

# Community Advisory Workgroup Meeting

## Meeting Notes

Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Link to packet and presentation:

CAW Members Present: Tom Crawford, Kim Piper, Juan Haeckermann-Godoy, Mackenzie McCall, Courtney Cecale, Lauren Tamboer, Tierra Bonds, Stephen Bernath, Amita Devarajan, Matthew Landers, & Shannon Sipher

CAW Members Absent: Rachel Hastings

Guests Present: Gene Angel (Thurston Economic Development Council), Rachele Martin (Thurston Lewis Mason Central Labor Council), William Westmoreland (Pacific Mountain Workforce).

Staff Members Present: Alyssa Jones Wood (City of Tumwater), Rebecca Harvey (Thurston County), Julia Downing (Thurston County), Dominic Jones (City of Olympia).

1. Welcome and Call to Order (5 minutes)
  - a. CAW meeting call to order at 4:02pm
2. Announcements (10 minutes)
  - a. Staff Announcements
    - Staff need a volunteer to be the CAW representative for the Jan 27 Executive Committee (EC) meeting from 4-6pm.
      - i. Amita will be the representative.
    - The City of Lacey is in the process of contracting with a new Administrative Services consultant for the TCMC. They will hopefully begin work in March.
    - The TCMC is still seeking applications for the three open seats on the CAW. They've received about a dozen applications so far.
    - Thurston County has received nine bids for the Energize Thurston Installer RFP. The team is interviewing 6 contractors this week.
    - All TCMC jurisdictions are looking for public comment/engagement on their Comprehensive Plan.
  - b. CAW Member Announcements
    - Juan is conducting research on transportation accessibility for south county residents. He is putting together a survey and wants to share the survey to anyone available.
    - Tom and Stephen are having a work session with Thurston County Board of County Commissioners on Jan 29<sup>th</sup> at 9am. If any other CAW members would like to be present let Stephen know. It will be a hybrid meeting.
    - Tom shared that TCAT is recruiting folks to make comment and engage with each city councils and Board of County Commissioners who will be receiving proposals for the HES ordinance. TCAT is inviting people to join. Initial meeting on February 6 for education. Contact Janet Nazy, TCAT Executive Director for more information.
3. Business Items

- a. Approval of TCMC CAW Draft 2025 Meeting Schedule (45 minutes)
- This was moved to the second business item at the request of Tom Crawford.
  - Rebecca gave an overview of the Draft 2025 CAW Meeting Schedule, which is a flexible document that currently includes some open agenda spots that will be filled in throughout the year.
  - She noted that the February 18 item “Discussion - 2025 Regional Initiative Delay” would follow a discussion of the same item at the January 27 EC meeting.
  - A majority (10 out of 11) of the CAW members in attendance voted to approve the Draft 2025 Meeting Schedule.
  - CAW members were divided into breakout groups of two to brainstorm potential business items they might like to include in open spots in the 2025 schedule. Discussion prompts for the breakout groups are listed below.\* CAW members then shared what they discussed with the full group.
    - i. Stephen would like to think about what we can do related to transportation even if it’s education-oriented, and finding funds available regardless of the outcome of the EC meeting. He discussed the *Wood is Good* initiative – a mass timber movement to increase the use of wood in larger buildings to reduce concrete use.
    - ii. Juan and Mackenzie suggested looking into how we are currently protecting our lands and how to increase these protections for agriculture land in particular. Rebecca suggested taking a look at the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan chapter on Natural Resource Lands.
    - iii. Matthew seconded Stephen’s request to discuss transportation, both transportation alternatives and planning.
    - iv. Courtney would like to explore if there is a way to identify high GHG emitters, publish a list on a webpage, and identify technical assistance opportunities. She would also like to think about how to align community wealth building with climate projects.
    - v. Tom shared he would like to discuss how to create a dedicated local source of funding. He noted that members of the Staff Team had voiced interest in identifying a source of matching funds for grants.
    - vi. Shannon shared an idea to develop a local lobbying and advocacy group in Olympia, as the state capital, to lobby against state/local government funding being used to fund private industries, specifically data centers.
    - vii. Amita suggested having more announcements and discussions coming from CAW members.
    - viii. Kim shared the importance of continuing to develop language and verbiage to communicate with those who may disagree with the general views of the CAW. She also shared it would be nice to have an informed representative report to the EC and CAW at the

end of this legislative session about what bills were rejected, dropped, passed, etc.

