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MEETING SUMMARY

ODOE Oregon Energy Strategy Advisory Group Kick-off Meeting; August 14, 2024

Attendees

Present Advisory Group members: Aaron Orłowski, Andrea Kreiner, Bryan Adams, Charity Fain, Christine Golightly, Cory Scott, Elain Prause, Emily Griffith, Erin Childs, Fred Heutte, Ivy Quach, Jeff Hammarlund, Jennifer Hill-Hart, Jimmy Lindsay, Joshua Basofin, Juan Barraza, Laura Tabor, Mary Morelins, Nate Hill, Patrick Ford Mills, Robert Wallace, Scott Simms, Shannon Souza, Timothy McMahan, Tucker Billman

Absent Advisory Group members: Andrew Mulkey, Cathy Ehli, and Jennifer Bies

Oregon Department of Energy staff: Abby Reeser, Alan Zelenka, Bryan Hockaday, Jessica Reichers, Jillian DiMedio, Joni Slinger, Josh Price, Lauren Rosenstein, Ruchi Sadhir

Consultant team: Ben Duncan (Kearns & West), Gillian Garber-Yonts (Kearns & West), María Verano (Kearns & West), Ruby Moore-Bloom (CETI)

Number of members of the public in attendance: 6

Welcome, Agenda Review, and New Advisory Group Member Introductions

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, opened the meeting. Ruchi Sadhir, Associate Director, Strategic Engagement & Development at the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), welcomed the group, gave an overview of ODOE's mission and vision, and reviewed the purpose of the Advisory Group.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, outlined the goals of the meeting:

- Review comments, discuss, and finalize the Advisory Group Charter
- Provide an update and discuss ODOE project work and public engagement to-date.
- Collect Advisory Group Feedback on ODOE Project Work

Ben Duncan reviewed the meeting agenda and group agreements. Ben noted that meeting materials can be found online at the [ODOE Energy Strategy Advisory Group Webpage](#) and informed the public that they can provide written public input to ODOE by sending an email to Energy.strategy@Energy.Oregon.gov.

Ben Duncan introduced the ODOE project team and led the members of the group through introductions.

Ruby Moore-Bloom, Clean Energy Transitions Institute (CETI), introduced the CETI team, which will conduct the energy pathways analysis and will model health and economic impacts of reducing fossil fuel use.

Ben Duncan introduced the Kearns & West team, which will provide facilitation and process support throughout the project.

Review and Finalize Charter

Ben shared the importance of prioritizing attendance at the Advisory Group meetings and the expectation that any proxies be briefed on the project status and any meeting materials prior to attending meetings. He added that moving forward the project team will plan to send any comments submitted by Advisory Group members to the full group. He noted the importance of keeping the charter at a high level in order to maintain the ability of the group to develop an appropriate process as the project moves forward. He reminded the group that they are tasked with holding the project team accountable.

Ben reviewed the following seven charter suggestions shared by Advisory Group members and facilitated discussion around the suggestions.

Charter Suggestion #1

(1) Add language, “Inform and educate their communities and organizations about the development of the Oregon Energy Strategy, the tradeoffs weighed by the Oregon Department of Energy, and the importance of a statewide energy strategy” to Section C: Roles and Responsibilities of Advisory Group members.

Ben noted that ODOE proposes formally adding this language to the charter.

Discussion

Comment: The utilities serve a multitude of communities, and it will be difficult to keep all of them informed and educated on the development of the Oregon Energy Strategy.

Comment: The original intent was for the members to act as ambassadors and bring the conversations and any points of consensus to the public. The intent of the suggestion was not to act as a mandate.

Comment: Trade associations will inform their members but will lean on members to inform their communities.

Ben suggested changing the wording of suggestion #1 to say, “their communities and/or their organizations.” The Advisory group shared agreement with this proposed update.

Charter Suggestion #2-3

(2) The Guiding Principles overtly acknowledge the importance of ensuring that the strategy is realistic and achievable.

