



Fort Collins Climate Task Force

March 31, 2008
215 North Mason, Community Room
MEETING MINUTES



Present:

Board Members and Alternates

John Bleem	P			Garry Steen	P
William Farland	P	Blue Hovatter	P	Norm Weaver	P
Bill Franzen	A	Jeff Lebesch	P	Steve Wolley	P
Pete Hall	P				
Phil Friedman	P	Eric Levine	P		
Stephen Gillette	A	Liz Pruessner	P		

Others present: Art Bavoso, Facilitator

Judy Dorsey, The Brendle Group

Lucinda Smith, Natural Resources Department

Ana Arias, Natural Resources Department

Dale Adamy, Citizen

Public Input

None

Task Force Member Input

Norm Weaver said his recovery was going well; the task force was glad to welcome him back. Liz said that the NRAB weighed in on the GHG goal at their last meeting. NRAB supported the CTF recommendation for the state goals and stressed the importance of a proactive, aggressive approach to doing things in the immediate future. They liked the idea of an annual goal with benchmarks and weren't crazy about RECs.

Phil said he personally felt the CTF should focus on actions and not worry too much about a goal. Eric reiterated what Phil said. The time has come to step up and start implementing measures in a meaningful way. He did not appreciate the way the Coloradoan represented the issue, and felt the economic aspects had not been given a fair shake. Jeff then reported that the Electric Board discussed the Short-term Provisional Package, and he shared the comments from the E-Board. Pete agreed with the importance of education and mentioned PSD's Green Tip of the month on the Superintendent's newsletter.

Minutes Approval

Liz moved to approve the minutes from February 4 and March 5, 2008. Steve Wolley seconded

The task force unanimously voted to approve the February 4, 2008 and March 5, 2008 minutes.

Agenda Review

Lucinda reviewed the agenda and the group was comfortable with it.

John Stokes, Natural Resources Director, addressed the Task Force to discuss future expectations of the CTF. He stated that Council has supported the direction the CTF was going by indicating support for relaxing the goal posts while still indicating support for moving forward. He said it looks like there could be seven Council members who will adopt the CTF recommendations on future climate goals. Even if the goal posts change a little, the measures the CTF put forward are most important. He reminded the CTF they are an independent body offering recommendations to Council, and it is in their purview to make recommendations about milestones if they wish. Council may or may not adopt the recommendations but staff will work hard to make sure the costs, etc. are represented in the best light possible and that the value of your recommendations are well articulated. John advised the CTF to focus on short and mid term recommendations and focus on moving “Full steam ahead”. He felt the timing of the CTF effort is very good.

John Bleem asked how these pieces fit together, such as the CTF, the Electric Energy Policy Work, the trash services study and other City efforts. John Stokes said the trash services study is expected to go to Council this summer.

John Bleem said PRPA has received bids for wind energy and the RFPs are good for 90 days from mid March, so PRPA is anxious to see how policies will be integrated. Judy pointed out that Wade Troxell and David Roy asked for a SmartGrid roadmap and wondered what the response would be. Norm said there is a group (at Utilities?) starting to discuss SmartGrid strategies. Eric felt that the entire climate efforts are somewhat dependent on timelines. Jeff reiterated the concept about Utilities changing their electric energy policy. He noted there is a lot of sentiment in favor of more wind energy, but there are cost issues. John Stokes also pointed out that Brain Moeck, PRPA Executive Director, said the first priority should be to spend resources on efficiency, while Wade expressed interest in SmartGrid technology, and others want local projects. John Stokes thanked the CTF for their work.

March 25 Work Session Review and Comments

Blue commented that he felt there was a disconnect between Council’s expectations and the CTF’s expectations. He thinks Council is expecting the CTF to drop strategies as a result of the longer term goal adoption, however he expects the CTF is likely to add longer-term strategies. Liz and Eric echoed that concern. Eric felt there would be changes coming from the first work session and that many of the “short-term” measures are no longer really short term; some will have to wait until (the next budget cycle).

Numbers Update

Lucinda provided information about the community-wide GHG emissions inventory which had been updated since the CTF last met. The reason for the update is a new dataset for “vehicle miles of travel”. The updated data are provided by the NFR MPO’s consultant and projects VMT out through 2035 for the long-range transportation plan. She said the decision about which data set should be used for future projections is still not final, but the 2005 number is solid. Norm asked why the 2010 projection had dropped from 3.5 millions tons CO2e to 2.9. Lucinda

replied that was because the original projection from 1998 predicted 7% VMT growth rate per year. More recent information doesn't show that level of VMT growth.

