

Kansas City, MO Climate Protection Steering Committee (CPSC)  
Online Meeting Via Microsoft Teams  
March 21, 2022

*CPSC Members Present:* Robin Ganahl (Chair), Michael Kelley (Vice-Chair), Bridget Sanderson, Ellen Fairchild, Kristin Riott, Beth Pauley, Bill Griffith.

*CPSC Members Absent:* Thomas Grever, Angela Crawford.

*Staff:* Andy Savastino, Lara Isch, Chris Hays, Rachel O’Neal – OEQ; Delia Heffernan – KC Water.

*Other Attendees:* Adam Rossi, Claus Wawrzinek, Alissa Greenwald, Allen Dillingham, Anna Spoerre, Ashley Sadowski, Billy Davies, Carol Macken, Don Wallace, Elizabeth Danforth, Emily Wolfe, Christy Engemann, Erica Flores, Kailee Ford, Araceli Fritz, Theresa Garza, Lemartt Holman, Jason Klindt, Jerry Shechter, Jim Turner, Justice Horn, Karen Uhlenhuth, Kelly Gilbert, Mary Kay McGinty, Michaela Meckel, Miriam Bouallegue, Ryan Dickey, Nolan Sagan, Wade Kiefer, Warren Adams-Leavitt, Jabbar Wesley, Laela Zaidi, Nikki Goodson, Michael Wolfe, Beto Lugo-Martinez, Eslun Tucker, Atenas Mena.

**Introductions & Overview**

Robin Ganahl opened the meeting at 3:30 pm with a brief welcome.

Rachel O’Neal called roll for committee members; a quorum was present at that time.

**Approval of January and February 2022 Minutes**

\*Ellen Fairchild made a motion, seconded by Bill Griffith, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January and February 2022. The motion passed.

**Opening Comments – Robin Ganahl**

This committee was appointed by Mayor Lucas to guide the process and produce a climate plan that best serves the residents of Kansas City, as well as clearly show how the city will meet or exceed the targets for GHG reduction approved by City Council. Robin feels that key issues were decided without her or the committee’s knowledge. She is concerned that the strategy prioritization process was not transparent due to the fact that the city did not take a recommendation that had been voted on by the CPSC. Robin wants to work with Brendle group to have all the recommendations made by CPSC incorporated into the plan.

\*Robin Ganahl made a motion, seconded by Beth Pauley, that the Brendle Group and OEQ make themselves available this week to finish incorporating the CPSC’s recommendations that were voted on and to work on areas where the CPSC and Brendle/OEQ are not aligned. Additionally, to publish an updated draft of the climate plan on the Cities website by next Monday (3/28/22).

Discussion:

- Andy Savastino – The staff has made themselves available to the CPSC, shared the concerns regarding the scope of the contract with Brendle and laid out a plan to work with the working groups to help process the comments from the community. The plan was just launched on Wednesday, so this is the beginning of this phase of the project. OEQ considers this a very high priority but is also short staffed. They are working to the best of their ability to accommodate the needs of Robin and the committee while staying within the scope of the contract with Brendle.
- Lara Isch – Even though Brendle has very little time left on their contract, they have been trying hard to work with the CPSC to get their comments incorporated. There was an overwhelming need to get this out to the public for as long as possible to stay on track and the thinking behind their actions is that the CPSC could work through the public's comments and finalizing their own comments at the same time so Brendle's time could be utilized to the full extent possible. OEQ is also waiting for staff feedback and would like to work on incorporating all of those pieces together.
- Kristen Riott – Concerned about setting up an adversarial relationship with the various entities that will be needed to accomplish the goals of the Robin and the committee. Kristen believes in the philosophy of the director of Bridging the Gap, which is, “in order to make real progress on difficult issues, like Climate Change, you need to have everyone at the table and everyone talking in a civilized way to make forward progress.” Nurturing any decisiveness, will not serve the purposing that the committee is dedicated to.
- Beth Pauly – Beth supports Robin's motion because she believes there are big issues with the draft that do not reflect what this committee is working towards. Specifically, it says in the draft plan that adding renewable energy to the grid will increase rates but the source for that statement actually says the opposite. We cannot run the risk of conveying any false information, especially when it relates to fossil fuel, which needs to be eliminated.
- Bridget Sanderson – Also supports Robin's motion because she is frustrated that the CPSC worked really hard on their recommendations and when the Brendle group had questions, they didn't reach out. She wants to sit down and talk about the issues.
- Ellen Fairchild – Isn't the public comment period where all people can add input?
  - Robin - to keep on schedule and be able to approve the plan by the next meeting, the conversations need to happen sooner than later.
  - Lara – The consultant team sent out a document that had all the CPSC recommendations and information about whether or not they were put in the plan and why or why not. At the last meeting with Brendle, it was discussed that CPSC could make their edits or clarifications in that document to save consultant time (which has to be paid for). Robin will forward that document to the rest of the team.
  - Lara - Brendle thinks that the items that needed further discussion along with some of the public comments can be taken care of at one meeting in order to maximize meeting times. Remaining meetings with Brendle do depend on budget.
- Michael Kelley – Cannot support Robin's motion. The route a motion like this takes will not get us where we need to be to lower carbon emissions.

\*Robin Ganahl withdrew her motion.

## **Present Draft Plan – Lara Isch**

Please see attached PowerPoint.

