defined.

Luke thanked the group for their input and noted that the planning team looks forward to getting more input on the workplan activities.

8. Partner Updates

Dan King and Nick Martin provided a brief summary of Xcel Energy's recently approved integrated resource plan (IRP). In particular, they noted that there was an unprecedented amount of discussion around equity in the IRP and they provided a summary of the order point around building an equity stakeholder group.

Emma Schoppe provided a brief update on inclusive financing, noting that 23 comments representing about 40 organizations or individuals were submitted last Friday, so there is a lot to go through.

Meeting Adjourned