

# Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board - Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 8, 2025

City Council Briefing Center

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM by Brian Henning

**Public Comment:** Citizens are invited to address the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board on any topic not on the agenda. 3 Minutes each.

- *None*

## **Attendance:**

- Board Members Present: Brian Henning, Kathryn Alexander, Ryan Arnold, Kerry Brooks, Claire Cooney, Kevin Fagan, Larry Luton, Bob Lutz, Lea Molina, Kit Parker, Hala Zahalqa
- Board Members Not Present: Amanda Parrish, Happy Avery, Elyse Hochstadt
- *Quorum Present:* Yes
- Staff Members Present: Jon Snyder, Tirrell Black, Emily King, Adam McDaniel, Marlene Feist, Sarah Sirott, KayCee Downey, Maren Murphy, Nicole White, Adam McDaniel, Kelly Thomas, Kirstin Davis, Logan Callen, Marcia Davis, Sarah Nuss

**Minutes:** Minutes from 4/10/2025 approved unanimously.

## **Briefing Session:**

- **Chair Report** - Brian Henning
  - Brian started off by welcoming our two new board members, Claire Cooney and Ryan Arnold. He gave the members a moment to introduce themselves.
    - Claire is going into her senior year at Gonzaga, majoring in Environmental Studies and minors in Biology and Sustainable Business. She also works at the Climate Institute. She is looking forward to being the youth member on the board.
    - Ryan is the Regional Business Manager at Avista covering the Spokane territory. His background is in sustainability. He started in energy efficiency in low-income housing about 20 years ago. He has an MBA in Sustainable Business and has taught at Gonzaga. He has worked in sustainability off and on throughout his life. He is excited to be joining the board.
  - Brian discussed the formation of the Sustainability Action Workgroup. Three people volunteered for the workgroup, and all were appointed. Larry Luton, Kathryn Alexander, and Kevin Fagan will be serving on the workgroup, along with Amanda Parrish and Brian as ex-officio members, and staffed by Jon Snyder. The workgroup has their first meeting scheduled for later this month. Everyone is welcome to bring anything directly to the board for consideration, this just brings another venue for doing additional work, especially for something that might require additional research or collaboration.
  - Brian also wanted to talk about where things are with respect to the climate crisis. Scientists tell us that we need to stay under one and half degrees of additional warming. We are about at that now, which is pretty scary since that was supposed to be the limit. The Paris Climate agreement sets its upper target at two degrees, which is the most we think we could withstand. We are currently on a trajectory of three degrees of warming. Physics, chemistry, and biology don't care who is in office or what budget challenges we have. We have to figure out ways we can move forward the best we can within the means that we have which is one of our goals as a group, both in long term planning as well as immediate actions we can pursue on behalf of our community. Today we will be receiving an update from the Gonzaga Climate Institute, but Brian wanted to bring up that multiple local agencies are partners on an EPA

Community Change Grant that was awarded last December. It has been having challenges and most recently last Friday, we received official notice that it is to be terminated. We are evaluating what options we have for pursuing protection of this. Brian suspects that even if people in this community don't choose to pursue legal action, he thinks others across the country will do so. He has optimism that many of these will be successful and hopes that ours will be as well. The type of work being done with the grant is to improve public facilities such as libraries and community centers, help some of our most vulnerable communities, and a re-granting opportunity to be able to allow the community to identify projects that it thinks should be pursued. He encouraged people to apply, as the time allowed for the work to be done won't be extended. When the funds are made available, we'll want to move as quickly as we can. We are also going to pursue other sources of funding for those applications.

- **Secretary Report - Jon Snyder**
  - Jon brought up that there had been some discussion of doing a tour of city facilities during a meeting. June, July, or August would be good a time for us to do that. There are a few different areas we could go to. There is a CSO tank within a 5-minute walk of City Hall. The water facility where we get our water - we have a well next to our hydropower facility is also interesting. We can look at some things that are crucially important to the city and sustainability. Jon wanted to put that out there, a decision hasn't been made yet, but that could be tailored according to interests of the board. People can send their thoughts to Jon and Brian.

**Current Agenda:** The current agenda was approved with the addition of an item at the end of the agenda to discuss a possible resolution related to the EPA Community Change Grant to consider developing and if approved, sending to City Council.

#### **Informational, Discussion and/or Action Items:**

- 2025 State Legislature Sustainability Bills and Budget Items Recap
    - Presentation provided by: Jon Snyder and Marlene Feist
    - Questions asked and answered.
    - Discussion ensued.
      - Documents provided during the meeting are attached to the end of the minutes.
  - 2025 Federal Legislative and Budget Update
    - Presentation provided by: Jon Snyder, Adam McDaniel, & Brian Kristjansson
    - Questions asked and answered.
    - Discussion ensued.
  - Climate Resilience Project Overview
    - Presentation provided by: Dante Jester & Mary Condon
    - Questions asked and answered.
    - Discussion ensued.
  - Sustainability Action Plan Continuing Discussion
    - Presentation provided by: Jon Snyder
    - Questions asked and answered.
    - Discussion ensued.
  - Discussion of Resolution Regarding EPA Community Change Grant
    - Presentation provided by: Brian Henning
    - Questions asked and answered.
    - Discussion ensued.
- Motion**
- *I [Kerry Brooks] move to encourage the Mayor to coordinate with Gonzaga in determining appropriate legal and/or other action in support of the EPA Community Change Grant. Seconded by Kathryn Alexander.*

Deliberation ensued.

- *Kerry Brooks offered a friendly amendment to say “encourage the Mayor to coordinate with Gonzaga in determining appropriate legal and/or other action in support of the EPA Community Change Grant and report out at the special meeting of May 22<sup>nd</sup>.”*

Motion passes unanimously 11-0-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:25 PM.

A special meeting of the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board will be held virtually on May 22, 2025. The next regularly scheduled Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board Meeting is on Thursday, June 12, 2025.