

# Meeting Minutes

## Mayors' Commission on Climate Change Meeting #8

Virtual Meeting | May 13, 2020

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### The following Commissioners were present during the meeting:

Anne Stausboll | Commission Chair  
Alberto Ayala | Executive Director, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District  
Amanda Blackwood | President and CEO, Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce  
April Wick | Executive Director, Resources for Independent Living  
Arlen Orchard | CEO, Sacramento Municipal Utility District  
Chris Ledesma | Mayor Pro Tem, City of West Sacramento  
Dave Tanner | CEO, Sacramento Association of Realtors  
Henri Li | General Manager and CEO, Sacramento Regional Transit  
James Corless | CEO, Sacramento Area Council of Governments  
Laurie Litman | President, 350 Sacramento  
Mackenzie Wieser | Planning Commissioner, City of Elk Grove  
Meg Arnold | Project Lead & Consultant, Valley Vision  
Mike Teel | Owner and Chairman, Raley's  
Nailah Pope-Harden | Director, Nailah Outreach Consulting  
Nikky Mohanna | Principal, Mohanna Development  
Robert Nelsen | President, California State University Sacramento  
Stephanie Bray | President and CEO, United Way Capital Region  
Steve Hansen | Vice Mayor, City of Sacramento  
Trish Rodriguez | Senior VP, Kaiser Permanente

### Also present during the meeting:

Kate Meis | Executive Director, Local Government Commission  
Julia Kim | Director of Climate Change and Energy Programs, Local Government Commission  
Remi Mendoza | Senior Planner, City of Sacramento  
David Tilley | Principal Planner, City of West Sacramento

### Call to Order

Chair Stausboll called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

## Opening Remarks

Chair Stausboll welcomed Commissioners to the meeting. She noted that the Commission's work is on track to finalize its recommendations report in June, noting that its recommendations will be influenced by recent and ongoing challenges related to COVID-19. The meeting will include two action items (Equity Recommendations and Year One Projects) and focus on gathering input on the draft report.

## Progress Report

Kate Meis provided an update on the Commission's progress regarding the Finance and Funding TAC, Equity TAC and Final Recommendations, Business Roundtables, and community engagement. The draft report, as well as the Supplemental Report (staff report that provides context and menu of options), has been posted for public comment. Meis noted that the final meeting will take place virtually on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

## City of Sacramento Community Outreach Activities

Remi Mendoza with City of Sacramento presented an overview of City's timeline for their Climate Action Plan Update and provided an overview of upcoming virtual community engagement activities.

Pope-Harden asked about efforts to ensure future outreach is more accessible. Mendoza noted that the City is providing translations and closed caption, working closely with community groups, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations, and providing telephone support to complete surveys.

Ayala asked when City Council will vote on approving the recommendations and how the Climate Action Plan will be used to operationalize recommendations. Mendoza responded with two key milestones to bring the draft Plan to City Council and elected officials: later this summer after community outreach and by the end of 2021 to adopt the final Plan.

Litman asked if ordinances can be put in place before 2021. Mendoza noted that staff will engage elected officials before the final Plan is adopted and respond to direction from city council.

Wieser asked about the level of participation at outreach events. Mendoza highlighted strong participation before the pandemic with over 100 participants at city workshops and over 500 participants at community plan area meetings. To engage hard-to-reach communities, staff went to communities via pop-up events, translated materials, and created a youth ambassador program.

Ayala asked how the city plans to deal with development projects that may come forth prior to the adoption of the Climate Action Plan, particularly in light of stimulus funding. Stausboll noted that this may be something the Commission can address as part of Year One Projects.

## City of West Sacramento Climate Action Plan Update

David Tilley with City of West Sacramento presented an overview of the City's timeline for their Climate & Resiliency Action Plan and an update on community engagement activities amidst COVID-19 shelter-in-place guidelines.

## Equity TAC Recommendations

Jackie Cole with Veritable Good Consulting who served as the Equity TAC facilitator presented the final Equity Recommendations.

Ayala noted challenges related to trust and how time-intensive it can be for community members to engage in outreach activities. Pope-Harden and Bray also noted similar comments in regard to outreach fatigue and how community members want the opportunity to be involved in planning, not just to provide input or feedback.

Chair Stausboll noted that the Commission is recommending the cities to put environmental justice committees in place as part of Year One Projects.

