



Environment Council of Rhode Island Full Board Meeting

Monday, February 1, 2021 | 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM | Virtual Meeting on Zoom

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Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions 5:30 - 5:40 PM
 - a. Land Acknowledgement
 - b. Approval of [January 4 minutes](#)
 - c. Office Report
2. Providence Climate Justice Ordinances and Discussion 5:40 - 6:00 PM:
 - a. Updates from the Providence Environmental Sustainability Task Force (ESTF), Chair Sue AnderBois (links to [ordinance articles](#) and [Building Energy Reporting Ordinance \(BERO\) flyer](#).)
3. Transportation and Climate Initiative 6:00 - 6:15 PM
 - a. Updates and discussion, Green Energy Consumers Alliance, Mal Skowron
4. Policy Committee 6:15 - 6:35 PM
 - a. Climate Crisis Campaign
 - b. Coffee Hour, date & time TBD
 - c. Legislative agenda discussion and process (PolComm on Monday, Feb 8, 4:30)
5. Strategic Planning and President's Report 6:35 - 6:50
6. Reports from ECRI fiscal agency projects 6:50 - 6:55 PM
 - a. Green Infrastructure Coalition
7. School Recycling Club
8. Announcements 6:55 PM
9. Adjourn 7:00 PM

Attendees

Eugenia Marks, Barry Schiller, Priscilla De La Cruz, Barbara Walsh, Paul Beaudette, Angie Koziara, Meg Kerr, Colin Antaya, Hank Webster, Jessie Kingston, Jim Kingston, Jonathan Berard, Justin Boyan, Kai Salem, Katherine Gibson, Kenneth Filarski, Krystal Noiseux, Mal Skowron, Nicole Di Paolo, Noreen Inglesi, Bina Gehres, Paige Therien, Peter Trafton, Susan Korte, Trent Batson, Victoria Leytin, Greg Gerritt, Dana Goodman, Sue AnderBois, Donna Personeus

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions (intros in chat)
 - a. Land Acknowledgement
 - i. We are on indigenous, stolen land. We are still dealing with the impacts of this. Important to acknowledge the land we are on in our environmental work and use this as a guide in our strategic planning process.
 - ii. Resources:
 1. <https://www.tomaquagmuseum.org/belongingsblog/2020/3/22/a-guide-for-land-acknowledgements-by-lorn-spears>
 2. <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>
 3. <https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement/>
 - b. Approval of [January 4 minutes](#)
 - i. **Meg Kerr makes first motion, Jonathan Berard makes second motion. All vote in favor (no opposition or abstentions) - January Minutes approved.**
 - c. Office Report
 - i. Current balances
 1. Ed Fund: \$47,638.02 (\$10,000 of this is grant for Strategic Planning Consultants)
 2. ECRI: \$35,523.45
 - a. Dues since June 1, 2020: \$7,796 - Much higher than ever before. We have added a number of new members (Individual and Organizational) this year.
 - ii. Video Festival: Saturday February 20, 2 pm;
 1. Registration: <https://www.environmentcouncilri.org/content/2021-ri-nature-video-fest>
 2. We have over 40 people registered already and a great lineup of 12 videos to show.
 3. New feature: Viewer's Choice Awards
 - iii. Tisdale awards: We are making progress towards our new fundraising plan which will entail an online silent auction in April. We will be sending out the call for donation in early February and for the first time we are looking for sponsors for the Tisdale Awards. Contact the office for more information or to donate.
 - iv. Current: 4 item donations, 1 sponsor
 - v. Annual meeting theme this year will be 50 years of ECRI (past and future). Greg is looking for someone who would be willing to do a bit of archival research in the ECRI files at the RI Historical Society Library. If you are interested, please contact the office.
 1. First Monday of June 2021
 2. Planning volunteers welcomed - contact Greg
2. Providence Climate Justice Ordinances and Discussion
 - a. Updates from the Providence Environmental Sustainability Task Force (ESTF), Chair Sue AnderBois ([Ordinance articles](#) and [Building Energy Reporting Ordinance \(BERO\) flyer](#))
 - i. Providence Climate Justice Plan Codification
 1. Environmental Sustainability Task Force - Similar bodies in other towns and city. Body appointed by City Council members or the Mayor. Conduit between the city's work and the public.

