

MINUTES

Mayor's Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force
Bascom-Tykeson Room—Eugene Public Library
Eugene, Oregon

October 25, 2005
1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Dave Funk, chair; Lisa Arkin, Josh Bruce, Julie Daniel, Roger Ebbage, Lynn Feekin, Mark Miksis, Deb Noble, Scott Pope, Jack Roberts, Randy Ross, Claire Syrett, Claudia Villegas, Jack Roberts, members; Mayor Kitty Piercy; Bob Doppelt (Institute for a Sustainable Environment), University of Oregon; Mary Walston, Jan Bohman, Eugene City Manager's Office.

ABSENT: Terry McDonald, Rusty Rexius, Kartar Khalsa, members.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Funk called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. Task force members introduced themselves. He noted that Mr. Rexius, co-chair, was unable to attend because of a scheduling conflict.

Mr. Funk underscored that the process was still in the "appreciative inquiry process." He reiterated that the group members should not yet "jump to solutions." He noted that the next meeting, scheduled for November 15 at 7:30 a.m., was a joint meeting with the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Funk announced that Town Hall Meetings were scheduled for December 13 and January 12 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. to gain public input. He stated that a meeting with the Institute for Sustainable Economics had been scheduled for December 15 from 4 to 6 p.m.

2. Items from Task Force Members

Mayor Piercy related that she had been to two roundtables and had come away quite impressed with the conversations that had been had. She thanked the group for their participation in the process.

Mr. Bruce noted that an email had been received from Jan Spencer and asked what the process would be to address such submissions. Mr. Funk replied that as things arose he and Mr. Rexius, Mr. Doppelt, and Mayor Piercy had reviewed them and tried to determine if and when things could fit into the larger scope of issues. Mayor Piercy added that at some point there was a capacity issue. She said every time another meeting was added it added staff time and minutes costs and ultimately there were resource limits.

Mr. Doppelt said the additional meetings with constituencies should be treated like the roundtables in that attendance by members was greatly appreciated but not mandatory. He hoped that some members would be at every meeting but did not expect all of the members to attend all of the meetings. He noted that the exception to this was the joint meeting with the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Doppelt stated that from the beginning a roundtable had been scheduled to discuss sustainable forestry and sustainable manufacturing. He said at this point he was not sure how to organize the sustainable manufacturing roundtable and whether there were enough companies that would have an interest in it. Regarding the sustainability forestry roundtable, he said he and Ms. Noble had just begun

discussing how such a roundtable could be organized. He speculated that the roundtable might be scheduled for February, 2006.

3. Approval of Minutes of September 27, 2005

Ms. Feekin, seconded by ???????, moved to approve the minutes of September 27, 2005, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Update on Online Public Survey

Mr. Doppelt stated that there was a much broader public component to the work of the Mayor's Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force (SBI) than the roundtables. He said one piece of that was a survey that was now available. He reported that a notice had been sent out to community groups to let people know it was available. He related that a letter on the Mayor's letterhead would be sent to all members and members of the technical advisory group, all roundtable participants, and all interested parties to let people know of its availability. He hoped to seek input from the community about how to grow, retain, or create businesses and jobs in the realm of sustainability. He added that he was trying to get press releases to the *Register Guard* and the *Eugene Weekly* and some public service announcements to the local public radio stations. He thanked the members for their feedback on the last data test. He also noted that a group of people were being brought together to develop a communications and outreach strategy. He said things were emerging from the roundtables and it was time to move forward with the outreach. He hoped that by the first of the new year information regarding the SBI would be widely available in the community.

Mayor Piercy said she would be giving the State of the City address in January and this would provide another opportunity to bring the SBI to light.

Ms. Feekin asked if there was a way for people who did not have internet access to obtain the survey. Mr. Doppelt replied that there was not a hard copy available at this point. He said due to resource issues he was uncertain as to whether it would be available off line but it was worthy of consideration.

5. Comments and Discussion About Completed Roundtables

Mr. Funk reported that one person had commented that the process was too "structured by insiders." He said this was the only comment he had heard from outside of the roundtables.

Mr. Doppelt stated that he hoped people would come back together. He noted that the Reuse Recycling Roundtable had opted to meet again. He remarked that one key issue was how many roundtables the SBI could facilitate. He hoped that some of the roundtables would continue to meet on their own.

Mayor Piercy said Deborah Brewer, of the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB), had indicated that EWEB would be having discussions on sustainability.

