

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Agenda 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

Monday, May 5, 2025

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the March 3, 2025 minutes.

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

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

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

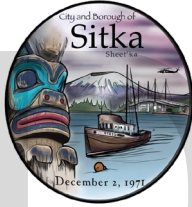
B. Discussion/Direction/Decision on the 2025-2026 Work Plan

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

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

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

XI. ADJOURNMENT



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

Meeting Minutes 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

Monday, March 3, 2025

6:00 PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 P.M.

Present: Elizabeth Bagley, Gerry Hope, Erik de Jong, Aurora Taylor (Chair), Katie Riley, Kevin Mosher (Assembly Liaison)

Absent: None.

Staff: Bri Gabel (Sustainability Coordinator)

Public: Barb Bingham

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA

No changes.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES

Approve the February 3, 2025 minutes.

Riley moved to approve the February 3, 2025 minutes.

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

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

None.

V. SPECIAL REPORTS

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Approve the Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Goals

Riley moved to approve the 2025-2026 Work Plan Goal 1: *Support Sustainable Municipal Operations* and its supporting actions as written in the packet.

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

Hope moved to approve the 2025-2026 Work Plan Goal 2: *Explore Regional Approach to Sustainability*.

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

Hope moved to add Goal 3: *Explore Energy Expansion Options* and supporting details as published in the packet as a next step to Goal 5: *Continue Supporting and Finalizing the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy*.

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

Hope moved to approve the 2025-2026 Work Plan Goal 4: *Continue to Collaborate with City Staff on Strategic Management of Municipal Solid Waste.*

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

Barb Bingham spoke in support of this goal and drew attention to the potential of composting.

Hope moved to approve the 2025-2026 Work Plan Goal 5: *Continue Supporting and Finalizing the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES).*

Motion PASSED 5-0 by voice vote.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Approve the Sustainability Commission 2025-2026 Work Plan Document

Commissioners discussed ways to make the document more succinct and made suggestions and recommendations to increase the clarity of document.

Hope moved to approve the 2025-2026 Sustainability Commission Work plan document as published in the packet and amended through Commission discussion.
Motion PASSED 5-0.

C. Discussion/Direction/Decision on the Commission's Participation at the Sitka Living Locally Event

Bingham introduced the event and provided additional details to the Commission and answered logistical questions about the event. Hope, Bagley, and de Jong volunteered to support the Sustainability Commission's table at the event.

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

None.

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

Staff: Gabel updated the Commission on the progress of the roadmap collection for the SCRES with 30 roadmaps so far, mostly from students. She announced that the next SCRES game session for the public was scheduled March 20th in partnership with the Sitka Public Library.

Chair: Taylor announced that the Native American Agriculture Fund had a grant open that could support subsistence harvesting and local food sovereignty.

Assembly: None.

Commissioners: Riley updated the Commission on the Clean Energy Internship program the Sitka Conservation Society was creating with the CBS Electric Department and the plans to pilot the program in the summer.

Hope updated the Commission that his original plan to attend the National Conference of American Indians (NCAI) had been cancelled.

X. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA

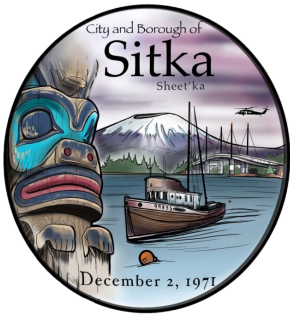
The next meeting was scheduled for April 7, 2025 at 6:00 P.M., in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seeing no objection, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at approximately 8:07 P.M.


Minutes by: Bri Gabel, Staff Liaison



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
Thru: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
From: Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) Technical Team
Date: April 4, 2025
Subject: Approve the SCRES Guiding Principles

Background

The Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy (SCRES) is a two-year planning process aimed at establishing a shared vision of Sitka's energy future to guide energy-related community decisions. The mission of this process is to shape a roadmap for community and policy actions that advance the shared energy vision. The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Technology Innovation Partnership Project (ETIPP) and is conducted in partnership with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) and the Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP). The SCRES has three major tasks: 1) establishing a baseline inventory of heat trapping gases produced by the Sitka community 2) creating a series of Sitka specific energy education modules and 3) an overarching task documenting the community perspective on Sitka's energy future and providing recommendations toward meeting those objectives. This item focuses on Task 3, which will summarize efforts in Task 1 & 2, so we refer to the Task 3 document as 'the strategy' or the SCRES; there will also be a separate final deliverable for the baseline inventory and the energy education modules are complete. The final SCRES document will consist of a summary document with key points, a detailed summary of the work completed, as well as an appendix with supporting material for an even deeper dive.

