

Vermont Climate Action Commission

Thursday February 8, 2018

8:30am – 4:30pm

The ANR Annex Building / Berlin

Commissioners Present: Marie Audet, Harrison Bushnell, Kristin Carlson, Paul Costello, Matt Cota, Tom Donahue, Daniel Dutcher (for Michelle Boomhower), Bethany Fleishman, Chris Morrow (for Bill Laberge), Johanna Miller, Ted Brady (for Michael Schirling), Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur (for Mary Sprayregen), Bob Stevens, June Tierney, Robert Turner, Peter Walke

Agenda Items

1. Welcome / Goals for the Day

The Chair welcomed the group and established the goal for today's meeting. Today's presentations are intended to provide shared understanding and knowledge to the group. The outcome of the meeting will be establishment of working groups for each topic. Those groups will develop work plans for the March meeting that lead to development of the commission's July report and recommendations.

The group discussed the governor's letter of January 25. In it, the governor indicated his support for electric vehicles and advanced wood heat. There are also discussions going on regarding funding for increased weatherization, but action may not be coming this year. There was some disappointment expressed by committee members regarding the governor's response on a carbon market-carbon price study, which the Chair acknowledged. The Chair is planning a meeting with the governor in the near future to discuss the future of the commission through July and beyond and will share any feedback with the commission members.

Notes from the January meeting were approved.

Topic Area Presentations

The commission received presentations on six topic areas through the remainder of the morning and through the afternoon. Topic area summaries (posted separately) were provided to the commissioners in advance of the meeting.

2. Electric Vehicles / Transportation

- Panel: Dave Roberts and Michelle McCutcheon-Schour, VEIC; Marilyn Miller, Vermont Automobile Dealers Association. Facilitator: Collin Smythe, Department of Environmental Conservation

3. Building Energy Use

- Panel: Richard Faesy, Energy Futures Group; Paul Zabriskie, Capstone Community Action; Philip Bickel, Efficiency Vermont; Facilitator: Dan Edson, Department of Buildings and General Services

4. Electric Grid Modernization

- Panel: Josh Castenguay, GMP; Bill Kallock, Integral Analytics; Facilitator: Riley Allen, Department of Public Service

5. Morning Review

The group discussed the morning presentations and agreed on the following:

Grid modernization

The Commission discussed this issue at length to determine whether it could add any significant value to the discussion. All agreed that it was a critical building block for many climate actions, but members were concerned that the Commission might not be able to add additional information to the discussion. In the end, the Commission agreed to table the decision on whether to form a working group in support of investigating this topic until it was clear that such a group was needed.

Building weatherization

Issues: Funding, workforce development and retention, logistics.
Agreement to form a work group

EV/Transportation

Issues: Nexus w/several other issues, primarily grid modernization. Funding.
Agreement to form work group

6. Land Use

- Panel: Charlie Baker, Chittenden County RPC; Kevin Geiger, Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission; Jamey Fidel, Vermont Natural Resources Council; John Austin, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife; Facilitator: Tom Rogers, Department of Fish and Wildlife

7. Carbon Sequestration Opportunities

- Panel: Jeff Carter, UVM Extension; Robert Turner, R.J. Turner Company; Facilitator: Alex DePillis, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

8. Climate Economy Promotion

- Panel: Ellen Kahler, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund; Three Members of Accel-VT Cohort (Omega Grid, Skyven Technologies, and Emergy)

9. Next Steps / Topic Group Assignments

Grid Modernization

The commission affirmed the earlier decision that this issue would be tabled until additional information is available

Weatherization/Building Energy Use

Includes discussion of thermal and electric energy
Commissioners Donahue, Stevens, McGinnis and Allen for Commissioner Tierney

EV/Transportation

Commissioners Fleishman, McGinnis, Donahue, Carlson, Bushnell, Morrow, Miller, Wallace-Brodeur, Dutcher for Commissioner Boomhower, and Allen for Commissioner Tierney

Smart Growth

The Commission discussed this topic and agreed to rename it from “Land Use” to “Smart Growth”

Includes discussion of Act 250, Mobility/transportation

Commissioners Fleishman, Stevens, Wallace-Brodeur, Miller, Dutcher for Commissioner Boomhower

Carbon Sequestration

Commissioners Costello, Turner, Audet

Climate Economy

Commissioners Costello, Bushnell, Miller, Brady for Commissioner Schirling

Each group will have a chair/leader (to be identified). ANR will provide workgroup support. Chair Walke will solicit input from Commissioners not in attendance as to which work group(s) they would like to support.

Chair Walke will follow up with the commission regarding whether these work group meetings need to be warned as public meetings.

Commissioner Bushnell proposed a mechanism be developed to allow communication between the work groups as the work progresses. This will be developed at the March meeting.

Goal is for each work group to develop and present a work plan to the full commission for review at the March meeting. ANR will provide a work plan template and staff support for each work group.

July deliverable will be a report with recommendations in each of these areas for delivery to the governor.

10. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

11. Other Business

The Chair suggested and the commission members agreed to hold future commission meetings at this location (ANR Annex).

12. Adjourn