- Draft plan is live at: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/04e8f07a-1fdb-4c92-91b8-8f4ec1a83f4c>
- It is also on the OEQ site but to make a comment please go to the playbook site: <https://playbook.kcmo.gov/cprp>
- The plan is not the policy. The plan is a guiding document to create policies. It is a living document and will be evolving over the next 30 days to incorporate comments from the community as well as internal city departments.
- Reviewing and providing comments on the Plan and the Short-Term Implementation documents will be most helpful to move the needle.
- Next Steps:
  - Deadline for public review – April 12, 2022
  - CPSC will meet to discuss and finalize plan – April 25, 2022
  - Final Plan presented to City Council at Business Session (tentative) – April 28, 2022
  - Final Plan presented to City Council committee for review and pass to City Council – May 4, 2022
- It is recommended that you register for the Playbook site.

## **Explain 1-month Public Comment Period – Lara Isch**

- Preferred method of commenting: The Playbook site.
- If you have a lot of comments or want to schedule a call with OEQ please email [oeq@kcmo.org](mailto:oeq@kcmo.org). Please do not email staff directly.
- Any Kansas City photos are welcome.
- Public session for Wednesday will most likely be moved out a week due to administrative issues.
- Future responsibilities of the CPSC:

The committee shall advise the City Council on the implementation of the City's Climate Protection Plan. The committee shall also review plans, budgets, programs and actions of the city which significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions while preserving economic development, transportation options and the ability of responsible producers of energy to provide a stable and cost-effective energy supply. The committee shall advise the City Council as to important developments related to the Climate Protection Plan as appropriate.

## **Public Comments**

Adam Rossi – What is the role of coal in Evergy's mix? Didn't see anything about closing the Hawthorne plant. Worried that the plan is not aggressive enough on this issue.

Michaela Meckel –wants KC to be zero carbon by 2040, recommends closing the Hawthorne coal plant by 2025 and all other coal plants by 2030.

Ryan Dickey – Would like to see measurable outcomes with each strategy, asked about CPSC edits that weren't in the plan, and wants to see more ambitious language about building decarbonization (without tenant rents rising) and public transport staffing.

Kailee Ford – is disappointed that some of the changes from the last meeting did not make it into the plan yet. Thinks that the community is not being heard. Wants the committee to call on the Mayor to fill the remaining two open seats.

Karen Uhlenhuth – Pay as you save may be a good program to jump start energy efficiency throughout the city, the city needs to adapt the most recent IECC code, finance trees (increasing and maintain.)

Michael Wolfe – Thinks that public input has been a “joke.”

Laela Zaidi – Would like to see the vacant seats on this committee filled.

Beto Lugo-Martinez – Believes there is no equity in the plan. Requests that all comments be included in the plan, at least as an appendix. Doesn't believe that any comments should be limited in time. Trees should not substitute for emissions standards or laws and strong polluter enforcement.

Billy Davies – This week's Finance committee meeting – proposal to move OEQ out of City's Managers office will be on the table. We need to have a full CPSC.

Nikki Goodson – City should focus on transition to renewable energy and alternative modes of transportation.

Atenas Mena – Fill the vacant seats with diversity in mind. Does not want Coal or Natural Gas. The location of the Hawthorne coal plant is of special concern regarding the environmental justice community.

Beth Pauley – The Hawthorne plan has come up a lot in this meeting and would like to know why it wasn't included in the plan yet.

- Andy Savastino – this option is not off the table yet but needs to be approved by the Cities legal team before it can be spoken to.

Erica Flores – feels that it is important to address industry ties to utilities and issues that are hard to talk about. There is more than what is reflected in the plan that can be done to help communities that are most impacted by climate change. Wants OEQ to reach out to more members and diverse groups in the community.

- Andy Savastino – the city will be reaching out to diverse groups as laid out in the

Eslun Tucker – Wants to add that the Climate Plan requires OEQ be kept in the City Manager's office. Data shows both wind and solar are now cheaper. the more we roll out W & S, the more we will all benefit from lower cost. This is a punctuating moment, to speed up electrification. Every this could result in a major opportunity for you as we shift to 100% electrification.

Ashley Sadowski – On the implementation plan there is very few MWDBE organizations listed. It would be great to better understand who is missing and how we can add a goal in the plan that builds the capacity of people of color to lead implementation.

Mary Kay McGinty – Worried that on pg. 25 of the plan it says the cost savings from increasing the percentage of renewable energy in the utility grid mix is unknown, and likely an increase in electric utility rates. Thinks the City should advocate on behalf of the CPSC at the Public Service Commission to retire the Hawthorn coal plant by 2025 and all remaining coal plants by 2030 and ensure ratepayer money is being spent not on more gas infrastructure but on renewables and helping modernize our households and building to meet the demands of the grid.

Don Wallace - Who or what entities are responsible for furthering these directives that will ensure that this truly is a living document?

- How will staff manage to provide oversight of the promises made by the large number of Implementation Leaders and Supporting Parties?
- What language in a resolution or ordinance should the Council pass to assure the community that this document remains a “living document”?
- Pages 18-22 of the Short-Term Implementation Plan identifies the FTEs for staff time requirements for fulfilling the short-term actions. What is the total number?
- Is the ordinance as posted by Mr. Savastino and read by Mr. Kelley identifying the responsibilities of the Steering Committee mentioned in this Plan? This would be reassuring to the public of the viability of the plan after approval by Council.

### **Next Steps**

\*Robin Ganahl made a motion, seconded by Michael Kelley, to take a position of support for keeping OEQ within the City Manager’s office. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 pm.

\*Action Items