

STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
City of Spokane
Sustainability Action Subcommittee Steering Committee (SC)
June 6, 2023

Call to Order: 5:40 pm

Attendance

Steering Committee Members Present: Larry Luton, Naghmana Sherazi, Matt Hollon, Michelle Howard, Brian Henning, Pragya Rai, Stacie Maier, Sarah Burruss, Rowena Pineda

Staff/Others Present: Kelly Thomas, Luke Cashman, Morgan Shimabuku, Marlene Feist, Katherine Miller

Absent: Dave Garegnani, Esther Angell, Jennifer Thomas, Mindy Howard

Note Taker: Kelly Thomas

Agenda Items

1. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. Any objections to the minutes?
 - i. Correction to the May 17 minutes- move Kirsten Angell & Mike Petersen to "Staff/Others Present"
 - b. No motion needed. Minutes approved.
2. General Facility Charges presentation by Marlene Feist
 - a. Per Council resolution, SASSC consulted on this subject
 - b. Power Point presentation provided
 - c. The SASSC requested specific points to be addressed by Marlene, which she addressed in the presentation:
 - i. Show what other comparable communities are doing with GFCs.
 - ii. What impact would this have on low-income people? What can be done to mitigate that impact?
 - d. A concern was raised about much control a ratepayer really had about these changes, and Marlene emphasized that these only affect new connections.
 - e. A question about how these connection sizes mentioned, and how the rates incentivized using the standard, smallest ¾" connection really impact the environment – does it take more electricity to pump water through a

smaller pipe? Marlene indicated that it doesn't necessarily, and that the true incentivizing exists in the "infill" for the lower zones, discouraging development in the outer limits of the City where multiple booster stations (and more electricity) are often necessary.

- f. SASSC probably will be most interested in this from the growth management side, and how infill makes the most sense. A wish that we could charge by use and not just by pipe diameter size.
 - g. A question about how waivers would be granted for those who need help with their bills. Marlene explained that they do have some incentives being offered for ADUs, and they are still determining how to offset those costs, through a utility tax or otherwise.
 - h. Regarding wastewater, Marlene acknowledged that the bulk of the City's water costs are in its treatment. Charges are based on water meter size, not the size of the sewer pipe.
 - i. Possibility that many in this group would be in favor of a tiered rate system... would a letter of support from the Steering Committee be effective? Marlene replied that it would be a helpful lens for Council in their further considerations.
- 3. Item 3, "Potential use of advisory groups in working groups," deferred until next meeting due to lack of time.
 - 4. Three current vacancies on Steering Committee
 - a. Economics, Climate Action Advocacy, and Business
 - b. If Steering Committee members have suggestions, please send to Kelly Thomas. Council will approve and appoint nominations, but prefer to defer to Steering Committee expertise. If no nominations, Kelly will poll Council members for suggestions.
 - c. Kelly will send the previously used application form to the Steering Committee.
 - 5. Workgroups
 - a. No workgroups currently scheduled for the June 21 study session/meeting. We will keep it on the calendar for now, and if no groups volunteer, it will be cancelled. Possibility of a presentation on extreme heat work being done.
 - 6. July 4 meeting will be cancelled; Committee business will be handled at the July 19 study session/meeting instead.
 - 7. Water Resource Group presentation; Power Point presentation.
 - a. Has been engaged in working on this presentation for the last year; has been about 9 months since all the members of this water group have met together, however.
 - b. Lenses used were climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

- c. Identifying “quick and easy” actions was difficult. Water resource management is inherently complex. Watersheds are multi-jurisdictional and are managed and used by both private and public, local, regional, state, Tribal, and federal governments and entities. Sustainable, equitable, effective management of our water resources is neither quick nor easy
- a. However, they identified the following:
 - i. 6.1 – highest priority – “In collaboration with other stakeholders in the watershed, study climate impacts to SVRP aquifer.”
 - ii. 7.2, dealing with intertie agreements. Question about who examines the policy and process. Point brought up that drought and emergency situations aren’t addressed in these agreements.
 - iii. 9.1 – “Increase visibility and understanding through City website, City social media, and signage of projects that demonstrate City leading by example on water conservation.” This could actually be “quick and easy.”
 - iv. 9.2 – “Create more opportunities for community input in decision-making during all stages: before and after both planning & implementation” – email will be forthcoming from staff about the internal and external advisory groups meetings that have been taking place with GHD consultants, the “Link Strategy Group for Water.”
 - v. 9.3 – another quick & easy – physical signage to educate the public on the aquifer.
 - vi. 4.1 – this is the highest priority for the Tribe, and will be important for City Council to hear. “Support the development and operation of a Lead Entity for the Spokane River Watershed to guide restoration of native Redband Trout and anadromous fish habitats through a collaborative framework that functions in concert with local socio-economic and cultural needs.”
 - vii. The following 4 strategies were also identified as “quick & easy”:
 - 1. 10.2 - Continue participation in the Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative (IWAC)
 - 2. 10.4 - Support organization and agency management plans and programs that address watershed level sustainability strategies
 - 3. 10.5 - Collaborate regionally to develop disaster response plan for shared water resources like the SVRP aquifer and Spokane River

4. 10.6 - Hire an employee to act as a Tribal liaison to improve collaboration with Tribes within the Spokane River watershed

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm

Prepared by:

Kelly Thomas

Approved by:


