

**TUMWATER PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
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CONVENE: 1:03 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Eileen Swarthout and Councilmembers Michael Althausen and Charlie Schneider.

Staff: Transportation and Engineering Director Brandon Hicks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Water Resources and Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Water Resources Educator Meridith Greer, and Administrative Assistant Cathy Nielsen.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES;
NOVEMBER 4,
2021, &
NOVEMBER 18,
2021:**

MOTION: Councilmember Althausen moved, seconded by Councilmember Schneider, to approve the minutes of November 4, 2021, and November 18, 2021 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**2020
SUSTAINABILITY
REPORT:**

Educator Greer presented the 2020 Sustainability Report and efforts completed during 2021. The report identifies the top five sustainability categories important to the City and compares the results against 2019, which was the baseline year.

The first metric is climate and the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced from City activities. In 2019, the City produced approximately 490 metric tons of CO₂. Emissions in 2020 decreased 11%; however, as the City grew and expanded since 2015, emissions have increased. Although the results reflect a decrease in 2020, the overall decline is only 4% from 2015 levels. Some of the decreases can also be attributed to COVID and changes in City operations. One of the metrics considered in CO₂ production is the amount of fuel used by the City. The City uses gas and diesel fuel. Overall, the City experienced a reduction in the volume of gas and diesel fuel in 2020. The reduction could be attributed to efficiencies in the use of fuel and the impact of COVID caused by the increase in staff teleworking from home.

The second metric is energy in the form of natural gas, electricity, and renewable energy. In 2020, the City increased the amount of natural gas used at City facilities. The increase could be attributed to more open doors as the City accommodated social distancing. The 2020 results reflect data over a 13-month period and some of the difference could be attributed to two sets of data over a two-year period. As more tracking on sustainability occurs, timing in data consistency will be resolved.

Electric use reflects a net reduction of 1.8% in 2020 over 2019 usage. The

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reduction tracks closely with the goal to decrease electricity by 2% each year. In 2020, the City began participating in Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) Skookumchuck Wind Project with the goal to utilize renewal energy beginning in November 2020. Some of the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions could be the direct result of the City receiving several months of green energy. In 2020, the City was able to reduce approximately 118,000 pounds of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere by utilizing renewal energy instead of other carbon-based forms of energy. Savings of CO₂ emissions in 2021 are estimated to be 4,000 tons. Electricity usage constitutes a high amount of greenhouse gas emissions. The City's goal was to achieve a reduction of 45% of the 2015 levels. With the City utilizing green energy, it is likely the City can achieve the goal while also recognizing the importance of decreasing electricity usage across all City operations.

The third metric is transportation, primarily employee transportation to and from work. In 2019, 6% of all employees participated in commute trip reduction programs and 53% of employees participated in flexible work scheduling. In early 2020, approximately 5% of employees participated in the City's commute trip reduction program. With the advent of the pandemic, approximately 120 employees began working remotely. Moving forward, the amount of emissions may continue to decrease dependent on the new normal work situation for employees across the City. Staff plans to increase outreach and engagement in trip reduction program after the City has a better understanding of the new work environment.

Councilmember Althaus asked whether an employee who commutes to the City for work is counted as part of the City's total carbon footprint as each employee lives in a different area of the region. Educator Greer explained that currently, staff is not calculating employee travel to and from their home to their place of City employment. However, staff calculates employee travel during the workday when operating a City vehicle. Staff has considered options for calculating employee travel in the future with the understanding that the task would be a major undertaking as each employee lives in a different location.

The fourth metric is indoor and outdoor water usage. Indoor water usage dropped dramatically during 2020 beginning in April 2020, as employees were not in their offices and were not using water. Outdoor water usage dropped as well. Much of the reduction in outdoor water usage is attributable to the good work by Water Resources and Sustainability operations during 2020. The City was able to achieve less than 5% in leakage loss throughout the City.

The fifth metric tracked is solid waste. Solid waste was identified in 2019 as an important metric that was also difficult to track. Commercial garbage service operators do not weigh the amount of trash or recycling. In early 2020, staff had planned to complete a waste audit to identify how much waste the City was producing on an average day. Much of those efforts were hampered

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by the pandemic. Staff plans to refocus efforts when staffing returns at a normal level. The first effort will include identifying the baseline with the ultimate goal to reduce City-produced solid waste 10% by 2030.

