

## Just Transitions Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council March 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: March 17, 2022 4–6 PM: Meeting recorded to be posted online.

Subcommittee Members Present: Abbey Willard, Sue Minter, Iris Hsiang, Kashka Orlow, Kelly Klein, Chris Company, Beverly Little Thunder, Mona Tolba, Danielle Bombardier, Sarah Phillips, Virginia Diambou

Staff Present: Jane Lazorchak, Ross MacDonald, Claire McIlvennie, David Plumb, Marian Wolz, Carey Hengstenberg

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4:04 PM Welcome & Check In – Abbey Willard is the facilitator and reviewed the agenda

- Chris C – suggested making a statement on the Ukraine situation and how it will/can affect the CAP and related efforts. Oil, crops, hunger, etc.. maybe a topic for discussion for the next meeting.
- Approval of Agenda and [Minutes from 2/10/22](#) – assumed approval and accepted.

4:12 PM

- Climate Council Updates –
- Jane Lazorchak – Climate Council (CC) met once and is planning to meet in May and June, take the summer off then be busy in the Fall. Council met to discuss work planning and priorities for remaining budget. No consensus was reached on that.
  - o Invited Just Transitions (JT) members to join and learn more about the priorities and be part of the robust conversation.
  - o Full suite of activities can be found on image created by Marian W. Task groups are all meeting and moving ahead. Public engagement task group will be important to this Subcommittee.
  - o Document available that is tracking bills related to CAP...can see where priorities and actions are represented. Climate office proposal included with details. Clean heat standard did pass from the House. 2.5 years to engage with the public on that Clean Heat Standard. Environmental Justice (EJ) bill, S.148, too... joint fiscal office estimated roughly \$5M cost to State government to implement.
- Carey H. Justice 40 Initiative screening tool has been released and ready to use. Guidance on BIL and requirements therein to support this group's vision.
- Sue M. -concerned about the news and costs related to the EJ Bill. Isn't this a federal requirement? Can this BIL help with the costs and budgets outlined. Should this group advocate directly to the legislature?
  - o Carey – no federal requirement per se, but there are federal requirements in place that can be pertinent to this work. Not a law but an executive order... which means it could go away with an administration change in a few years. Investigating definitions of disadvantaged communities, including EJ communities..
- Jane L. – EJ Bill included a mapping tool and is recognized as potentially very helpful.
- Abbey – could explore an executive order in VT... maybe a way forward for some aspects of the EJ Bill.

- Reps from this committee will participate in the upcoming symposium on how best to implement Just Transitions principles. Preparing for that now. Good opportunity to share the work with UVM students and panel.
- Kashka O. – question – does anyone know how the current bills have been viewed through the lens of our principles and rubric? Are they following our guidance?
  - o Sarah P - Clean Heat Bill calls out the need to incorporate an equity lens. Overall, the Clean Heat Standard process has raised these points around engagement and using the equity impact assessment. These two items need to be incorporated more and she will look for the tool and insert in chat box.
  - o Chris C – had some useful discussions and testimony to help guide legislators how to incorporate JT principles, and encourages training on how to incorporate principles. Maybe other states or international approaches can be considered and helpful.
  - o Claire M – EJ Bill does specifically cite the work from the Just Transitions Subcommittee and calls for the work to use those principles and approach.
- Kashka O. Would it make sense for someone from JT to directly provide assistance and ensure JT participation and execution?
  - o Abbey – let’s discuss when we get there on the agenda.
- David P – great to see JT work is part of the bill. Sue M agrees and wonders if this could mean we do more.
  - o Beverly LT – was concerned that the percentage assigned for the BIPOC community was 10-15%. Feels there wasn’t enough emphasis on true weatherization for the marginalized communities. Felt it was being pushed through and she did not support it. Suspicious and not sure if this is about clean energy... Utilities would be the primary winners. This Bill may not be so great... how is this really going to help people in the North End... small improvements won’t cut it. No faith in this Bill.
  - o Sue M – clarifying - two Bills being discussed. EJ and Clean Heat Standard... EJ has our principles in it but differs from the Clean Heat Standard.
  - o Abbey W – regardless, Beverly’s comments are valuable and are heard.
  - o Sarah P – agrees with Beverly – needs more work and engagement to ensure it maximizes the good. Great to see engagement highlighted and this is necessary. Will need to assist to ensure appropriate outreach and engagement.
- Chris C – suggests a specific role for the Clean Heat Standard. Very structured process and different working with the PSD than the state Agencies. Feels square peg and round hole, based on experience. PSD may not be structured to do this work.

