

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

January 18, 2012

9:05–10:00 am

140 West Pine Street

Members Present: Dave Strohmaier (chair), Marilyn Marler, Adam Hertz, Bob Jaffe, Caitlin Copple, Dick Haines, Cynthia Wolken, and Ed Childers, Jon Wilkins, Dick Haines, Adam Hertz

Members Absent: Mike O'Herron

Others Present: Ross Keogh, Chase Jones, Ben Schmidt

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Approve minutes.

Minutes of January 11, 2012 were held until the next meeting.

II. FINAL CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEMS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

IV. REGULAR AGENDA

1. Update from Greenhouse Gas and Energy Conservation Team and Update from Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Ben Schmidt and Marilyn Marler) (Referred to committee: 04/11/2011) ([Powerpoint presented by Chase Jones](#)) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

Ms. Marler introduced the referral. She said the Council has the Greenhouse Gas and Energy Conservation Team which reports back to the Council through the Conservation Committee. We have quarterly-to-twice-a-year updates from the GGECT. In the last six months, a big project has been coordinating with the Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force. This referral is to introduce the new Council members to the GGECT and also to get a report on how the coordinated efforts are going and that's why Chase Jones has been invited.

Chase Jones said: I am officially a grants administrator with OPG, but as Ms. Marler stated, I have been serving last six months on the Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force to coordinate Missoula's first formal municipal Conservation & Climate Action Plan.

Mr. Jones started his presentation. He said there are 3 reasons to complete the Conservation & Climate Action Plan; to reduce energy consumption and conserve natural resources, reduce operating costs (he can't stress this point enough, simple actions add up to really big savings) and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions which contributes to a healthier planet and healthier Missoula.

For new council members, Jones gave a timeline of climate action planning in Missoula. Beginning in 1996, the City became involved in the Cities for Climate Protection campaign; in 2004 the first greenhouse gas and energy efficiency plan was adopted. Out of that, a recommendation made was to form the GGECT. Around 2007, the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement was signed and the Mayor formed his advisory group on climate change and sustainability. In 2009 UM Professor Robin Saha released Missoula's greenhouse gas emissions inventory. Also in 2009 the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant became available for conservation planning. The Mayor saw this as a great opportunity to turn the Mayor's Advisory Group on Climate Change and Sustainability into an implementation group, the Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force.

The first step what to form the Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force with energetic, passionate and involved citizens who represent a broad cross section of Missoula, including non-profits, businesses and other people with expertise in this area. Members were chosen from the

existing Mayor's advisory group, members of GGECT and other community members; they have been engaged for six months.

Ms. Marler asked: Has mayor's advisory committee been replaced by the task force? Jones answered that the advisory committee is on hiatus until the plan is completed. Jones said the task force is comprised of many talented folks with a wide range of expertise.

The task force first decided the scope of the plan. First was to review municipal operations to build upon the actions taken by Vehicle Maintenance and other departments over the years. Secondly, the task force wanted it to be a mitigation plan address Professor Saha's emissions inventory. The group wanted this conservation climate plan to be a list of strategies to mitigate those emissions. After a solid municipal action plan is completed, the next step is complete a community-wide conservation plan.

Jones identified the objectives of the plan, including documenting current activities. He said lots of great work has been done in this area within the City over the years. The next steps are to identify potential actions, evaluate the feasibility of and prioritize those actions. An important goal is to set a reduction target, as in zero net emissions by some future date which is yet to be determined. Net zero is a lofty goal and interim targets will be identified. The task force will establish a monitoring and reporting system and ask that local government lead by example.

Jones identified the task force's working groups, including Fleet & Facilities, Renewable Energy & Offsets, Internal Policies & Practices and Implementation. The Implementation working group has yet to convene, that will be the final piece when strategies are outlined.

The plan is nearing completion. The steps to completion of the plan include: complete strategies, prioritize strategies, finalize emissions reduction target, draft implementation strategy, management and key staff final review, and present to City Council.

Jones showed the committee some of the proposed actions in draft form. This draft is available from Chase Jones at cjones@co.missoula.mt.us .