In 2019, the City's Green Team met and developed a list of different ways to help the City meet its sustainability goals and targets. A top ten list was identified for the Green Team to work on in 2020. Educator Greer updated the committee on the 2020 results.

For climate, one goal was to plant more trees in the City. Planting efforts were supported by the Parks and Recreation Department and the Water Resources and Sustainability Department. Because of COVID-19, the City was unable to host many public events. The Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the Tumwater Farm Fresh program at Isabella Bush Park and planted willow stakes and trees earlier in spring and fall and distributed 40 seedlings during the Arbor Day event. Those efforts will continue to increase as COVID restrictions lift and more public events are hosted.

The second climate-focused project was reducing the need for diesel fuel by using renewable diesel, which burns cleaner and produces fewer emissions. The City was able to obtain one shipment of renewable diesel; however, because of supply chain issues, the City has encountered problems with obtaining additional supply. One of the 2022 goals is working with other regional partners to co-purchase renewable diesel as a way to increase demand in the region to obtain shipments easier.

Councilmember Schneider noted that he participated in the plantings of 12 redwood trees at Isabella Bush Park. One mature redwood tree can sequester the same amount of carbon dioxide as 250 trees. The City has an opportunity to acquire additional redwood trees for several other projects.

Educator Greer said another goal was reducing electricity by reducing the number of hours or days of operation at City Hall. Throughout the pandemic, the effort has been ongoing and many departments are examining options to determine what returning to normal may be for both staff and for the public. City Hall is open to the public during reduced hours on Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The second project is the utility energy audit, a Water Resources and Sustainability Department project. Staff plans to work with PSE once the City returns to new normal operations to identify the City's daily consumption of energy and recommend changes to improve energy operations across City operations.

Chair Swarthout mentioned the energy audit the City of Olympia is undertaking. She asked whether the PSE audit is a basic audit for both energy usage and energy leakage. Educator Greer responded that the PSE audit would

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be an expanded audit of building-related electricity usage, as well operational usage for water pumps and other service-oriented uses. The audit will be a comprehensive package of electric use by the City to identify areas where there might be an opportunity to increase efficiencies.

Chair Swarthout added that the City of Tumwater is also contributing to the cost of the City of Olympia's audit study. She urged staff to monitor progress on those efforts.

Educator Greer reported one transportation-related project is to reward staff who participate in the City's commute trip reduction program as administered by the City's Administrative Services Department. City Clerk Variant serves as the Commute Trip Reduction Coordinator. She sent a commute trip reduction survey to all staff on November 2, 2021. The information from the survey and the addition of new employees will provide information on why some employees are not participating in the program and what types of incentives could be offered to increase participation.

Two water projects identified by the Green Team is to create landscaping plans for City rights-of-way and medians to reduce irrigation. The City is currently working on a pilot project by developing a landscaping plan along Capitol Boulevard between E and M Street. The area will be used as a test case to determine the effectiveness of plantings and if the landscaping plan is feasible for other areas in the City. The second project is retrofitting and upgrading City irrigation systems across the City.

The last project identified relates to solid waste by installing compost recycling in City buildings. The project is currently pending until operations return to a new normal City Hall schedule. The second component of the project is installing recycling and compost cans at City parks through the launch of pilot program at a City-sponsored event, such as Brewfest. The City will work with volunteers to monitor compost and recycling bins to ensure the waste is sorted properly. The goal is to implement the program for all City events and in more parks.

Moving forward, the Green Team is working on two additional policies to implement in 2022. The policies are anti-idling and electronic recycling. The team is working on finalizing language and receiving input and support from other departments. Additionally, the City is hiring a Sustainability Coordinator in early 2022 to help support the program.

Educator Greer acknowledged 2020 and 2021 Green Team members for assisting in the implementation of the program. All City departments are represented on the Green Team.

Chair Swarthout conveyed her appreciation to Educator Greer for her work. As a member of the Climate Mitigation Plan Steering Committee, she is

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working with the City of Olympia on the Building Electrification Study.

Director Smith acknowledged the efforts by Educator Greer. The City is preparing for the recruitment of the Sustainability Coordinator position with the advertisement released within the next several weeks. Interviews are scheduled in January. The position would be responsible for working with the Green Team and tracking efforts by the City for evaluation of the City's progress to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Councilmember Schneider acknowledged Educator Greer for her efforts. He asked why the City has not moved forward to purchase more electric vehicles. He acknowledged the need for more charging stations if the City considered only purchasing electric vehicles; however, the City should develop a policy to promote the installation of more charging stations to accommodate the future use of electric vehicles.

