

## Vermont Climate Council August 23, 2021 – Minutes

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Date/Time:	August 23, 2021, 8:30 AM
Location:	Zoom Meeting
Physical Location to Attend in Person:	Agency of Natural Resources, One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05602 in Catamount NL D215
Vermont Climate Council members present:	Abbie Corse, Anson Tebbetts, Brian Gray, Catherine Dimitruk, Chad Farrell, Chris Company, Erica Bornemann, Iris Hsiang, Jared Duval, Johanna Miller, Joe Flynn, Julie Moore, June Tierney, Kelly Klein, Kiah Morris, Lauren Oates, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Lindsay Kurrle, Liz Miller, Richard Cowart, Sean Brown, Sue Minter, Susanne Young
Sub-committee co-chairs present:	Billy Coster, Peter Walke, Sarah Philips, Kiah Morris
Staff and support present:	Jane Lazorchak, Marian Wolz, David Plumb, Cameron Hager
Minutes By:	David Plumb, Cameron Hager

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- 8:30 AM Convene/Welcome/Overview and Approval of Agenda  
*Secretary Susanne Young, Agency of Administration*
- Agenda Approved by Council
- 8:35 AM Review and Approval of [July 26, 2021 Minutes](#)  
*David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*
- Minutes approved by Council
- 8:40 AM Just Transitions Reflection – Reviewing the Revised Guiding Principles and Scoring Rubric  
*Co-Chairs Sue Minter (VCC member), Sarah Phillips and Kiah Morris*
- Councilors supported adopting the revised Guiding Principles and Scoring Rubric with one caveat –some councilors expressed concerns that the rubric may create the impression that policies won’t have negative impacts.
    - Councilors who expressed those concerns will review again the Rubric in light of the conversation
    - Co-chairs agreed to take the concerns back into the Just Transitions Subcommittee
      - Specifically, some councilors said signaling that all

recommendations should have no negative impacts may inadvertently privilege the status quo.

- Just Transitions Co-chairs said the intent of the rubric was precisely to help identify potential negative impacts and who might bear them, providing a mirror where we are rising and where we are falling short
- One councilor also asked the Just Transitions Subcommittee to provide additional practical guidance on implementing the principles, particularly around engaging diverse communities.
- Councilors also asked that we move towards having data around these issues, to know if we're really helping people.

9:45 AM      Engagement Update  
*Jane Lazorchak, Global Warming Solutions Act Director*

- Jane Lazorchak presented a [Public Engagement Timeline](#) with subject-specific stakeholder events and public regional and state-wide events.
  - Invitation to Councilors to review the materials (collateral) that the consultants are preparing for events. Councilors can use those same materials at events or meetings that they attend. Email Jane by Aug 25 if you'd like to review the materials.

10:00 AM      Science and Data Recommendations – Social Cost of Carbon and Cost of Carbon  
*Councilor Jared Duval*

- Jared Duval presented a short video explaining social cost of carbon and presented the subcommittees [recommendations](#) on it, and a recommendation around the cost of carbon. The Council asked for more time before confirming the recommendations.
  - Questions around the concept of social cost of carbon
    - What exactly is the discount rate and why do we need it?
      - It's a concept in finance that addresses the time value of money - how do we value future costs in today's money
      - A lower discount rate makes future costs more expensive today, recognizing a greater responsibility to future generations and prompting more action today. A higher discount rate reduces our calculation in today's dollars of these future costs, reducing incentives to act now and putting more responsibility on future generations.
    - Some of the impacts of carbon are in sectors, like health care, where inflation is higher than overall inflation. Is this something that is considered in the recommended discount rate?
      - Jared will follow up with consultants

- Questions around the Recommendations
  - What value exactly are we recommending for social cost of carbon?
    - Jared clarified that the Subcommittee is recommending to a 2% discount rate.
    - The Subcommittee also recommends doing sensitivity analysis with other values/rates.
  - One councilor asked the Council not to close the discussion on which discount rate to use, so that the Council can have a deeper conversation on the impacts of intergenerational equity, specifically whether a 1% rate would be more equitable, involving a broader set of stakeholders in that conversation.
    - Jared agreed to bring that comment back to the subcommittee and hold the discussion once the sensitivity analysis is run.
    - There is some time urgency to set a discount rate, because it is needed to conduct the economic analysis.
    - The council agreed to advance the analysis with a 2% discount rate while also further reviewing materials and considering additional sensitivity analyses.

10:50 AM Review of Remaining Data and Technical Analysis to come  
*Jane Lazorchak, Global Warming Solutions Act Director*

- Jane Lazorchak provided an overview of the [pending technical analysis](#)

10:55 AM BREAK

11:10 AM Measurable Goals for Sequestration, Resiliency and Adaptation

- Jane Lazorchak provided an [overview of the goals in the GWSA](#)
- Agriculture and Ecosystems Co-chairs Billy Coster and Abbie Corse presented the Subcommittee's thinking to date on goals
  - The Subcommittee wants to make more progress on its pathways before articulating goals associated with them
  - Councilors asked co-chairs to make sure they are considering things such as the value of soils and healthy working lands.
- Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee member Chris Cochran, Director of Community and Housing Revitalization, presented a [draft set of goals](#) based around the Subcommittee's proposed 5 pathways. Councilors expressed support for the ideas and provided the following comments
  - It would be a good idea to look at all land use policies to see if people are coordinated

- Suggest that by 2025 Vermont has a comprehensive individual/household needs response and long-term recovery framework in place (public infrastructure recovery process is already quite strong). Key gap: unevenness (and general absence) of well-organized local recovery framework. This is not emergency response. This is recovery assistance after the disaster
  - Perhaps specifically mention home buyouts? Moving people out of harm’s way? Also, mobile homes in high hazard flood areas?
- Wording in Pathway 4 “no new development or redevelopment occurs, when feasible, in the river corridor” may raise a lot of concerns and needs more context.
  - Chris Cochran said that the phrase “where feasible” is key and agreed to add more context.
- Some councilors will offer opinions offline after doing a deeper dive
- Let’s be as clear as possible about the actionable pieces that can be brought to the legislature
- When you’re thinking about resiliency in communities, schools are a large part of that. Would appreciate it if we can think about this moving forward.
- When considering smart growth strategies, we need to be clear about the emissions from existing structures versus new.
  - Chris Cochran said studies are being done about how land use will reduce GHGs

12:00 PM Public Comment

- No Comments from Public

12:05 PM Next Steps for the Council and Subcommittees  
*Jane Lazorchak and Secretary Susanne Young*

- Council Meetings
  - Stay tuned for next council meeting regarding proposal to involve councilors directly in drafting the Climate Action Plan
- New Time and Day
  - Tuesday 1:30 to 4:30
  - Bi-weekly meeting starting 9/14
  - Special Meeting approved for 10/5 by Steering Committee

12:10 PM Adjourn

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