Ledesma noted the importance of equity becoming more clear with COVID-19.

**Motion to advance the Equity Recommendations for inclusion in the Commission's Recommendation Report:** Moved by Commissioner Ledesma and seconded by Commissioner Bray.

**The motion passed with 17 AYES, 1 NAY (Teel) and 1 ABSENT (Nelson).**

Teel questioned the timing of implementation given COVID-19.

## **BUSINESS ROUNDTABLES**

Erika Bjork with Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce provided a summary of input received through Business Roundtables and conversations with the business community.

Corless noted the importance of acting with a sense of urgency in a manner that does not cause unintended harm to people and businesses. He urged commissioners to consider the incremental costs of making the shift to carbon zero, to be intentional about recovery without burdening disadvantaged communities and small businesses, such as through community carshare programs or measures to help businesses lower energy bills.

Bjork noted that many small and minority-owned businesses lack access to capital to invest in improvements and lack trust in financial institutions and governments.

Litman noted the importance of rebuilding in a way that is green, recognizing that COVID-19 will not be as large of a disruption as climate change. She expressed the need to be creative.

Wick noted that the Equity TAC discussed the idea of buy-in and the need to ensure groups that have traditionally borne the greatest burden from climate change or government regulation/deregulation do not bear a disproportionate impact. She recognized the diversity of the business community and the need strong public-private partnerships to support implementation.

Teel noted concerns about moving to one source of energy with electrification goals, highlighting concerns related to resilience and equity.

Orchard noted that electricity is not a single source as there are multiple ways to create electricity (biogas, solar, hydrogen, etc.), but that energy resilience is important to continue considering as technologies around storage emerge and become more cost-effective. He noted the importance of hearing the business voice in all of the Commission's decisions. In response to concerns regarding the all-electric new construction strategy, he highlighted success in working with developers and the cost-

effectiveness of all-electric homes and subdivisions. He noted that mandates can be problematic and the importance of providing incentives, co-investing with businesses and property owners, leveraging time of replacement to electrify existing buildings, and providing financial and community support to disadvantaged communities to co-invest in cleaner appliances.

Pope-Harden noted the importance of hearing a variety of perspectives when making a decision and encouraged the Commission to be creative. She noted that COVID-19 is uncovering that many are going through the experiences that disadvantaged communities have been going through, which are being further exacerbated by climate change. She noted that minority-owned businesses are struggling to get capital.

Mohanna highlighted a major theme from Metro Chamber's efforts – the need for innovation and technological advancements to ensure that ordinances put in place are successful. She noted the imperative for ordinances to be coupled with the creativity and technological advancements necessary to achieve the Commission's goals and how SMUD has showcased what an effective public-private partnership can look like (SMUD's Solar Shares program).

Blackwood expressed the Chamber's strong support for addressing climate change issues, but recognized that many businesses are already going out of business. A key barrier is access to capital – frontend cash is needed over rebates as businesses are forced to make difficult decisions. She noted that barriers need to be removed and incentives created.

Ayala recognized the very drastic impact that the business community is facing, as well as the urgency to address climate change. He noted that recent data suggests that air pollution makes the human body more susceptible to viruses like COVID-19, as well as evidence of emissions from the building sector serving as the largest source of emissions and premature death in California. He noted that almost a third of all homes using natural gas have indoor air pollution levels that would be illegal outside, hitting people who are most impacted.

Bjork commented that they are not necessarily advocating for more natural gas, rather promoting flexibility and innovation. She noted that they do not want to limit SMUD's ability to source energy and that there may be new sources of energy in the future.

Wieser urged the Commission needs to step up and address climate change with the same level of commitment as when the initiative launched 18 months ago. She noted that it would be remiss if we thought that climate change and COVID-19 have some level of connection to one another – we need to utilize this rebuilding time to come back stronger and more resilient. She recognized that we are all facing unprecedented times, but there is no right time for a crisis and climate change is a crisis.

Ledesma acknowledged the struggle of how to finance the Commission's recommendations – for both businesses and the cities. He highlighted the need to make choices that address multiple priorities with one being to ensure the business community has the resources they need. He also noted that the business community is not alone as the State faces a budget deficit and cities face lower levels of sales tax and property tax revenue.

Chair Stausboll noted that the business roundtables section of the report will be strengthened and will highlight opportunities for cities to further engage with the business community.

## Year One Projects

Meis presented an overview of the Year One Projects.