Mr. Strohmaier asked if the Mayor or Communications Officer would like to comment or if the committee had any questions. Caitlin Copple asked which cities around the country may be looked at as models. Jones said that both Helena and Bozeman are examples that the task force looked at, they also looked at the statewide plan, and the plans of Seattle, Portland and Eugene. They created a Google database of action plans and had group members review those. The University of Montana has also adopted a plan.

Ed Childers asked if Jones could elaborate on the net zero emissions goal. Jones said that we start with the baseline of the emission inventory from Dr. Saha. Each proposed strategy has a projected emissions reduction. With that data, we work toward net zero emissions. To achieve net zero, we will likely have to do some offset or renewable energy project.

Ross Keogh of the GGECT said that when you do climate action planning, the idea is to identify some sort of reduction goal. UM has a goal has net zero emissions by 2020, but the Task Force hasn't determined yet what is a feasible, cost-realistic outcome for city. Net zero is the "Cadillac" of climate action planning, what you do if a community wants to express its' commitment to sustainability and to responsible climate planning.

Cynthia Wolken said she is excited about project, and she appreciates all the work that has gone into in. She thanked the GGECT and the Conservation & Climate Action Plan Task Force for their hard work.

Dave Strohmaier said; likewise, excellent work. He asked for the timeline for bringing a completed Conservation & Climate Action Plan to the Council. Jones said he expected the plan to be ready in the next two to three months.

Strohmaier asked Ben Schmidt of City-County Health and GGECT and Ross Keogh of GGECT to update the committee to on the work of the GGECT and their interaction/interface with the Conservation & Climate Action planning process.

Ben Schmidt explained that GGECT is a volunteer group that meets monthly; it reports directly to the Conservation Committee and receives guidance from the committee. Some recent projects of GGECT include the new recycling bins downtown installed by the BID, collaborating with UM and Professor Saha on the emissions inventory, and giving recommendations to the City on what bills in the State Legislature should be supported or opposed or comments that could be made.

Schmidt asked for guidance and suggestions from the Council on GGECT activities. Regarding GGECT's involvement in the Conservation & Climate Action Plan, several GGECT members are also on the C&CAP task force. Very soon, GGECT will host evening public meetings to allow citizens to see and comment on the Conservation & Climate Action Plan. GGECT will bring the collected public comment back to the Council.

Jon Wilkins asked: Have you worked or coordinated with Target on glass recycling? Schmidt answered no. Wilkins said it might be a good idea. For the last couple months he has been taking recyclable glass to Target. Maybe GGECT work with Target can expand that program a little bit. Schmidt said that would be a good idea. He said that Best Buy takes recyclable electronics. It would be good for GGECT to encourage those types of programs when possible.

Schmidt said that GGECT feels it is very important that a permanent sustainability coordinator position remain at the City. Other cities have found having an identified implementation point person is essential to the success or failure of conservation and climate plans and realizing efficiency savings. That is one of the things GGECT wants to keep recognizing as a priority for the City. Ross Keogh this issue merits further discussion. Jones is already performing some sustainability coordinator functions, but has to balance them with his other duties. We've also been fortunate enough that there was a private donor that helped provide funds early to have an Energy Corp member with us through August of last year. Then we were able to find additional funding for another Energy Corp person to help do that planning. In the long run, it's not clear that Energy Corp will continue to be available for these types of things; there are efforts underway in Congress to shut down Americorp funding. It's much more sustainable and effective if the Council wants to prioritize it and create a specific staff office, whose job it is to concentrate on these things. The Target glass recycling project is an example of a task a staff person could complete. It is difficult for volunteers to pull all these pieces together. When you see effective committees like this working, you use members of the outside community, to inform the larger policy discussions among community members that relies upon staff expertise and time. The key point is having a staff person available for the GGECT to rely upon.

Strohmaier clarified that Energy Corp is a program of the Americorp volunteer program.

Schmidt said one thing the GGECT would like to keep pushing on is to develop a green building program and implement incentives to build above code. The program was started a few years ago and has floundered, but it is an important and needs involvement from the Council and the Mayor. Schmidt said the committee would also like to keep emphasizing Green Blocks.