4:49 PM      Public Engagement Task Group Discussion and Update  
 Engagement of Council, Steering Committee, Sub Committees, and [Task Groups](#)  
 Strategies for consistency and implementation across other efforts

- Abbey W – looking to members of this Group to provide update.
  - o Kelly K – provided the Public Engagement group on JT and areas of public engagement. Translations, video content and story map will be created. These strive to talk about the plan in an engaging way, using personal stories. Broad based public engagement... 1-3 meetings online to talk to people and share info and obtain feedback on open items around the Transportation and Biomass. Task Group is mostly focused on outreach and engagement through “partner organizations”. 5 subsets identified and each will need to be approached differently. Use that experience and apply to future groups if possible/necessary. Something to build on and apply in the future.

- Kashka O – discussions have included funding, initiatives, hear about future actions and how to be involved. Discussed one place/clearinghouse for marketing and templates that can be used across the orgs in a uniform way. Amanda Carlson (Capstone) created materials to share with people she meets in her work. So many engagements and conversations, and most need more info to help with specific issues.
- Jane L – in addition to partner support, they also have been starting to plan for broad-based public engagement. Similar to statewide efforts, but now want to organize breakout groups to target engagement and inform the CC. two dates (mid-day an evening (4/12 and 4/13) with the intention to bring task group a proposed agenda and scenarios on how those breakout groups would work and how to apply in future conversations and outreach opportunities. Invitation for people to share and become involved. Mona’s message to perform outreach through partner orgs has resonated and the Task Group is bringing that forward.
- David P – shared a doc outlining communities, how to engage, and next steps. Would like to work with Beverly and discuss how best to approach Indigenous community. Kashka, too, for low-income communities. Mona, too... try to get action orientated and move on those plans. DEC contractors are performing outreach and having similar conversations. Can learn from that work. Will be reaching out to several members.
- Abbey W – Mona – Are you comfortable about these efforts.
  - Mona T – yes, but feels this is taking too long. Doing the right thing, but many, many meetings before steps are taken... she wants faster action and no need to wait any longer. So many people don’t know anything about this work and needs communication to share the work. Need education, however you approach it.
  - Abbey W -great to hear and thank you, Mona.
- Sue M – Capstone is just one of 5 statewide community action groups, and they are ensuring dissemination of materials and efforts.
- Abbey W – several orgs are being identified and thanks.
- Kashka O – list of partner orgs was longer, but it was pared down to get started, learn from initial efforts, and go from there. Thanks to Mona for her point of view... Maybe a few meetings week to jump start the process. Many events they can piggyback on.
- Carey H – acknowledge Mona and thanks for sharing. A lot of State workers feel they need to bring complicated ideas and policies for the general public for useful input without providing basic education on the topic.
- Kelly K – one item discussed was to have a slide deck, presentation, outline, DIY kits that anyone can use these to tell people what is out there (to all our respective communities). Get info out, yes, but really need to hear about what it means to members of the public and hear stories that can help us understand how to make the process better.
- Jane L – part of the issue is lack of capacity, but the new Climate Office will include an outreach officer who can work on this outreach full-time. Website materials will soon be on the website and will be used to download all of these materials.
- Chris C – Define and outline how these policies will affect our lives. Related to wallets, cars we drive, etc. need to get to the reality of what this stuff means. Maybe stuck in advocacy mode, but time to move on soon.