To understand the community's energy vision, the technical team has received public input through surveys, public events, and an energy planning game to facilitate discussion. These events, alongside webinars for energy education, have provided many touchpoints to gather community input, with more opportunities anticipated available through public comment periods on the strategy document.





Analysis

An early request from Commissioners was to root the project in community values. As early as the initial scoping community survey and further solidified through workshop discussions, four themes that guide how Sitkans think about their energy future have emerged: affordability, reliability, self-sufficiency, and innovation. Throughout the final SCRES document we hope to use these terms to show how different actions and policies connect to these priorities. Example definitions are shown in Table 1, with example usage for policy or actions shown in Figure 1. By painting a picture of what each of these priorities means and how they might impact the future energy system, we hope Sitkans can better see themselves in which actions they may want to pursue and how each can move Sitka towards each of these priorities.

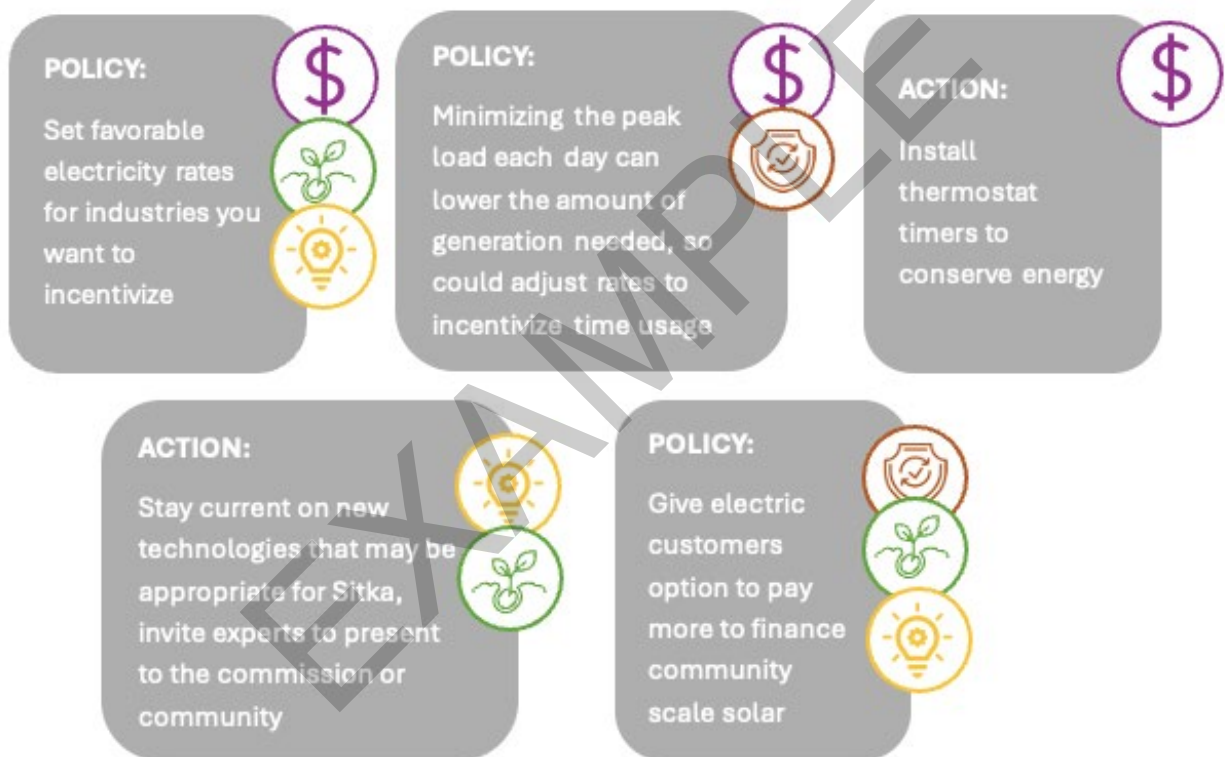
These priorities will be used as a narrative device to help Sitkan's connect with energy throughout the SCRES. Since energy can be a highly abstract concept that does not always clearly link to what community members may express as their priorities and to ensure that the final document remains focused on community action, these priorities will act guiding principles for the storytelling approach to the final document.

