



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Meeting Minutes - Final Sustainability Commission

**Officers:** Chair Aurora Taylor, Vice Chair Katie Riley, Secretary Erik de Jong

**Members:** Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope

**Staff Liaison:** Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator

**Assembly Liaison:** Thor Christianson

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Monday, May 5, 2025

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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### I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

**Acting Chair Riley called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 P.M.**

**Present:** Katie Riley (Acting Chair) Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope, Erik de Jong,  
Aurora Taylor (telephonic)

**Absent:** Thor Christianson (Assembly Liaison)

**Staff:** Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator, telephonic), Amy Ainslie (Planning and Community  
Development Director)

**Public:** Eric Jordan, Leah Mason, Sam Pointer

### II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

No changes.

### III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the March 3, 2025 minutes.

**Hope moved to approve the March 3, 2025 minutes. Motion  
PASSED 5-0 by roll call vote.**

### IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics off the agenda)*

None.

### V. SPECIAL REPORTS

None.

### VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

### VII. NEW BUSINESS

#### **A. Approve the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) Guiding Principles**

Gabel introduced the item and explained how throughout the scoping community survey and solidified through workshop discussions, four themes that guide how Sitkans think about their energy future had emerged: affordability, reliability, self-sufficiency, and innovation. She explained that the intent was to build a narrative around each of them to illustrate what each of these principles meant and how they impact the future energy system in Sitka. By doing this, the community could better decide which actions to pursue to move Sitka towards each of these priorities that have been consistent throughout the project.

Riley inquired about the inclusion of collaboration as a guiding principle as it was also a community value. Amy Ainslie clarified the distinction between a value and the guiding principles; Gabel suggested drafting it as either a guiding principle or guiding question for review at the June meeting.

Bagley inquired if the renewability of Sitka's energy sources should be reflected more explicitly in the guiding principles and table. Gabel explained that the renewable aspect of the project would be more clearly described in the draft SCRES document.

Leah Mason spoke in support of the storytelling approach to help understand the nuances of the proposed themes. Eric Jordan shared his experiences and observations about the benefits of clean energy, emphasizing the cost savings.

**Hope moved approve affordability, reliability, self-sufficiency, and innovation as the guiding principles/priorities for the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy.**  
**Motion PASSED 5-0 by roll call vote.**

#### **B. Discussion/Direction/Decision on the 2025-2026 Work Plan**

The Commission discussed challenges regarding municipal solid waste and the lack of a Public Works Director and updated waste stream analysis. Gabel provided an update on the Southeast Alaska Solid Waste Authority's (SEASWA) regional solid waste planning project and how it could support the Commission's work with municipal solid waste.

Riley asked about the status of electric vehicle purchases and their usage in the municipal fleet. Ainslie provided where to find that information in the FY26 budget and pointed out vehicles slated to be replaced with EVs and provided an update on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds. Riley, Hope, and de Jong expressed interest in participating in the Decarbonizing and Rightsizing to Improve Vehicle Efficiency (DRIVE) advisory group to support staff as needed.

Hope called attention to how the Commission could track their regional sustainability efforts and networking.

#### **VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD** *(not to exceed 3 minutes on topics on or off the agenda)*

Sam Pointer introduced himself to the Commission and his interests in the Commission's ongoing work and that he looked forward to learning more.

Mason spoke in support of tracking regional sustainability efforts and taking a proactive approach in finding solutions.

#### **IX. REPORTS** *(Staff, Chair, Assembly, Commissioners)*

**Staff:** Gabel updated the Commission on the SCRES technical team's visit to host roadmapping workshops and the progress that was made. She attended the Sustainable Southeast Partnership (SSP) retreat in April and was currently attending the Energy Leadership Accelerator summit cohosted by the Alaska Center for Energy and Power (ACEP) and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI).

**Chair:** Riley reported on the SSP retreat, her attendance to the Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association's climate adaptation work session in March, her work with the Sitka Conservation Society's fish to schools program and how it could be modeled regionally and announced that the CBS Electric Department was currently recruiting a high-school aged intern.

**Commissioners:** Bagley summarized her guest lecture on climate change and human health at the Sitka High School.

Hope summarized his attendance at the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribal Assembly meeting and explained their role in a regional approach to sustainability.

Taylor reported on the SSP retreat and her work with Spruce Root and the Bristol Bay Native Association on climate adaptation in fisheries in Dillingham, Alaska.

**X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA**

The next meeting was scheduled for June 2, 2025 at 6:00 P.M., in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Acting Chair Riley moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seeing no objection, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at approximately 7:46 P.M.

Minutes by: Bri Gabel, Staff Liaison