Lucinda asked if the CTF wanted to revisit their Guiding Principles and add or modify anything. In particular she asked if they wanted to add "*Highlight the cost-effectiveness of actions to gain community support and promote market transformation.*" Several members felt that concept was covered in other existing guiding principles. They opted not to modify them, and to focus on recommending actions.

Art asked if the group wanted to appoint a spokesperson(s). Initially, Eric indicated he thought there should be a spokesperson. At the March 25 work session, Kevin Cross from the Fort Collins Sustainability Group was invited to the table, but Blue felt it would be better to have actual CTF members present. The CTF discussed options and ultimately agreed that there was no need to appoint one or two people, but that interested individuals could volunteer to represent the CTF if a need arises and their schedule allows. Blue volunteered to attend the April 4 meeting at the Chamber Legislative Affairs Committee.

Next Steps

Lucinda reviewed the possible schedule for the remaining CTF work and process as follows:

Mar 31 and May 1 - CTF meetings

May 6 or 20 - Council resolution to adopt goal (materials due on April 16 or May 7)

Mid May - Climate Task Force complete recommendations to the City Manager

May 29 – SIT meeting (June not a good option for SIT, per Tess)

June and July - Staff develop recommendation on implementation plan, taking into consideration CTF recommendations

July 22 - Council work session (materials due July 11)

August - Public Outreach /Board and Commission review

Sept 2 or 16 - Council action to adopt implementation plan (materials due Aug 20 or Sept 3)

Fall 2008 and on - subsequent Council actions to adopt specific recommendations

Blue wondered how the CTF will take into account public and Board input in August. Lucinda indicated it is a common process for the final board/public input to occur after the work session, but under this schedule, the input will go to staff and not the CTF, who will have completed their work by then. Eric indicated it was very important for Council to be aware of the timeframes and windows of opportunity and that they will need to know a timeframe for implementation. Liz asked if there would be another public open house and how would the CTF be involved? Lucinda responded that the CTF recommendations would stand and the CTF would be welcome to come to an open house in August, but the CTF would not be expected to update the recommendations again. She pointed out that the City Manager wants City staff to have an opportunity to wrap their arms around these recommendations. Bill Farland said we need to have a firm date to hand off our work to staff and can aim for mid May, and then continue engaging as citizens. Phil said he was okay with handing this off to staff but is concerned that the timing will slip further.

Input on Goal Resolution

Lucinda asked if the CTF had points they felt should be incorporated into the GHG goal resolution. Bill Farland pointed out that the points requested by council for inclusion largely mirror the Guiding Principles, so the CTF Guiding Principle should be include in the community GHG goal resolution. All agreed on that.

Provisional Package Review

Art asked if the CTF wanted to make any revisions to the Short-Term Provisional Package. She asked if the CTF wants to continue with this level of RECs. She also asked how the CTF wants to see the interim climate action plan shaped – Do you want to establish interim milestones and which years would they be? Milestones would help identify which types of things you want to see in place in certain years.

The CTF discussed the importance of adding metrics.

Steve W. moved to call for mandatory annual reporting and that each year's goal should be along the straight-line trajectory from now to 2020 and then to 2050, and that the annual reports would say whether we made the milestone target and provide a list of programs we've executed and a list of programs going forward. Establish some trigger mechanism if the annual review does not show things are on track. It should identify where the year falls on the straight-line to 2020 but allow for some degree of non-linear progress.

Norm seconded.

Discussion:

Norm asked about triggers. A trigger that causes more than just a review if we are not turning the trajectory downward might be necessary, i.e. triggers more aggressive actions.

Eric called for monitoring and developing triggers and developing contingency planning, as is done with state air quality planning. Bill Farland suggested the annual report should commence in 2009 for 2008. Blue supported defining triggers but felt progress might not fall on a straight-line trajectory; that there could be a step function, and some leeway should be given. Norm feels the key for a trigger should occur if we don't turn the trajectory downward, but that we should allow some bandwidth off of the straight line. i.e. 10%. Phil felt the problem is that we did not have good indicators and good predictors in the past. Phil indicated the milestones years are important and metrics should be identified for those key milestone years, rather than annual milestones.

Pete pointed out we need to identify a baseline year, and also identify who is responsible for reporting. Blue suggested that we could use milestones as a trigger for biennial reporting, and that existing boards could monitor this progress. He suggested using 2011 and 2015 as years for Council work session evaluation and triggering contingencies if milestones not met. Eric feels there is so much competing for Council's attention that a Board or commission might be needed to stay abreast of progress.