It should be noted that the tech team recognizes that these priorities are not mutually exclusive. However, the intent is to utilize these principles to create realistic actions that can help readers visualize how proposed actions can further these priorities as distinct futures. To facilitate this, the technical team has drafted a table that outlines how each of these priorities may shape a future version of Sitka. However, throughout discussion between the technical team, Electric Department, and through the energy road mapping workshops, how each of these priorities/principles are translated into action differ greatly between the consumer (public) and supplier (utility). Prior to drafting the final outline of the SCRES, the technical team requests feedback from the Commission to ensure that these identified areas are in alignment with the Commission's goals of the SCRES and reflective of the community.

Sitka's Energy Priorities (Guiding Principles)

	 Affordability	 Reliability	 Self Sufficiency	 Innovation
What does this priority mean for Sitka?	minimal capital investment, maximizing generation, efficient homes,	address backlog of maintenance, transmission upgrades, diversification of resources	focus on electrification, reducing fuel usage and GHGs, food availability, efficiency and conservation	striving to be on the cutting edge as an example community, growth mindset
What has been challenging for this priority in the past?	Degrading or damaged energy infrastructure, lack of long term planning	Lack of diversity in generation sources	Island community has challenges in meeting its own needs with existing resources	Cost of living is high and it's challenging to invest in the future
How does Sitka's economy look guided by this priority?				
What's the environmental impact of this priority?				
How does the power system impact everyday life				
What technologies				

might meet this priority?	
How is transportation impacted?	
What does the food system look like?	
How is housing impacted?	



Example policies and actions, as well as how they line up with Sitka's priority for their future energy system. Policies and actions are examples to illustrate the storytelling approach.

Recommendation

Approve the storytelling approach utilizing affordability, reliability, self-sufficiency, and innovation as the guiding principles (energy priorities) for the SCRES.

Consider approving the definitions as drafted in the table and/or provide feedback on how these can be refined.

Provide any early feedback on how the Commission would like the public comment period to be managed (see next steps for proposed schedule).

Next Steps

April 28th: A detailed SCRES outline will be available for Commissioner review.

May: Sustainability Commissioners reviews outline of SCRES, send comments to Sustainability Coordinator. The technical team can meet with commission members to discuss edits as requested.

June: Final approval of outline.

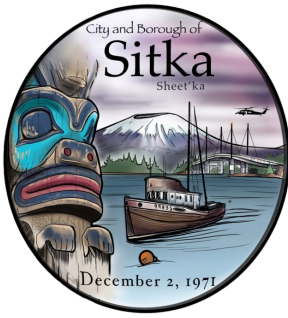
August: Sustainability Commission review draft document.

September: Release draft of SCRES document for public comment.

November/December: Presentation to Assembly, public document released.

POSSIBLE MOTION


I MOVE TO approve affordability, reliability, self-sufficiency, and innovation as the guiding principles/priorities for the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sustainability Commission Members
From: Bri Gabel, Sustainability Coordinator 
Date: April 4, 2025
Subject: Discussion/Direction/Decision on 2025-2026 Work Plan

Background

On March 11th, 2025, the [Assembly unanimously approved](#) the [2025-2026 Sustainability Commission Work Plan](#) and included goals. These goals are:

1. Support Sustainable Municipal Operations

- a. Update the Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and analyze progress
- b. Identify sustainability metrics for municipal operations that align with CBS's Strategic Plan.
- c. Develop recommendations and necessary actions to reduce municipal emissions, such as continued support for electrification of the municipal fleet via advisory group.
- d. Integrate sustainability metrics into existing and near future CBS projects.

2. Explore Regional Approach to Sustainability

3. Collaborating with City Staff on Strategic Management of Municipal Solid Waste

- a. Develop the Solid Waste Advisory Group Charter and MSW Strategy
- b. Facilitate Public Engagement in the Southeast Alaska Solid Waste Authority Regional Planning Project

4. Supporting and Finalize the Sitka Community Renewable Energy Strategy

Recommendation

This item is intended to allow Commissioners to coordinate the next steps to begin working towards the approved goals. No motion is required but can be made if necessary.