Mayor Piercy shared that she had also received the email from the person Mr. Funk reported on. She said the premise of the email was that the group had not determined what sustainability was. She wished to clarify that she was not debating whether sustainability was worth achieving. She underscored that the premise that the SBI was operating from was how to move down the road toward achieving sustainability.

Ms. Feekin echoed positive comments on the roundtables. She remarked that they had exceeded her expectations. She thought it had been beneficial that a "pre-conversation" had been held with the

individuals who participated as it helped them understand both the constraints that were holding things back and the opportunities to move forward. She thought it true that many ideas were generated but she was unsure of where they could go. She did not think one could expect the roundtable participants to “carry the ball” forward. She wanted to find a way for the roundtables to come together more than once.

Mr. Funk commended Mr. Doppelt for getting people to focus and take responsibility. Ms. Feekin added that she appreciated that Mr. Doppelt asked participants with ideas to consider how things could be accomplished and how they could be accomplished without help from the City.

Mr. Ross commented that it would be beneficial to utilize Public Access Television and its interns to work on increasing awareness. He noted that he had attended the Lane County Home Show and had reviewed a pamphlet on Solar Energy. He said there were tours of solar homes and that they had a survey. He thought the SBI could access this survey and use it to its benefit.

Mr. Miksis asked if there was a way to assign someone as the point person of the roundtables. He thought it seemed like there were a lot of good ideas shared at the roundtables but they sometimes lacked direction.

Mr. Doppelt said the follow-up document was being prepared for disbursement.

Ms. Noble felt there were legislative pieces that needed to be addressed, such as the rule that canola could not be grown within three miles of a grass seed farm. She observed that it almost seemed that a sustainability lobby was needed at the legislative level to work against the constraints that sustainability could be presented with.

Mayor Piercy observed that a meeting was planned with policy makers. She said initial communications had been sent to commissioners, councilors, and the area legislative delegation.

Ms. Noble recommended that a person or committee be appointed to oversee this work in an ongoing way.

Ms. Feekin opined that the “social equity piece” was being overlooked. She felt that every time it was addressed there was no data on how many businesses provided health care benefits and what the wages were. She averred that the lack of this specific information sometimes made roundtable discussions “grind to a halt.”

Mr. Doppelt directed the group to review the summary of outcomes from the roundtables that had been held thus far. He said three themes had been identified at every roundtable: 1) Sustainable business practices and products needed clearer definition; 2) More education was needed in the business community and the public at large about what it meant and what this was about; and 3) A “one-stop shopping” information resource was needed. He stated that Mr. Ebbage intended to develop a Web site to meet the third concern. He indicated that one other outcome from the education and training roundtable was that a survey was being worked on to send to local businesses to identify their education and training needs. He said the questionnaire would be sent to all of the people that participated in the roundtable and beyond that to ask about the social and environmental characteristics of their businesses in order to get the aggregate information and “paint the picture” of what those characteristics were.

Mr. Doppelt related that he had a conversation with Jim Lindley, who ran the Lane Community College Small Business Development Center regarding the development of a local focused sustainability program that would be based around the information gained by the survey. He said while the details had yet to be worked out, he thought it would be run through the LCC center and would be comprised of a one or two day seminar program. He hoped that the University of Oregon and the City of Eugene would partner with that along with some other agencies.

Mr. Doppelt reported that Bob Warren, from the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECD) had sent him emails after attending the funding and finance roundtable explaining that OECD administered an Oregon Business Retention Service Fund that featured a no interest loan for \$5,000 that any company or organization could obtain for consulting services. He stated that consulting on sustainability would qualify for this loan. He also noted that with a 25 percent match, up to \$30,000 was available for feasibility studies.

Additionally, Mr. Doppelt reiterated that the reuse and recycling roundtable had chosen to meet again. He said there would be two agenda items: how to expand education to major waste generators about the markets available for waste and whether or not to use incentives to stimulate reuse and recycling.

Mr. Funk asked if Downtown English would have space for a roundtable. Ms. Villegas responded that it did. They agreed to work out the details after the meeting.

Mr. Doppelt listed the rest of the roundtables that were scheduled at this point.

Mr. Bruce recalled that some discussion had been held about merging the green building roundtable into the existing City of Eugene group. Mr. Doppelt replied that a city advisory committee was asking similar questions. He thought a merge was possible.

Mayor Piercy supported merging the two and suggested it should happen soon.

Ms. Arkin suggested that the roundtables come up with a list of sustainability indicators for the City of Eugene. Mr. Doppelt recommended that the task force deal with this, though he was uncertain if the SBI had the capacity to do so for each roundtable. He said he had a graduate student gathering examples of “triple bottom line” indicators. Ms. Arkin thought the people in the roundtables could provide great input.

