

Just Transitions Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council
October 3, 2024, 4:00-6:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Sophi Veltrop, Carey Hengstenberg, Claire McIlvennie, Liz Almer, Denise Bailey, Matthew LeFluer, Callie Fishburn, Beverly Little Thunder, Mona Tolba, Bruce Wilson

4:00 PM **Introduction** (Abbey)

- Review Agenda and Accept [Minutes from 9/5/24 meeting](#)
- No quorum so meeting minutes approval will be revisited later in the agenda or not approved if more JTSC members do not join the meeting.
- No comments on draft minutes
- Matthew shared guidance on Plain language.
<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/>. More discussion on this during the discussion around the guiding principles visual.

4:10 PM **Climate Action Office Update** (Sophi and Liz)

Upcoming Public Meetings

Public input sessions just scheduled for members of the public interested in or impacted by a particular subject area and would like to engage in discussion with subcommittee members. Email/meeting invites with more information about specific topics will be sent out soon. They'll be posted at www.climatechange.vermont.gov/calendar

Matthew: Brought up Green Mountain Transit and service cuts, this should be part of the conversation around public transportation.

Ideas about getting the word out about these meetings? Share with Sophi.

- Capstone Community Action has a newsletter, other CAP agencies may also have a newsletter where they can announce
- Engage with Regional Planning Commissions with communications they already have going out to people
- Share invite list and contact information so that JTSC members can add names to the list, or email names and contact info to Sophi to add to the list. The list is here:
<https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/anr/climatecouncil/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx> Search by subcommittee, then to documents to find lists that says "Stakeholder Meeting invitation list". Subcommittee member will need to use their @partner.vermont.gov email accounts to edit documents on the SharePoint Site.

Liz (Climate Action Office) shared: Cross-cutting task group meetings

are happening later in October. (Education, Workforce, Compact Settlement)

Climate Action Plan (CAP) section updates and JTSC role

- Review of [Building Equity into the CAP and Ensuring a Just Transition](#) section (beginning on page 48)
- Subcommittee members read through the section about building equity into the climate action plan. Revisions will be due in February. Process for updating/editing will be discussed at a future meeting.
- Discussion on how the JTSC can approach revisions to the chapter. Beverly suggested smaller groups could volunteer to look at different sections. Matthew shared that a visual chart might help in this section. Bruce Wilson (Human Rights Commission) asked a question about what equity means? Denise shared definition that the State's Office of Racial Equity uses that Capstone also adopted. There is a 4-part definition of equity in the CAP's 'Building Equity and Ensuring a Just Transition' chapter. More conversation may be necessary to define equity for the plan. Plain language is also important.
- Climate Action Office to contract with graphic designer and copy editor for new CAP, for readability and accessibility, tells stories, includes plain language
- Abbey suggested that a few members volunteer to make an outline for this chapter's revisions, and bring it back to the JTSC at the November meeting. How do we engage with other subcommittees on this chapter. How has equity been included in the subcommittees' work?
- Does equity mean inclusiveness? We should be talking to BIPOC individuals. Consider using inclusivity vs. equity. Sophi can look into if people's definitions of what equity means to them has been captured in previous public engagement efforts.
- There should be a differentiation between definition of equity and strategies that are being used to address equity.
- Consider acknowledging gaps in "equity" in strategies in the Climate Action Plan. For example, funding for electric cars, while there are proposals to cut bus routes.
- Discussion around whether the JTSC is used to "check a box". Is the input from identities and communities represented by the JTSC really being considered and incorporated.
- Is there an opportunity to include participatory budgeting in the chapter that we write?
- Task group volunteers: Claire, Beverly, Denise, Abbey
- 4:55 PM Public comment

- No public comments received

5:05 PM

Just Transitions Guiding Principles Visual (Abbey and Carey)

- Update on approval by Steering Committee and VT Climate Council
- Review of new [Guiding Principles Visual](#), context and talking points
- Liaisons to share new tool during upcoming subcommittee meetings

- Abbey gave an overview of the drafting process for the Visual, noting it has been approved by the Steering Committee for use by the subcommittees.
- Carey noted this also came in response from feedback from Subcommittee co-chairs that they didn't know where to start with the Guiding Principles so this was an attempt to create something more accessible.
- Most changes to the document since the last subcommittee meeting were visual in nature, there was one minor change suggested by the steering committee to clarify the role of the subcommittees in the input sessions.
- Discussion:
 - Given comments that equity is often just “checking boxes”, is it appropriate to include literal check boxes in this document?
 - It is important to think about what we really mean when we are doing this work, what are you really trying to do in this work? Words mean a lot. We are making decisions that impact people's actual lives. Equity is a rich, powerful word but what do we mean when we use it?
 - When we think about how liaisons bring this to the other subcommittees, important to also bring the heart component of this work – can JTSC members bring the visual and also speak to what doing the work means to them? Should subcommittees hold space on each of their next agendas to have this conversation?
 - Climate and environment are everything and we cannot leave people behind in this work. We need to develop a community mindset, hear discussion of this but do not see it implemented in practice often.
 - What we are fighting for is the land we live on, the air we breathe. We are not as resilient as the rocks we walk upon.
 - Can be more challenging to bring the heart work to the table versus talking points and data gathering, good inspiration to bring this to the subcommittees.
 - Will we be peppering the document with real people and data? It's one thing to talk about it in this subcommittee but other to see it in the document itself.
 - Sophi noted that is the vision for the copyediting and layout component on this, bring in quotes, stories, and visuals from the people they have been talking to. The story component could be a place for JTSC to be involved and have input.

- Housekeeping: Practically, is there a timeline for when liaisons should be introducing this document and making sure there is space on the agenda?
 - Sophi noted the subcommittee co-chairs should be aware of the document, liaisons might want to coordinate with them on how to frame it at upcoming meetings.
 - Kelly's introduction at the Steering Committee was shared: [Recording of September 23 VT Climate Council meeting](#) where Kelly shares the new Guiding Principles visual tool. This 10 minute section (8:30 – 22:00) of the [recording](#) can be valuable to liaisons who will have the opportunity to offer similar context and review of the tool at upcoming subcommittee meetings. Kelly's introduction of the new visual tool, and discussion by the Climate Council, runs from minute 8:30 – 22:00 if you want to listen.

5:25 PM **CAP Discussion Topics (Abbey) – not discussed**

- Liaison updates on topics of discussion or interest from subcommittee meetings
- Bring questions to the group for support/input on working through equity topics in other subcommittees

5:55 PM **What's Next (Abbey)**

- Claire, Abbey, Denise, and Beverley will meet to discuss an outline for the JTSC chapter
- Liaisons will work to support subcommittees with the visual
- Next meeting in November (Abbey will miss November / December meetings)
- JTSC members can review input meeting invite lists to provide input

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