Does the City do an annual budget report? Blue indicated there is an annual report that identifies predictions and expenses, and makes adjustments where necessary. If we are over budget the BFO drilling platforms would be re-evaluated for the remaining year. Steve supports looking at progress annually to make sure we are heading in the right direction.

Blue feels it is important to keep triggers and milestones to give more flexibility in time, rather than setting annual triggers. Triggers should happen on a milestone basis (every 4 years) and annual reporting should occur, and biennial work sessions should occur.

Eric supports two year milestones. Art adds milestone years every two years with a dedicated City Council work session.

Since the motion content drifted away from Steve's original objectives, he restated the motion calling for mandatory annual reporting, a list of actions implemented and did we make it and contingency planning to identify what plans will be put in place to get back on track.

Norm seconded.

Vote: 10 in favor, 2 opposed. Norm opposed and when it became clearer what was being voted on Phil voted against it.

A straw poll was taken first and Norm didn't support the measure.

Blue moved to include milestone trigger years in 2011 and 2015 and 2019 in sync with the budget cycle to cause new actions by the City if not meeting the milestones. He also called for biennial work sessions to keep Council fully engaged.

Garry seconded.

Discussion:

Pete said how do you build in accountability? Perhaps that's a better word than "serious consequences". How about "serious new actions occurring if not meeting the targets."

Eric asked if two year milestones could be considered and Blue agreed to triggers every two years in sync with the budget cycle. Norm asks how the trigger year activity differs from the annual activity. Blue envisions the triggering occurs with the larger picture in view.

Blue moved to include milestone trigger years in ~~2011 and 2015 and 2019~~ every two years in sync with the budget cycle to cause new actions by the City if not meeting the milestones. He also called for biennial work sessions to keep Council fully engaged. Garry seconded.

Vote: All in favor – motion passes unanimously.

Art recoded on the flip chart:

Mandatory annual reporting: did we make it? A list of activities that show reduction levels were met or not and what plans will be put in place to get back on track"

Summary: the CTF supports annual reporting to include the greenhouse gas emissions inventory and that list of reductions achieved. They recommend setting biennial milestones and conducting a more in-depth biennial review that looks closely at whether the targets were met and if not, identifies contingency actions. The biennial review should include a Council work session held in advance of the biennial budget cycle to optimize the opportunity for corrective actions.

Lucinda asked if there are any changes you want to make to the Short-term provisional package? For example, do you want to reconsider RECs.

Blue wanted to reconsider the “Incentives for On the Ground Renewable Energy”. He noted the original discussion did not include wind, but since City Council passed a resolution allowing for monitoring wind inside the city limits, this suggests an interest in small scale (residential) wind power in city limits, so could we add wind to the text?.

Norm said that in-town Fort Collins may not be the best wind regime so it would be better to have the language saying that we are supportive of leaving the door open, rather than re-analyzing the measure. Blue just wants to open the door wide to allowing wind. Judy asked whether the CTF just wants to modify the description. Lucinda suggested that we modify the text but not change the analysis. Eric recognizes that there are many other policy issues that must be addressed with the installation of new residential scale wind such as HOA issues, view sheds, codes, etc.

Blue moved to revise the language of ““Incentives for On the Ground Renewable Energy” to allow consideration of wind, but not to re-do the analysis to include wind. Norm seconded. All in favor. Motion passes.

Art asked if there are any other measures the CTF wants to change. Jeff said that regarding RECs, a lot of people want to see energy on the grid and there is some distrust of where the money goes. But PRPA has worked to identify high quality RECs and this seems to be a much more cost-effective measure. Norm said that on one hand, the City’s using PRPA to purchase RECs has lead to being encumbered by existing contracts for RECs, yet the flip side is that in order to get meaningful RECS you need a longer-term contractual relationship . PRPA seems to be doing due diligence to find this balance. We have a dilemma right now.

Judy suggested that comparing RECs to “energy into the grid” is like leasing vs. owning. . It costs 7 cents for power and the enviro benefits, and 1 cent just for the enviro benefits. When we are looking at the 7:1 price differential between RECs and delivered wind, we are not comparing apples to apples. The time horizon and the cash flow are not the same. It may cost seven times more to develop wind vs. buying RECs but that is a short-term comparison.

