



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Meeting Agenda Sustainability Commission

**Officers:** Chair Katie Riley, Vice Chair Angie Bowers, Secretary Carol Voisin

**Members:** Elizabeth Bagley, Kent Barkhau, Aurora Taylor, Fernanda Zermoglio

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

**Assembly Liaison:** Kevin Mosher

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Tuesday, June 6, 2023

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

**II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA**

**III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES**

Approve the May 2, 2023 minutes

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

**V. REPORTS**

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

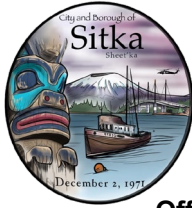
**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Updates and Next Steps for Working Groups

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

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

**X. ADJOURNMENT**



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Meeting Minutes Sustainability Commission

**Officers:** Chair Katie Riley, Vice Chair Angie Bowers, Secretary Carol Voisin

**Members:** Elizabeth Bagley, Kent Barkhau, Aurora Taylor, Fernanda Zermoglio

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Tuesday, May 2, 2023

6:00 P.M.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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### I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

**Chair Riley called the meeting to order at approximately 6:01 P.M.**

**Present:** Katie Riley (Chair), Elizabeth Bagley, Kent Barkhau, Angie Bowers (arrived at 6:17), Aurora Taylor, Carol Voisin, Fernanda Zermoglio, Kevin Mosher (Assembly Liaison).

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator), Amy Ainslie (Planning Director)

**Public:** Larry Edwards, Lisa Sadleir-Hart, Joel Hanson, Leah Mason

### II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

**Voisin moved that Item VI. Unfinished Business be moved to the end of the agenda.  
Motion PASSED 6-0 by voice vote.**

### III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the April 4, 2023 minutes.

**Taylor moved to approve the April 4, 2023 minutes.  
Motion PASSED 6-0 by voice vote.**

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

None.

### V. REPORTS

**Staff:** Gabel reported that received a scholarship to attend the Alaska Sustainability Energy Conference in late May thanks to a Denali Commission grant.

**Chair:** Riley attended the Sustainable Southeast Partnership Annual Retreat that connects diverse organizations from around the region. Gabel and Riley met with Woody Widmark, Chairman of the Tribal Council of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, to discuss the stakeholder engagement form for the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership (ETIPP) application and potential partnership if the technical assistance is received.

**Commissioners:** Barkhau asked about the Commission's role regarding the April meeting Heat Smart (AHS) recommendation to the Assembly. Riley explained that she advised Andy Romanoff, Executive Director of AHS, to reach out to the Sitka Assemblymembers for co-sponsors for the recommendation to go to the Assembly and that the Commission's job was finished. Mosher added that he advised Romanoff to call Assemblymembers for a co-sponsor.

Taylor attended the new commission members training hosted by the clerks. She announced new employment with an Anchorage based climate policy institute where she is the climate justice coordinator working with north and western tribes on climate adaptation and environmental monitoring.

Bagley announced that Drawdown had recently published a road map video series.

## VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### A. Decide the Next Steps for the 2023-2024 Annual Work Plan Goals.

Gabel noted that the ETIPP application was due May 19 and expected to be notified of the outcome in mid-July or later. She presented the stakeholder engagement form to STA's Natural Resource Committee and that they suggested moving it to Tribal Council for approval. She added that the final ETIPP report was caught up in the federal approvals was not yet available and would distribute it as soon as she received it.

Mosher inquired about the chances of a successful ETIPP application. Gabel explained that chances of success would depend on making a link between the first and second requests.

Riley noted that in her conversations with Chairman Widmark she used the term "partner" instead of "stakeholder" as the Tribe may play a bigger part in the ETIPP work if they chose to do so. She suggested that the Commission form informal working groups to begin working on goals two and three while ETIPP applications were reviewed. Gabel suggested a public engagement working group that could be applied to all three goals.

Hanson voiced support for the formation of work groups, especially public engagement and suggested the Juneau model for engagement with sustainability themed meetings.

Commissioners volunteered for the following informal working groups:

Public Engagement – Barkhau, Taylor, Voisin

Solid Waste – Zermoglio, Bagley, Bowers

EV Fleet Transition – Riley, Taylor (unofficially but noted her availability to help as needed)

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

### B. Steve Behnke, Chair of the Energy Subcommittee of the Juneau Commission on Sustainability (JCOS), and Denise Koch, Deputy Director of Public Works and JCOS Staff Liaison, on CBJ's Process for Developing Their Community Renewable Energy Strategy

Behnke gave some history and politics that surrounded the development of the renewable energy strategy in 2018. CBJ/JCOS hired a consultant to put together a strategy who provided basic background materials. Four overarching strategies were developed with hundreds of identified action items which focused on uses of renewable energy then on energy supplies. CBJ staff strongly supported efforts with six large public meetings over a year. The main recommendation was to develop action plans for each strategy which is what JCOS is focused on now. Lessons learned were to focus on community and CBJ uses, the need for "buy in" from the community and the need to maintain continuity in implementation.

Koch noted that Behnke is the continuity for the strategy. She was recently appointed to the staff liaison position as JCOS had matured from planning to implementation of plans through Public Works. She explained and provided examples of how sustainability is being woven into other CBJ departments.