6. Discussion of Social Equity/Capacity Indicators

Mr. Doppelt said at the last task force meeting a discussion had centered on equity and social capacity issues and there had been a request to provide examples of how local companies were addressing this. He stated that two graduate students had worked on this and the document provided to SBI members, entitled *Overview of Social Equity Indicators*, was the result. He provided a brief overview of the information. He explained the difference between *Traditional Indicators* and *Sustainability Indicators* with the aid of a chart and gave examples from other cities and businesses. He asked the group if it wanted to develop a proposal for social equity indicators in Eugene as well as economic and environmental indicators.

In response to a question from Mr. Funk, Mr. Doppelt affirmed that the cities of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Jacksonville, Florida, conducted their own studies using city money.

Mayor Piercy thought there were a number of ways to gather the information, such as talking to school districts or from human service providers as an example.

Ms. Feekin suggested a sub-group look at these indicators and try to come up with a set of indicators for Eugene and then test the data on how much of it was available through local agencies and how much of it was available through the State.

Mr. Funk asked for volunteers to participate in a sub-group “to get the ball rolling.” Ms. Feekin, Ms. Syrette, and Ms. Arkin agreed to do so.

Mr. Pope favored working on the social equity aspect. He felt social equity was “squishy” at times because social equity was a result of doing other things right.

Mayor Piercy asked if the group wanted to look at the entire community or to look at specific business practices. She thought the group could be led on a tangent that the group did not want to focus on at this point in time.

Mr. Funk said given the schedule and that the group was still in its appreciative inquiry stage maybe the group should hold off on this particular discussion. He averred that ultimately it was key to have a baseline and determine where the community was going.

Ms. Syrette thought it would be helpful to provide the report to roundtable participants.

Mr. Roberts arrived at 2:35 p.m.

7. Discussion of Climate Change Economic Impact Report and City of Eugene Greenhouse Gas Reduction Efforts

Mr. Doppelt stated that in line with discussion with the social and economic bottom lines, the environment also needed to be discussed. He pointed to a report and letter that had been signed by over 50 economists that had been sent to the governor and local elected officials and the state’s business leaders. Copies of the report, *Fifty Leading Economists Warn Oregon: Global Warming to Come with a Big Price Tag*, were provided to the SBI members. He stressed that the environment was already impacted. He reported that the message included recommendations to reduce auto emissions, to prepare for changes in the economy and environment that were now inevitable, and to invest in clean energy and other sustainable practices. He said he would be speaking to the City Club on this topic on October 28 and Assistant City Manager Jim Carlson would be speaking on what the City of Eugene was doing in these respects.

8. Presentations and Discussion Portland Sustainability Efforts: Portland Office of Sustainable Development- History, Goals, and Methods

Mr. Doppelt introduced Stephanie Swanson and Ann Griffith, representing the Portland Development Commission Sustainable Industries and Creative Industries Programs.

Ms. Griffin provided an attachment entitled *Sustainable Industries Energy Industries – Target Industry Plan 2005-2006* and a brief slide presentation. She noted that all of the materials were available electronically and suggested that anyone interested provide her with an email address. She said her office was tasked with being a leader and a voice for sustainability in the city and also with coming up with “on the ground” solutions.

Ms. Griffin stated that targeted sustainable industries already had a strong work force component. She pointed out that the City of Portland had gone through extensive economic strategizing and had called out the increase of sustainable businesses as a goal. She noted that the average wage for sustainable industries was \$52,000 annually.

Ms. Swanson reported that the green investment fund encouraged technology and the City of Portland had a sustainable business practices policy that encouraged everything from bio-degradable cleaning products to the use of bio-diesel in the city fleet vehicles. She said all city projects had to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. She stated that by 2010 the city’s goal was to use 100 percent renewable power resources to run the city government.

Ms. Swanson attributed much of the success of sustainability in Portland to public/private partnerships. She underscored that they were not fixing streets or operating the water utility, but they were trying to be involved in all areas to try to implement sustainable practices. She reviewed some of the results: 400 LEED certified buildings built in the United States as of 2003, with the green building market estimated to be a \$6 billion products and service industry, with Portland as a leader. She related that emissions in Portland were down 12.5 percent and job growth was up by 15 percent. She averred that the economy did not have to be sacrificed to improve and support the environment.

Mr. Pope left the meeting.