Litman expressed support for Year One Projects to use the first year to build the foundation that is needed. She also noted that other projects could be implemented or initiated in the first year, such as slow streets campaign, electrification, and biodiversity plan.

Ayala asked if there are projects that could be highlighted for the first 2-5 years of implementation. Meis responded and noted that more information recommendations for year 2-5 projects could be provided to the cities, but not something that the Commission would vote on.

Chair Stausboll asked what “year one” entails. Meis noted that the first year would begin when the Commission provides its recommendations to the cities (not tied to Climate Action Plan Updates).

Mohanna noted that affordability is an important factor and, given business concerns related to electrification, suggested increasing the electrification and energy efficiency programming to include incentives that cover upfront costs. Meis noted that the energy efficiency program could be more expansive while being mindful of reducing costs for marginalized communities first and foremost. She noted that building all-electric new construction generates cost savings, which is why it had been prioritized for Year One Projects.

Nelson expressed support for the Year One Projects as a set of priorities to guide future efforts.

Ledesma noted the importance of incentive programs to help residents reduce energy bills due to the City of West Sacramento’s energy utility. Chair Stausboll noted the importance of including West Sacramento’s challenges with the utility in the report.

Blackwood expressed both support for maintaining the Commission’s sense of urgency and concerns regarding the timeline of the all-electric new construction strategy.

Corless highlighted opportunities to establish car-free districts on the weekends and encouraged the cities to experiment with car-free streets while traffic is reduced due to COVID-19. He also noted the opportunity to incentivize continued teleworking.

### **Motion to advance the Year One Projects for inclusion in the Commission’s Recommendation Report:**

Moved by Corless and seconded by Ayala.

**The motion passed with 16 AYES, 2 NAYs (Blackwood, Teel), and 1 ABSENT (Hansen).**

## DRAFT REPORT

Chair Stausboll noted that input from the Commission will guide LGC in finalizing the report, which will be voted on at the Commission’s next and final meeting.

Meis provided an overview of the draft report.

Ayala asked if there is an expectation to respond to all public comments. Meis responded and noted that commissioners are expected to review public comments to guide LGC, not respond to each comment.

Chair Stausboll noted that public comments will be included as an appendix to the Supplemental Report.

Orchard asked to review the report with meeting discussions around equity and business roundtables in mind. Chair Stausboll noted preference for unanimous adoption of the final report and the need to create a process for factoring in meeting discussions. Meis highlighted an initial next step to organize calls with each commissioner leading up to the final meeting. Chair Stausboll noted that the Commission had voted on the carbon zero strategies, foundational principles, and equity recommendations, and that the report's narrative language will be updated to reflect today's meeting.

Mohana expressed the criticality of a unanimous vote. She noted that while she has concerns about some approaches, she believes in the overall vision. She acknowledged challenges related to loss of income and lack of affordability, and the need to incentivize density and affordability to mitigate transportation emissions.

Wick highlighted the Commission's shared vision of achieving carbon zero by 2045 and offered support to engage with Commissioners in order to obtain unanimous adoption. She expressed interest in seeing climate change policy platforms of chambers of commerce.

Pope-Harden asked when community outreach will take place. Meis noted that the Commission's online public comment portal has been open since the beginning of the process, which will remain open. She requested support from commissioners and partners to help with outreach. Chair Stausboll noted that the cities will be in charge of leading outreach after the Commission completes its work.

Teel noted changes since items had been voted on. Chair Stausboll noted that the Commission will vote on all items as a whole when voting on the final report.

Ayala requested the report to be reviewed for accessibility.

Bray highlighted the importance of remaining committed to the vision that has been cast in the report rather than reconsidering decisions the Commission had already made. She noted how COVID-19 has revealed issues in plain sight, which will be worsened by climate change. She recognized that the complexity of climate change will lead to disagreements during an extended period of scarcity, but also the opportunity to think differently and bring people along.

### **Next Steps & Closing Remarks**

Chair Stausboll announced the date of the next meeting, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 4:00-7:30 PM. The objective of the meeting will be to adopt the final report. The agenda will also include updates from the cities and commitments from commissioners to support implementation.

Ayala encouraged commissioners to thoughtfully consider what they can do to amplify what the two cities will accomplish, recognizing the need for support, partnerships, and regional action.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Stausboll adjourned the meeting at 7:17pm.