(3) It is important to emphasize tradeoffs and overtly grapple with them in the development of the Energy Strategy.

Discussion

Comment: It is important to share that there will be some hard tradeoffs.

Comment: Having an awareness of what is feasible and achievable is important.

Response: Ben shared that the group may not agree on what is realistic and achievable, but that the group will be charged with debating and providing input on the topic.

Response: Ruchi shared that ODOE is appreciative for the Advisory Group's support in ensuring realistic and achievable outcomes that the state will be able to implement.

Comment: The language can be interpreted in different ways and can be used to stop more ambitious goals that are needed. The possibility of preventing something before we begin is concerning.

Comment: Suggestion that the language be adjusted to clarify that the goal is to develop a strategy that is designed to be implemented.

Response: Ruchi shared that ODOE recognizes that the Energy Strategy is only useful if it is actionable.

Comment: It is important to grapple with what feasible looks like for different members of the group.

Comment: The process will lean on the model and Advisory Group discussion to develop actionable recommendations. This language could create subjectivity around what is realistic.

Ben shared that the project team is not proposing a language change based on suggestions #2-3.

Charter Suggestions #3-8:

Ben reviewed the remaining charter suggestions shared by the Advisory Group members.

(4) Amend the desired outcomes of the Advisory Group process to include language stating that documentation of the Advisory Group process provides a fair and accurate record of the Group's deliberations and guidance. – Section D: Desired Outcomes

(5) Amend the Decision-Making approach to include language stating that neither voting nor consensus will be required, and all Advisory Group input will be considered. Member feedback will be documented in meeting notes and posted to the ODOE webpage following each Advisory Group meeting. ODOE will provide a staff response to indicate how Advisory Group input was considered, how it was incorporated into the Energy Strategy development, or why the information was not included." – Section F.2: Decision Making Approach

(6) To provide an assessment of positive and negative potential impacts that any policy or legislative recommendations may have on the various stakeholders involved.

(7) To clearly highlight, in the final strategy, areas of consensus as well as areas of where there was disagreement, including any relevant peer-reviewed or factual evidence provided by members in support of their perspective. Ref: "Decision-Making Approach."

(8) To declare up front that this group plans to address current and pending state policies, initiatives, and goals that may be countervailing, conflicting, or otherwise at odds and in need of some type of alteration reconsideration or other steps to rectify goals and objectives that are at odds and/or to reflect new data, technology and trends. An example is prohibition on construction of new natural gas power plants and banning of new nuclear power plants.

Ben shared the project team is not suggesting charter language changes based on these comments, but that the process feedback will be taken to mind as the work moves forward. Ruchi added that ODOE is committed to sharing a fair and accurate record of group feedback and asked the members to identify any needed corrections to meeting records. Ben flagged the need to avoid prescriptive language in the charter that would limit the process later.

Discussion

Comment: It is important that policy makers receive a holistic picture of Advisory Group discussions as they make decisions.

Comment: Impending pressure on communities and the development of new technologies may lead to the consideration of new green energy measures such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). There may be countervailing issues such as community health issues that may be helpful to consider as well. These are areas that might need to be ironed out and articulated to the legislature.

Response: Ruchi shared that these examples may not fit in the charter, but that there will be discussions on current state policies or examples of policy prohibitions and data that might be seen as in conflict that will be discussed later in the meeting.

Comment: The impacts to Oregonians will be felt in the recommendations to policy makers. I have concern that policy makers will not be able to sift through meeting summaries and that relevant data should be included in the Energy Strategy so that they can see data and discussions shared by the Advisory Group members.

Comment: Communities will be most concerned about affordability. It would be helpful to see current costing so the group can understand where funding should be allocated.

Comment: In the last year we have seen lawsuits around contentious programs. Robust documentation of input would be useful later in the case that the outcomes are bought to court.