Leah Mason asked about the six public meetings, and asked what contributed the most to the success.

Commissioners took turns asking questions about details of developing the Community Renewable Energy Strategy, particularly the public engagement through the six meetings. Behnke explained that the meetings brought together interested public and panelists for two-hour discussions regarding sustainability issues. Other questions included details about CBJ's greenhouse gas emissions inventory, costs of consultation, and tips for the Commission moving forward in their work.

**C. Approve the Sustainability Commission Stakeholder Support Form for ETIPP Application**

Riley explained that Barkhau, Zermoglio, and herself drafted the Commission's responses for the Stakeholder Engagement Form for the ETIPP Application Gabel submitted. The responses focused on scoping and public engagement.

Mason asked to see more details about how to educate the public and more details about the Commission's plans for engagement with the public and the Tribe.

Riley requested stronger wording in the letter about relationship with the Tribe and to not assume their involvement. She noted that as a sovereign potential partner, the Tribe can choose whether or not to engage with the Commission and suggested wording to reflect that. Commissioners discussed other minor changes to wording and formatting for easier readability.

**Zermoglio moved to approve the Sustainability Commission's ETIPP stakeholder engagement form with the suggested edits.**

**Motion PASSED 7-0 by voice vote.**

**D. Approve Support Letter for Sitka Local Foods Network and Transition Sitka Community Garden Concept.**

Joel Hanson suggested a minor change for consistency. Larry Edwards suggested minor grammatical changes.

Taylor wanted to make it clear to the Assembly that the Commission supported the concept as a whole and recommended the suggestions made by the public were made. Gabel suggested requiring only the Chair's signature to be consistent with other commissions.

**Barkhau moved to approve the letter of support for Sitka Local Foods Network and Transition Sitka Community Garden Concept with the suggested edits.**

**Motion PASSED 7-0 by voice vote.**

**VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD**

None.

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

The next meeting was scheduled for June 6, 2023 at 6:00 P.M., Harrigan Centennial Hall.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Riley moved to adjourn the meeting.**

**Seeing no objection, the meeting ADJOURNED at 8:15 P.M.**

Minutes By: Carol Voisin, Secretary

# COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGY

## Q&A QUICK FACT SHEET

City and Borough of Sitka, Sustainability Commission

### **What is the City of Sitka Sustainability Commission working on?**

The number 1 goal this year is to get public input in creating a community energy strategy for further renewable energy to inform and support our assembly.

### **How does this affect me?**

Current electric power demand in Sitka is being met through our generating capacity at Blue and Green Lake dams. When our demand exceeds this hydropower generating capacity we will have to run our backup diesel generators to provide for the additional demand. This will drive costs up for all electricity users.

### **Why is this important?**

In a summary of the 18-month Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) study looking at future energy needs for Sitka, the Department of Energy reported that Sitka does not have enough hydropower production for modest economic growth and cost of living improvements possible through electrification of home heating and ground transportation.

### **What did the ETIPP program do for Sitka?**

Starting in 2021, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory of the Department of Energy partnered with our Electric Department to identify opportunities for grid decarbonization and clean energy generation that would be cost-efficient and reliable. ETIPP developed a model for the Sitka grid, assessing energy potential from solar, wind, and ocean sources, and evaluating green energy export options to help Sitka reduce its carbon footprint and optimize its microgrid without negative consequences for ratepayers.

### **What next?**

The Sitka municipality applied for two more Department of Energy grants in May 2023. A second ETIPP grant from our Planning Department asks for technical assistance to develop a Community Renewable Energy Plan. A plan that can help guide our community and Assembly to a more resilient and sustainable future less dependent on fossil fuels. A second grant, submitted through the Electric Department, asks for more specific assistance in designing new energy resources and modernizing our electric grid.

### **Where can I learn more, or get involved?**

To give feedback about this project, you can make comments directly to the Sustainability Commission during regular meetings at Centennial Hall at 6:00 PM on the first Tuesday of every month. Questions or comments can also be directed to the CBS Sustainability Coordinator [sustainability@cityofsitka.org](mailto:sustainability@cityofsitka.org) or (907) 747-1856.

View the Sustainability Commission's full meetings' minutes, workplan, and more at the [CBS website](#).

Read more about the ETIPP project in Sitka at the U.S. [Department of Energy website](#).



# CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

## Agenda Item Requests Sustainability Commission

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Tuesday, June 6, 2023

6:00 P.M.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

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**1. Status of recommendation to the Assembly for \$10,000 towards a heat pump assessor**

**Date Requested:** 5/31/23

**Rationale:** Has a report that may require some discussion.

**Response:** The Commission has no further action to take on this item and a separate item is not required for an update. An update on the status of the recommendation will be given by the Staff Liaison and Assembly Liaison under reports.

**Outcome:** Not added to Agenda.

**2. Request for feedback/direction from Commission on Public Engagement Working Group**

**Date Requested:** 5/25/23

**Rationale:** Has a report and would like feedback from the commission on the working group's direction.

**Response:** All working groups will have the opportunity to provide updates and get feedback on their work. Each working group does not need their own agenda item.

**Outcome:** Not added to Agenda.