Marler asked if the Green Blocks program was going to happen again this year. Jones said no, due to lack of funding. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant was not re-funded by Congress. The program is a great model, received fantastic feedback from participants and community, but it does take funding.

Wilkins expressed disappointed that the program had not been funded and asked if staff was looking for other types of funding. Jones said that is a big part of his job as a grants administrator with OPG. He has not seen any grants that allow for that activity, but he is still looking.

Keogh said: this is exactly the kind of thing we want to talk about when we do municipal climate action planning. There are potential avenues for locally assessed or excise taxes to drive this process.

Wilkins asked about green tags and said it would be a beneficial program if the proceeds could be used local projects. He asked for an update on the green tags program and asked if GGECT had looked into green tags as a funding source.

Schmidt said, the program has seen modest success, but without marketing, it won't take off very well. GGECT is working with UM to make it an option to purchase renewable energy certificates along with tickets to sports and other events. GGECT is also working with Run Wild Missoula on a similar program. The Council resolution that created green tags says that funds have to be spent locally.

Wilkins said perhaps public relations for green tags should emphasize that funds will be spent locally and on weatherization and other projects. He thinks that would increase participation in the program. Marler said the Green Tags program could be more made more visible on the City's home page.

Keogh said the green tags program has raised \$250 to \$300 dollars. He said revenue sources are going to have to be more focused, and that taxes, not voluntary donations would be needed to fund green blocks.

Strohmaier said that if the Council has some level of consensus that the green blocks program has been a success in past and would like to register our support the federal block grant, it would be beneficial draft a letter to Montana's congressional delegation to that effect.

Bob Jaffe said it would helpful to have example of where having a dedicated sustainability staff position translates to savings to pay for position. In the past, the Mayor's office has said it could spread the task out and obtain savings without hiring new staff, and we did that with the Johnson Controls study. Now that the "low-hanging fruit has been picked", can you show there would be that kind of return within the City budget? Jaffe also asked if the GGECT had considered low-cost weatherization programs like those offered LEAP. Is there a potential to coordinate with programs like that?

Keogh said part of the Action Plan will be to lay out the case for a permanent sustainability staff position. Volunteers just can't spare the time to perform these types of functions. Schmidt said a recent Ann Arbor, Michigan study demonstrated that the position paid for itself multiple times over. As far as LEAP goes, GGECT definitely needs to work with them, but their funding quite limited. The City needs staff to apply for those grants.

Schmidt said GGECT is pursuing the idea of printing an educational blurb on the City sewer bills and will continue to provide feedback to Council on bills in the State Legislature.

Strohmaier asked for public comment, there was none. He then asked for committee questions and suggestions for the GGECT.

Marler said she has been perplexed by the roles and functions of the Mayor's Advisory Group On Climate Change versus the GGECT. She hopes there is no duplication of effort and hopes the groups are coordinating their efforts.

Strohmaier asked Schmidt to clarify the differences between the two groups.

Schmidt said the two groups do function differently. GGECT has projects; the Mayor's Advisory Group primarily brings ideas to the Mayor. GGECT would like to be more involved in future City building/construction projects—several team members have architectural and construction experience. Marler agreed and wondered if another Council committee would be more appropriate for the GGECT to report to, in case the Council is missing the opportunity to have GGECT comment on building projects or policy. She thanked Keogh, Schmidt and Jones for their efforts.

Strohmaier asked if GGECT had any involvement with new the parking structure construction. He said GGECT's input would be valuable in these types of projects. Schmidt answered that the GGECT was not involved in that project but that it appears that sustainability standards had been followed.

HELD IN COMMITTEE

1. Discuss the city's strategy to complete a boundary survey of Greenough Park. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Strohmaier) (Referred to committee: 04/04/2011)
2. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign an amendment to the agreement with Territorial Landworks, Inc. (TLI) in an amount not to exceed \$136,702.37 for professional services, including engineering, surveying, and construction management for Project #PR 08-02 GCT, Grant Creek Trail, CTEP #STPE 8199(105). ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Shaw) (Referred to committee: 10/24/11)

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 a.m.