Norm said that “lease purchase” is a good analogy for buying RECs - when the lease is up, you don’t own anything. Blue said we need to be able to help out the wind farmers long-term so they can make their project viable. It’s a large grid, and it really boils down to how close to home you

want the benefit to be. Do we want renewable energy projects within 50 miles? The city can no longer get the production tax credit for supporting renewable investment.

Blue suggested three options for those interested in investing in renewable energy: 1) Purchasing regular energy (coal-fired, hydro, and rated-based wind), 2) purchase RECs, and 3) purchase delivered wind energy, with a pricing structure reflecting the three options. There are organizations out there monitoring to make sure the green tags are not double-counted. So do we care where the renewable energy is generated? Do we want it on our grid? If so, we will pay different prices for this.

Phil thinks including RECs is appropriate but it has to be considered carefully. Let's not overdo it to get us out of the hole; it's a bad model for the use of RECS. RECs should be a conscious decision. We could focus more on projects that are built as a result of the investment, regardless of how far away they are. None of us really get the "green" electrons into our homes anyway. We should focus on who owns and builds the system; i.e. a concentrating solar system in San Luis Valley owned and operated by PRPA would be fine. The carbon intensity doesn't change.

Art asked if anyone wants to make a specific recommendation. Eric said he can't make a recommendation because he hasn't had the time to work it out, but he wants to make a recommendation for the long-term. He wants to add long-term strategies dealing with transportation and building codes. The Air Quality Board saw Felix Lee's presentation about building codes and had a good discussion about energy efficiency. Eric wants to see funding pumped into the local economy. He said the CTF gravitated towards RECs because of the 2010 goal, and he wonders how RECs play into it now that we are moving away from 2010.

Blue thought the CTF should look at a revised analysis for the renewable energy measure' to get a better idea. How does the equity grow over time? If we own a turbine for 20 years, and it pumping out energy and green tags, what does that look like for the Fort Collins? Phil was talking about investments in our community, yet PRPA has said that wind equipment breaks down. My vision for 20 years is to not hire new Utilities staff to operate the turbine. 20 years from now we may want to take these turbines down. If we can replace the turbine with a higher quality wind technology, we are not going to want fix and monitor these. Blue wants to see the analysis of alternatives over 20 years in order to decide.

Steve asked whether the CTF should put together a resolution that says "just go buy the wind now"; that might put us a long way down the road to our stated goal. Norm points out that much has changed in the last few months, previously it was considered difficult to get that much on the ground, and now we have more options for installed wind.

Lucinda said that a revised analysis will be done (with the help of PRPA, Utilities, and the Brendle Group.) Blue asked what exactly is provided for in the new bids to PRPA; what is the power purchase agreement and does that differ from RECs?

Norm then raised a question about the communitywide climate challenge. Utilities has always tried to push market transformation. The City of Boulder has a good carbon calculator site.

Norm suggested that the measure could leverage the work on CFLs but change the focus away from CFLs. Blue thought the written measure description could change to include ideas provided previously by him and other CTF members. We can make it more fun and expand to a long-term goal. Eric felt we could have a community climate challenge as a long-term goal too. Pete thinks there are so many other alternatives, such as the “Green Tips” that PSD provides on monthly basis. Norm volunteered to revise the written text of this measure. Liz asked about getting end of life issues for CFL’s recognized in the text as well. Lucinda will send Blue and Liz’s past suggestions on this measure to Norm who will revise the text.

Time ran out for a discussion of long-term measures. Lucinda asked how the CTF would like to prepare for the discussion of longer-term measures. Blue thought an e-mail discussion would be helpful prior to the next meeting and a write-up that summarizes ideas would be helpful.

Steve asked how the CTF will address the long term measures. Lucinda said that the CTF would see a qualitative analysis, select the ones they like, and these would be included in the packet. A few might be able to be analyzed in more detail. Eric said we need to shift the approach to long-term; Short-term measures have been concentrating on electricity and power and we need to include land use, green building, and transportation

Eric expressed a concern that the CTF doesn’t have experts in land use so is unclear how we can approach this, especially with the amt of time we have left. Phil asked if the long-term measures are to satisfy the goals to become carbon neutral. Lucinda said no, but that the CTF selected measures for short-term initially, and it wouldn’t be a complete packet without the inclusion on longer-term overarching strategies.

Lucinda will send an initial list of long-term measures for the group to consider by e-mail prior to the next meeting. It is clear that another meeting after May 1 will be needed as well, so Lucinda will send an e-mail to schedule that, possibly a shorter meeting to review the final package/decisions.

Next meeting:

May 1, 2008

5:30-8:30

215 N. Mason, Community Room