

**Vermont Climate Council  
September 23rd, 2024, Meeting Minutes  
11am-2pm – Virtual**

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**Climate Councilors present:**

June Tierney  
Eric Forand  
Ryan Patch (for Secretary Anson Tebbetts)  
Kelly Klein  
Denise Bailey  
Secretary Julie Moore  
Jared Duval  
Johanna Miller  
Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux  
Jaiel Pulskamp  
Richard Cowart  
Bram Kleppner  
Mark Levine  
Liz Miller  
Billy Coster  
Matt Cota  
Melissa Bailey  
Andrea Wright (for Secretary Joe Flynn)  
Chris Company

**Meeting video and documents are available here:**

<https://climatechange.vermont.gov/event/climate-council-2>

11:00 AM Convene/Welcome/Overview and Approval of Agenda/Approval of Minutes  
*David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*

- Councilors approved the previous meeting minutes.

11:05 AM Just Transition Reflection: Training for Councilors and Subcommittee Members & Visual Guide for Incorporating JT Principles  
*Kelly Klein, Councilor and JT Subcommittee Co-Chair*

- The Just Transition Subcommittee will coordinate a 90-minute training with the VT Office of Racial Equity.
- Liaisons or Just Transition co-chairs should explain the graphic to subcommittees for clarity and to ensure the connection with the Just Transition guiding principles is clear.

11:20 AM Draft outline of the Updated Climate Action Plan  
*Jane Lazorchak, Climate Action Office*

- o Councilors reviewed the proposal and provided the following feedback:
  - o Council should do the Land Acknowledgement process again as the creation of the acknowledgement fostered a great group dynamic.
  - o In the “Responsibility” column for the executive summary and the legislative action/ rule-making section, add the Council and the CAO.
  - o Councilors seek more clarity on how/ when to incorporate technical analysis, such as a cost abatement curve and associated analysis, which can inform details in the plan, especially the scale and pace of recommendations.
    - CAO responded that an updated Business-As-Usual and pathways analysis will start soon - the contract is imminent.
    - CAO said that there are no plans to do economic analysis right now, except in the Cap and Invest Study (done in collaboration with VTrans), which will be completed by the end of the year.
  - o The Department of Public Service noted that the Council’s most intense work overlaps with the same time the Department needs to be responsive to the legislature.
  - o There was a recommendation to add a description of how frontline communities experienced the flooding into the outline, possibly into the Just Transitions section. Could also use public infrastructure damage data, 211 report damage, and concentration of affected properties to tell the story.
    - The plan could include a graphic illustration of climate-related damage since the initial climate plan was updated, or since Irene.
  - o The outline could include an overarching framing section, which would feature a snapshot of where the state is at – the cost of energy now, the costs of damages from climate events now, and the transition VT is looking for.
  - o There was a recommendation to consider putting a request into the legislature for a budget for the Council.
- The new version of the plan includes a section for prioritized actions. Subcommittees will need to work on initial prioritization of a handful of actions to ultimately be reviewed by the Council (around 20-40 actions total).

12:10 PM Updated Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases  
*Science & Data Subcommittee*

- o Jared Duval provided background on the revised Updated Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases recommendation/ methodology that the Council will

make a formal decision to adopt.

12:20 PM Public Comment

- o Alice Peal, member of the Rural Resilience & Adaptation Subcommittee who also leads a Task Group on Public Health made comments that included:
  - o Public health is an issue in which the Council is starting from scratch.
  - o Communication and education are important issues that cut across public health and other topics.

12:30 PM Updated Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases – Decision  
*David Plumb, CBI*

- o Councilors agreed to adopt the Updated Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases.

12:35 PM BREAK

12:55 PM Public engagement - Review activities and prepare stakeholder meetings

*David Plumb, CBI*

- o David Plumb presented an overview of the public outreach activities the CAO is doing in collaboration with CBI.
- o Councilors read summaries of public input and named key issues they heard. They appreciated direct quotes in the summaries, and also encouraged the CAO to seek geographic diversity in its engagement work. Some of the themes Councilors highlighted included:
  - Desire for more public transportation. Electric vehicles are too expensive, and some feel that the government generally doesn't work for people like them.
  - More conversations about forests - some want more natural working lands treated as protected lands.
  - Need for more adaptation work and addressing the issues that are happening right now.
  - Emergency relief efforts during flooding or other events are a focal point. However, for many Vermonters, preparing for and recovering from severe weather is more immediate, relevant and concrete for people than climate action such as EVs and heat pumps.
  - Food as an important component of structural resiliency. Outreach should connect with people working at food pantries.
  - People with very different views need to speak with each other.
  - Confusion/ misunderstanding about what towns do (i.e. towns don't build housing). Need detailed master planning, capital planning, and beyond planning, need to focus on infrastructure.

- Anxiety, frustration, and anger about climate impacts and related themes (housing insecurity, affordability of life, etc). This brings up the theme of mental health, which is directly tied to climate.
  - Connection between what is talked about at these Council meetings and people’s health often seems to get lost. Mental health is not good right now, and we need to acknowledge this and reconnect it to the work we’re doing. This is about the resilience of the people as well.
- Disconnect with language. In order to reach people where they are, we need to speak their language.
- Sense of immediacy in this work.

1:40 PM Public Comment

- None at this time

1:50 PM Next Steps  
*Jane Lazorchak, Climate Action Office*

- Subcommittees are working over the next few months to develop updated recommendations for the Council.
- The next Council meeting is December 9.

2:00 PM Adjourn ##