Director Smith said the new Sustainability Coordinator would assist in evaluating the development of new infrastructure in the City to support electric vehicles. The City Administrator and the Mayor issued an order to evaluate electric vehicles first for any new vehicle purchase moving forward.

Director Hicks added that when operations moves to the new facility off 79th Avenue, the facility will include charging stations for electric vehicles. If funding is available as part of the conversion of the old public works shop to a parks facility, some charging stations could be incorporated as well.

Councilmember Schneider cited the City's desire to ban future natural gas connections. His neighborhood, The Preserve, still enables natural gas connections. He questioned why the City has not adopted codes to prevent new natural gas connections.

Councilmember Althaus responded that the Council is responsible for adopting a policy banning new natural gas connections in the City. A goal was included in the Climate Action Plan for banning new installations of natural gas connections. However, he believes that action was tabled. Electrification is the key in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and assist the City in achieving its energy goals.

Chair Swarthout mentioned that she has attended several meetings discussing the topic of electrification with realtors and other industry representatives representing construction trades. The Climate Mitigation Plan Steering Committee is currently working on actions surrounding natural gas because the issue is substantial and involves many aspects of society.

Councilmember Althaus asked whether the new public workshop would have natural gas connections. Director Hicks advised that the facility would have access to natural gas; however, staff plans to limit the use of natural gas.

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The goal is to limit the use but some equipment the department uses requires natural gas.

Councilmember Schneider questioned why the City does not concentrate more on water wise landscaping practices by requiring new development to transition from grass to other forms of landscaping to reduce the need for water. He supports the City moving in that direction.

Director Smith explained that although some cities with arid climate have adopted water wise landscaping policies, that level of landscape management is not cost-effective for a jurisdiction, such as Tumwater because of scale and scope. However, it is possible for the City to scale up. Conversations have been ongoing with staff about a water wise landscaping program and potential landscaping standards. The effort to evaluate would be substantial because of the many pieces involved in such a program. The Green Team has discussed similar options while recognizing that it is outside the scope of operations of City Hall. The conversations are occurring and he is hopeful that by 2022, staff will present a specific program proposal to the committee on water friendly landscaping.

Chair Swarthout inquired as to whether the City's Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) includes funding for installation of electric charging stations. Director Smith said he is uncertain whether funds were included in the General Government element of the CFP. The utility funds do not include any funding for electric vehicle charging stations; however, some funding was included for the Sustainability Coordinator to implement some actions over the next several years, which could include installation of electric charging stations.

**PIONEER PARK
RESTORATION
GRANT
AGREEMENT:**

Educator Greer reported the project is focused on an area within Pioneer Park where it meets the Deschutes River. The site is active with the channel moving quickly at approximately 10 feet each year. Although such movement is normal for rivers, the area is near development and the river is experiencing a decline in salmon stock. The Deschutes River through that area has several different issues from a salmon and aquatic habitat perspective with elevated temperatures, lack of shade, and accumulation of fine sediment washing away cubic yards of sediment each year, which can negatively affect aquatic species. The river also lacks woody debris that is helpful in creating areas for fish to rest and to protect them from predators. Because Pioneer Park is heavily used for recreation in the City, other considerations include public risk, such as trails and the threat of trails washed out by the river. Deschutes River is also a high flood risk area with the river rising high during the winter. The site is also the potential site for the Washington Department of Fish and wildlife hatchery that will attract public traffic.

In 2014, the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group received a Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant to complete conceptual designs and preliminary designs for the project. The group assisted the City in determining

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how to increase the number of trees in the riparian area and reduce sediment transport along the riverbed each year. In 2016, the group developed a plan to install rock weirs and large woody debris with the goal to focus on an existing island. In 2016, the Deschutes River split into two branches. Construction and placement of a river weir will prevent tubers from straying into an area of rocks. Over the last several years, the river system changed with the island no longer in existence. Existing plans created in 2016 are no longer valid for the project today.

Staff was able to receive funding from the Department of Ecology to complete design, permitting, and construction for a new alternative in that area of the river. The cost will be approximately \$450,000 with 75% of the funds from the Department of Ecology. The grant covers both design and construction and affords construction soon after the completion of design within a constant changing environment.