5:20 PM Accountability Strategies for Integrating Guiding Principles

- Abbey W – how we might want to ensure consistency and think about strategies for implementation going forward. Invited Marian to share her graphics of the organizations structure.

- David P – shared a graphic that outlines three levels of integrating guiding principles. 1. Council, subcommittees, 2. State government, and 3. in State legislature. Should focus on the initial “Council, Subcommittee and Task Group Work”. Next thing would be about how to get deeply engaged with the work of the Council and Committees. Showed and presented a comprehensive overview of the VCC.
  - o Marian W (creator of the image). Trying to illustrate how many Task Groups are intertwined. Some others fall more directly with specific Committees and work. Shows how the various work is being done.
  - o Jane L – “Measuring and Assessing Progress tool” – in the statute and crafting an RFP for that work. Envisions this would be a cross-cutting effort. Posted in the next couple of weeks. Almost \$500k for this tool so it is likely to be quite big.
- David P – what is our strategy to ensure principles and rubric are part of this work.
  - o Sarah – going back to that assessment tool. It’s one thing to use rubric on the front end, but quite another thing to say “here’s how we did”. Feel like equity efforts fall... good intentions but lackluster results. Interested in how that tool would ensure equity. Can contribute to that work.
  - o David P – wonder how Jane is thinking about this and how close this is to the actual approach. Are we going to get the right expertise?
  - o Jane L – doesn’t want to overpromise how that assessment tool is going to address JT. There is a reference to it, but the statute is narrow. Must be mindful of the limitations.
  - o David P – sounds like you have statutes to address, but what else is possible (for JT) from a measuring standpoint?
  - o Kashka O – when a subcommittee is working on a subject, have the JT Subcommittee to participate and help apply principles and rubric – they will need education.
  - o Jane L – specific GWSA component does allow for a specific tool to assess equity.
  - o David P – seems we need a tool, and that the assessment tool seems like a good place for this work. Invited members to dive deep and make recommendations.
    - Kashka volunteered... And Virginie and Kelly, too
- David P – anyone else what other info or ideas
  - o Abbey w – could the Subcommittee Liaisons continue attending other committee work?
    - Jane – Biomass could use a Liaison. Feels JT could be helpful with that effort. Life cycle, too – very technical and another great place for a Liaison.
    - David P – reach out to committee chairs if anyone is interested.

5:47 PM Public Comment

- Pat Segui – Questions – will there be public input on how best to spend those technical assistance funds?
  - o Jane L – had conversations with steering committee and full Council. Hoped the Council would recommend how best to sue that last bit of money. Unsuccessful and going back to the Steering Committee and there will be opportunity for Councilors to consider
- Pat Segui – Mapping tool – what is being included?
- Abbey – Thanks you for all your participation, Pat.
  - o Jane L – municipal vulnerabilities is part of a mapping effort and that is forthcoming. Part of the larger Environmental Justice bill, there is a mapping tool and that may make it out of the legislature.

5:52 PM Sub Committee Nominations

- Iris H – would like to designate a replacement
  - o Chris C – would support expanding the youth participation

- Jane L – Considering how to incorporate youth participation across all Subcommittees.
  - Abbey W – invited Marian to share the nominations received to date.
    - Marian W – shared the nominations. 9 total nominations. Regarding conversations about specific requests and asks... may want to think about who would be best to serve on Subcommittee. 10-12 committee members are recommended, JT Subcommittee has 9, needs 3, but can appoint more than 3 if necessary.
    - Sue M – feels like there was a more pressing need for members but feels good with the current 9 members. Would like to ensure that at least one member is a youth.
    - Abbey W – can consider until next time, but curious if anyone is planning to step down soon. That could influence the process and number of members appointed.
    - Jane L – Kashka volunteered to reach out and conduct interviews to discuss intentions, support needed, etc.
      - Kashka – has reached out and feels it is important to make the commitment.
- 6:05 Meeting adjourned.