- ix. Stephen shared it would be helpful to hear about the state budget and whether the new federal administration may be pulling back any funding for climate work that was released by the Biden Administration.
- b. Workforce Development and the TCMP (45 minutes)
- Moved to the first business item so the guests would not have to stay for the other item.
  - CAW member Tom Crawford led this discussion about workforce development in Thurston County. He emphasized the need for building connections and community in this time and wanted to discuss the needs and challenges of working people.
  - Three guest speakers were present at the CAW meeting: Rachelle Martin of the Thurston Lewis Mason Central Labor Council, Gene Angel from the Thurston Economic Development Council, and William Westmoreland of Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council.
  - Tom shared the goals of this item were to discuss the role of workers in achieving the goals of the TCMP and the work necessary to ensure workers are available, well supported, and treated fairly; as well as to discuss whether the CAW would like to schedule a future CAW meeting agenda item to further this discussion.
  - Tom provided a slideshow and posed questions to the guests for discussion.
  - How many workers are needed?
    - i. Gene shared that he would need to gather specific data to answer this question, it would be possible to estimate, but at this time he does not have a number.
    - ii. William discussed how in these types of workforce transitions we have to think about the long-term impacts of transitioning people away from their current skillsets. Certain workers who have done traditional electric work may only need to gain minor skills while others may need to relearn a larger percentage of their existing skillset.
    - iii. Rachelle shared information about two current programs in the state. The WA state labor council has a workforce development team that will go into trades that are shutting down and retrain these workers with new skills. There is also a more local apprenticeship utilization program and trainings for people that are totally new and for people that already have existing skills. She also shared that Intercity Transit drivers are currently in the midst of important contract negotiations. If you are interested in advocating for the drivers of ATU 1765, their board meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays every month at 5:30pm.
    - iv. Gene shared some previous research he did about the typical potential market growth in this field. These numbers have nothing to do with any significant advancement of green priorities; these numbers just represent Thurston County population growth.

Estimated numbers show we will need 117 additional electricians in the next 5 years. For typical construction workers and maintenance and repair people an estimated 400 additional FTE are needed to meet the growth for the next 5 years.

- Current Capacity
  - i. Rachelle shared there could be the capacity to train this workforce if we knew more about the numbers and if people would actually be interested in increasing/joining this workforce. Planning needs to be done. “No, we couldn’t do this tomorrow, yes we could do this soonish.” Emphasized that environmental justice is a priority of the state labor council.
  - ii. Alyssa shared the TCMC is estimating 8 HES assessors will be needed across the County if the HES ordinance is passed across all jurisdictions.
  - iii. William shared the Pacific Labor Council currently has strategies to support displaced workers, youth workers, and occupations in demand, so they could continue to invest in these strategies with demand and additional resources.
  - iv. Gene suggested the EDC has 3 ways to support this effort: Research Services, how can we start communicating a strong impact to our stakeholders and funders; Relationship Services, the EDC has a very deep relationship with the with business community; and Advocacy Services, what types of development will need to be put in place to build a greener community.
- CAW Discussion
  - i. Tom shared he believes the CAW should recommend that this be discussed by the EC and later potentially for the CAW to suggest policy or program initiatives to the local jurisdictions.
  - ii. Shannon shared the importance of utilizing local workers for large production companies and suggested efforts to encourage local elected officials to consider the effects of certain policies on the workforce.
  - iii. Juan shared he thinks this is really important in order to retain local workers.
  - iv. Amita shared they were in support of bringing this to the EC. They then asked in what format this information would be presented to the EC and what information would be presented.
  - v. Tom stated this would be a briefing to consider policy options to share with the elected bodies. It would be useful to figure out ways to integrate and connect the guest speakers at the CAW meeting to the TCMC process.
  - vi. Kim shared in real estate there is a void of qualified workers. In 2024 there were 4,160 new listings in Thurston County. She posed the question: if there were an HES assessment for each, who would perform the work (i.e., home energy upgrades) that are recommended via the assessments. As part of the workforce development, there is a need for generalists to decide what is the best ‘bang for your buck’ in terms of home energy improvements.

- CAW Decision
  - i. The CAW members in attendance voted unanimously (11 out of 11) to support further discussion of workforce development at a future CAW Meeting.
- 4. Upcoming Agendas (15 minutes)
  - a. Upcoming Agendas Review
    - The CAW voted in favor of scheduling the Workforce Development Discussion on the April CAW Meeting agenda (5 votes), followed by May (2 votes) or July (2 votes).
  - b. Agenda Requests for upcoming CAW Meetings
    - Staff explained that any CAW member could request an item for a future CAW agenda if they could answer the four required questions listed in the CAW Charter.
    - Amita expressed support for Kim's suggested agenda item for a presentation about the outcomes of the Legislative Session. Rebecca confirmed that the four questions were answered for this item.
    - The CAW voted in favor of scheduling this agenda item on a future CAW agenda.
  - c. Agenda Requests for upcoming EC Meetings
    - None at this time
- 5. Adjourn

\*Breakout Group Prompts:

1. What do you hope to achieve in terms of climate mitigation in 2025 (either as the TCMC, the CAW, or yourself personally)?
2. Are there any topics you would like to discuss, be briefed on, or take action on during a 2025 CAW meeting? *Note: This is just a brainstorming session; any topics you discuss will NOT be added to a future agenda unless they go through the full agenda request process as described in the CAW Charter.*