Next steps is the execution of an agreement with the Department of Ecology in January 2022 followed by design over the next 18 months, securing necessary permits, and completing construction. Staff requests the Public Works Committee recommended the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor and Director Smith to sign the Pioneer Park Restoration Grant Agreement.

Councilmember Schneider asked about the possibility of the Stream Team assisting with restoration plantings in the vicinity. Educator Greer replied that one of the goals of the project is to engage the public to include the Stream Team and assisting them in planting the riparian restoration area as well as installing signage about the project. The goal of the project is to create a sense of place and community by providing an area where the entire community contributes to the restoration.

Chair Swarthout asked about the status of a large pile of woody debris on the river along the golf course. Educator Greer affirmed that the woody debris is still in place and continues to attract more logs during high water events. Staff has met with golf course staff about the possibility of options for moving large woody debris; however, moving large debris is a difficult operation and is often not supported, as it constitutes natural elements of the system. Staff is monitoring the logjam as they move forward on other long-term projects.

Director Smith added that in 2022, the capital program includes a Deschutes River Erosion and Flood Control Study that would also consider exploration of options to address the logjam.

CONSENSUS: **The Public Works Committee recommended the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor and Director Smith to sign the Pioneer Park Restoration Grant Agreement.**

ANDERSEN Director Smith displayed an aerial map of the location of the Andersen Water

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**WATER RIGHT
AGREEMENT:**

System. The Andersen Water System was created to serve a mobile home park comprised of three parcels. The location is between 70th Avenue and Littlerock Road. The City is the preferred service provider for development occurring within the City of Tumwater. However, a number of small water systems within the City limits exist and serve communities and neighborhoods. Recently, the Andersen Water System provided notice to the City of Tumwater and to the Department of Health that it is no longer capable of serving the mobile home park. Additionally, two wells exist serving two houses on the Andersen property that are also served by the same water right. Approximately 41 customers are served by the Andersen Water System.

Upon notification to the Department of Health, the City was asked whether it would be able to serve the residents. In this situation, water rights are attached to the Andersen Water System. With the request for service, the City is acquiring the water rights from Andersen Water System to support the mobile home park. As water rights have a property value, the City pursued a process with West Water Research LLC, a national authority on pricing water rights within the market. The City has utilized the services of the company for a number of years to value other water rights in the City. The full water right totals 12 acre-feet or 400 gallons per minute, which is sufficient to serve the system. The City would acquire the water rights, add them to the City's water rights portfolio, and apply them to a future source, which has not been identified at this time.

Andersen Water System would like to retain the wells on the site and those wells would not be decommissioned at this time to serve the other properties. Staff is working to connect residents from the mobile home park to the City's system by mid-January 2022.

The City values the water right at \$34,800 in recognition of the two wells retained in-service. Andersen Water System has agreed with the valuation. The proposal would purchase the water rights without tying Andersen to a potential multi-year process with the Department of Ecology to finalize the value of the water right. Staff anticipates the Department of Ecology would reduce the water right to 10-acre feet, which equates to the \$34,800 purchase of the Andersen Water System.

Staff recommends the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Water Right Purchase and Sale Agreement with Andersen Water, LLC.

Councilmember Althausen asked about the connection between the service and the infrastructure that supplies water to the homes. Director Smith advised that a water line connects the wells to the two properties and to the mobile home park. The mobile home park has infrastructure that serves each of the units. When the City connects the mobile home park to the City system the connection will include a master meter process with the infrastructure within the park remaining the responsibility of the park owner. The wells will need to

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be formally disconnected, which will be overseen by the City as part of the transfer of service agreement. The mobile home park is responsible for the connection fee to the City's system. Last year, the City acquired a \$30,000 water system consolidation grant from the Department of Health. The grant will be credited to the mobile home park to help offset the expense of connecting to the City's system.

Chair Swarthout inquired about the status of connecting the mobile home park to City sewer. Director Smith advised that staff has been pursuing grants from several different funding sources to assist the park financially in connecting to sewer. Staff is pursuing all opportunities to assist homeowners to convert to sewer. By mid-January, staff should learn about the potential of receiving a grant to assist the Velkommen Mobile Home Park connect to City sewer.

CONSENSUS: **The Public Works Committee recommended the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Water Right Purchase and Sale Agreement with Andersen Water, LLC.**

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Chair Swarthout adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.**

Prepared by Puget Sound Meeting Services, psmsoly@earthlink.net