Response: Ruchi agreed that decisions in the energy sector often get litigated and clarified that the process will be providing decisions on modeling, data, and recommendations, not policy decisions. She added that ODOE will be looking to the Advisory Group for feedback on process recommendations and noted that ODOE is planning to share a draft version of the report with the group for feedback. She shared that the group will be asked to balance readability for policy makers with accuracy in representing conversations and noted that there will also be appendices published with the report. She noted the comment around costs and shared that policy recommendations might include programs that provide financial support.

Comment: There will be issues that will be more contentious that lead to strong disagreement. It would be helpful if the report outlines where there was disagreement and consensus. There will be debate on

topics like nuclear power and it will be important for policy makers to have a holistic and detailed understanding of the Advisory Group's feedback specifically on subjects with disagreement.

Ben suggested a second language to say, "fair and accurate including documenting areas of consensus and disagreement." Ben shared that the project team is asking the Advisory Group to bring the additional process recommendations into discussions throughout the process. He asked for the group to share whether they support affirming the charter, are willing to move forward with affirming the charter, or are not willing to move forward without more discussion. The Advisory Group affirmed the charter with the two proposed updates.

Update on Energy Strategy Project Work

Jessica Reichers shared that ODOE is gathering data and information to inform the energy model and noted that the model is intended to assess future energy demand and determine which supplies will meet those needs based on established energy objectives. Jessica shared the development timeline, reviewed activities to date, and shared a look at next steps as the group works towards the final modeling approach.

Advisory Group members shared the following questions and comments.

Question: Where is the background information that Advisory Group members can access to provide input on the modeling?

Response: Advisory Group members are encouraged to watch the Working Group Kick-off and subsequent breakout meetings to learn more. CETI staff will attend the September 9 Advisory Group meeting and can share more details as needed.

Question: What will be presented at the September 9th meeting?

Response: The project team is planning to share the reference scenario and will be collecting feedback from the Advisory Group. ODOE will share an alternative scenario timeline soon.

Question: Will there be an opportunity for adjustments and revisions after the online comment portal is closed?

Response: Modeling is an iterative process and necessary adjustments will be made. The Energy Strategy work will be updated on a schedule in the future.

Question: Is ODOE looking at using NEA and Energy Trust of Oregon analysis to include information beyond what is shared by the Working Group members?

Response: The Working Groups members are intended to act as conduits to their network. ETO and NEA members are included on the Working Group lists. If there is additional data, we need to know about please submit it through the portal.

Jessica shared an overview of Working Group and Listening Session attendance to date and provided an overview of key themes collected during the discussions. She shared that during the listening sessions, participants expressed a desire for more energy and fuel choices, alternatives to car transportation, and state support for energy efficiency technologies. They were also concerned about how energy choices

impact communities, including job opportunities, local economic development, energy resilience, air quality, and the challenges of EV adoption in rural areas.

Jessica reminded the group that the model includes one reference scenario and five alternative scenarios to compare energy trade-offs. The Energy Efficiency and Load Flexibility Working Group focused on key inputs for energy efficiency and load flexibility, emphasizing potential electricity load reductions and equity concerns. The Electricity Generation Working Group discussed uncertainties in load growth and transmission, suggesting alternative scenarios for different energy pathways. The Transportation Working Group explored clean fuels and zero-emission vehicles, addressing the challenges of increased electric load and the role of lower carbon fuels. The Land Use and Natural Resources Working Group examined balancing energy needs with environmental concerns, while the Environmental Justice Working Group focused on how energy transitions impact underserved communities, particularly regarding equity and access.

Advisory Group members shared the following comments and questions.

Question: How many members of the public participated in the Working Groups?

Response: The Working Groups had around 2-6 public attendees. We do not have a firm number, but we can get that information and send it before the next meeting.

Comment: The key takeaway from the Environmental Justice Group was that topics discussed in that group should be discussed in all the groups.