Ms. Daniels asked how the business recycling rates were determined. Ms. Swanson replied that it came from a landfill measurement and businesses as a whole were assessed. She said not only were they trying to impact the end result, the landfill waste, but they were trying to encourage businesses to approach it from the front end with less packaging and so forth.

Ms. Syrette asked Ms. Swanson to give an example of how Portland had addressed the social equity aspect of sustainability. Ms. Swanson responded that they had not done as much in this area as others. She cited the Northwest Green Directory as an example of how they tried to educate the public on all aspects of businesses and it included whether a company paid a living wage.

In response to a follow-up question from Ms. Syrette, Ms. Swanson pointed to the New Seasons Market as an example of how a business addressed the higher overhead a living wage created as the market had included this in its advertising. She said the market stressed that one paid more there for a better workplace among other reasons.

Ms. Syrette stated that Eugene was looking to craft community standards for its Enterprise Zone. She thought one of the pieces could be built around sustainable businesses. She asked if Portland had found support at the State level to implement sustainable businesses as an economic piece. Ms. Griffin replied that there were formal and informal in regard to the relationship with the State and sustainability was not a formal target. She thought when she called on any of the companies in its targeted industries, if she could bring in a State resource she would. In other words, the State did not specifically come forward with such resources.

Ms. Arkin observed that in many examples the Portland Office of Sustainable Development incubated many projects. She asked if the office was playing a role in finding out how to implement the precautionary principles that Portland implemented in 2004. Ms. Swanson affirmed that they were. She commented that the Mayor was very supportive as were several of the Commissioners.

Ms. Daniels commented that it was clear that the office was a catalyst and a synthesizer of information. She asked Ms. Swanson to elaborate a little more on how the tonnage fees on waste were utilized to pay for their work and what the fees were. Ms. Swanson responded that she was not the “waste person” and did not want to convey inaccurate information. She said she would consult that person and send Ms. Daniels an email. She stated that it was basically a residential franchise that was taxed at one percent and a tonnage fee for commercial operators.

In response to a follow-up question from Ms. Daniels, Ms. Swanson affirmed that the fees were only charged in Portland.

Mr. Doppelt remarked that the economic development of any community was shaped by a number of factors that were interdependent and those factors were different from community to community. He thought the City of Eugene had a different set of conditions than Portland, but had ended up with a similar set of target industries. He asked how Portland had arrived at its targets. Ms. Griffin responded that it was no coincidence that Portland had ended up with similar industries. She said they were trying to bring resources to emerging areas and trends and these were similar to those in Eugene.

One example was that a number of entrepreneurs were beginning to do something with bio-diesel and its potential for industry development.

Ms. Swanson said in looking at the number of sustainable industries, many were small businesses and much of the businesses were service-oriented as opposed to manufacturing.

Ms. Griffin stated that the cost of doing business and a local work force were key to helping a local company. She recommended educating business people in any growing sector on sustainability and targeting certain kinds of companies that had synergistic potential.

Mr. Ebbage asked if Portland was requiring buildings to be LEED certified or just to meet LEED standards. Ms. Griffin replied that the City of Portland had first passed LEED standards for new buildings in 2001. She said this past June the City had elevated the standards so that public buildings to LEED Gold standards and for clients who wished to receive financial assistance of \$300,000 or more from the Portland Development Commission and this amount was 10 percent or more of the project's budget and the building or structure was 10,000 or more square feet, then the requirement was to meet a Silver Standard. She offered to provide the full policy to anyone who was interested. She noted that new buildings were required to have "eco-roofs."

Mayor Piercy wondered if there were things the two cities could do together to take advantage of larger efforts that could be made.

Ms. Swanson felt that the Portland Mayor would support looking at a more regionally comprehensive strategy.

Mayor Piercy agreed that Portland was a large city on the front edge of sustainability and underscored that the City of Eugene wished to be the mid-sized city on the same front edge.

Ms. Swanson remarked that it was not just Eugene and Portland, that other cities, such as Bend and La Grande, were interested in LEED certification and sustainability.

Mr. Bruce asked if there were other options on the table when fees on waste treatment were chosen to provide funding. Ms. Swanson was uncertain as this had happened prior to her tenure at with the program. She said the office was about to embark on another strategic plan to look at other funding models. She felt there were other foundation grants that were likely available.

Mr. Ebbage asked if the program worked with the Governor's Sustainability Advisor. Ms. Swanson affirmed that it did.

Mr. Doppelt thanked Ms. Swanson and Ms. Griffin for their presentation.

8. Wrap-up and Next Steps

Mr. Funk adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

(Recorded by Ruth Atcherson)

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