Jessica shared an update on the modeling effort and noted that the deadline to finalize modeling inputs is September 10. She shared that the ODOE Energy Strategy team had created multiple avenues for input, including from the Steering Group, Working Groups, Listening Sessions, and public comments. She shared that the Advisory Group plays a key role in providing recommendations and insight, especially on contentious issues. Jessica informed the group that ODOE and CETI are currently assessing feedback to develop a draft reference scenario, which will be shared for further input. She added that the team is working on alternative scenarios but will need to prioritize and make decisions based on available data and criteria, such as policy alignment and reliability.

An Advisory Group member shared the following question.

Question: Do you foresee reactivating Working Groups after the first round?

Response: After the reference scenario work, ODOE will consider reconvening the Working Groups.

Discussion: Advisory Group Feedback on ODOE Project Work

Ruchi Sadhir, ODOE, shared that the Oregon Legislature asked ODOE to develop an Oregon Energy Strategy that identifies pathways to meeting the state's energy policy objectives. The existing objectives include House Bill 2021, the Climate Protection Program, and anything not covered which would default to Executive Order 20-04. In order to meet the goal of creating an Oregon Energy Strategy that meets stated energy objectives, the group will be modeling scenarios. The current goals being modeled are not

sufficient to prevent the worst outcomes from climate change. To better understand this, Ruchi noted the possibility of using a modeling scenario to assess a decarbonization scenario.

Members of the advisory group shared the following comments on modeling a decarbonization scenario.

Comment: I am concerned about balancing renewable resources with reliability and the economy. I suggest using natural gas as a bridge, learning from California's policy changes.

Comment: This would change the objective function of that scenario and would not be in line with the other scenarios. I suggest revisiting this when we revisit the Energy Strategy in phase two.

Comment: We are limited with our access to the modeling and the modeler. It makes the most sense to follow the direction shared by the legislature.

Comment: I support looking at something that pushes us.

Comment: We need to evaluate aggressive scenarios now to make informed decisions on ambitious goals.

Comment: I think some might already see our current targets as aggressive.

Comment: I see this work as a good start but anticipate significant changes and ongoing involvement.

Comment: I struggle with electrification goals and see emerging technologies like hydrogen as potentially useful for achieving our targets.

Jessica Reichers, ODOE, asked the group for advice on providing helpful, transparent, and useful information. Jessica posed the following questions:

- What are the best practices you would recommend to ODOE to ensure transparency in the Energy Strategy?
- Are the public engagement processes that you found particularly well structured in the way of the lead emergency presented comments, questions, and responses?
- At this early stage of the project, how can ODOE present information for you and the public on where there is not broad agreement on modeling decisions?

The advisory group members had the following questions and comments to the questions:

Comment: It may be a good idea to design how the public will provide feedback so that we are not working in a bubble.

Response: We have regular meetings with the power council and have advisors on the data.

Comment: The timeline given for participation in this project was very tight. Creating a timeline that is more detailed and less condensed would be beneficial.

Question: As comments come in, will they be posted for the public to review?

Response: The comments will be combined by topic and shared.

Jessica thanked the group for their answers and highlighted their appreciation for everyone's participation and flexibility despite a tight timeline.

Next Steps and Adjourn

Jessica Reichers, ODOE, shared that the next meeting is scheduled for September 9, 9am-12pm. At the meeting ODOE will provide an update on the final Working Groups, present the proposal for modeling analysis, including draft scenarios and key assumptions, and seek feedback from the Advisory Group and discuss next steps. She shared that the October meeting will consist of planning for engagement in early 2025.

Jessica shared that while not all of the scenarios will be completed by the September meeting, the reference scenario will be shared for discussion. She asked members to flag and share feedback on areas where they see broad disagreement and noted that ODOE will be working with CETI on the modeling timeline which will impact the scheduling of future advisory group meetings. A scheduling poll will be sent to collect availability for the October meeting.

Ben Duncan reminded the public that they can provide written public input to ODOE until August 31st by sending an email to Energy.strategy@Energy.Oregon.gov.

Ben expressed his appreciation for Advisory Group members and adjourned the meeting.