2. Ordinance Articles codifies:
 - a. The goals and elements of the City of Providence/Racial & Environment Justice Committee (REJC) Climate Justice Plan
 - b. Office of Sustainability
 - c. Seats for REJC and youth
3. Renames Providence Environmental Sustainability Task Force (ESTF) to “The Sustainability Commission”
4. Places term limits on seats
5. Climate Justice Plan is being incorporated into full Providence Plan
- ii. BERO Ordinance (Building Energy Reporting Ordinance)
 1. Largest buildings would need to report their energy usage
 2. Each building uploads their reports in one tool via National Grid (platform is the Energy Star Portfolio Manager)
 3. Other cities across the US have implemented similar ordinances
 4. Question (Chat; Paul Beaudette): can homeowners use the plan to follow or find their home’s energy use w/hopes of lowering it?
 - a. No, but they should take advantage of the National Grid homeowner program
- iii. Both ordinances were introduced by Councilwoman Helen Anthony (Ward 2)
- iv. Both ordinances were recommended to Finance Committee
- v. Shout-out to Justin Boyan of CARI for organizing two unique calls-to-action
 1. Petition in support of the ordinances got over 200 signatures from every ward in Providence. Providence residents can still sign the action: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/climate-justice-pvd/>
 2. About 30 members of public attended the Council meeting webinar and changed their Zoom name to “I Support Climate Justice” - Council members were able to look at the participants list and see everyone!
- b. Vote for ECRI to support the Building Energy Reporting Ordinance, including logo placement on the BERO flyer: Meg Kerr makes first movement, Greg Gerritt seconds. All vote in favor (no opposition or abstentions) - motion approved.**
3. Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI)
 - a. Updates and discussion, Green Energy Consumers Alliance, Mal Skowron
 - i. Rhode Island has a transportation issue
 1. Climate - Transportation makes up RI’s gross emissions
 2. Public Health Issue - Nearly 11% of RI’s suffer from chronic lung disease
 - a. Correlation between asthma occurrences and highway locations
 - ii. In December 2020, RI signed on to Regional TCI (Massachusetts, Connecticut & D.C.
 1. Goal of program is to create other options besides gas-powered cars
 - iii. How it would work
 1. Cap pollution
 2. Make polluters pay for the health and climate issues they cause

3. Community benefits from money brought in
 - a. Better electrified transit service (air quality)
 - b. Active mobility paths for walking and biking (safer and good for our health)
 - c. Electric car incentives and charging
- iv. Program would bring in at least \$20 million annually for RI investments will help kick-start renewable energy infrastructure
 1. TCI is a good way to leverage the Biden Administration's federal plan/money that will come our way
- v. Gas prices will only increase about \$.05 - and only if diesel and gasoline fuel suppliers choose to pass cost onto consumers
 1. People who don't drive at all will only see benefits
- vi. Equity
 1. Minimum 35% investment and direct benefits to communities overburdened and underserved by existing system
 - a. Will help Climate Justice Ordinance
 2. Advisory body made up of community members
- vii. Green Energy Consumer's Alliance is hosting TCI webinar on February 10 at 12 pm and February 11 at 7:30 pm: Register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/6603279121301017360>
- viii. Greg Geritt comment: General Motors has said they will go all electric by 2035 and have a new deal with NaviStar for hydrogen powered trucks
- ix. Justin Boyan (chat question): Has Green Energy Consumers, Acadia, or anyone gotten Dan McKee on record about TCI?
 1. He has not yet taken a position
 2. ECRI sent a letter to McKee requesting his partnership in environmental issues - TCI was on that list
- x. Jessie Kingston (chat question): Who do we see might be a likely sponsor for enabling legislation for this?
 1. Once the Governor's office drafts a bill, various people will weigh in on the bill and sponsors can then be found as well. We're still early in the process.
- xi. Hank Webster: keep the moment going (op-eds, contacting legislators, etc.)

4. Policy Committee

- a. Climate Crisis Campaign
 - i. Act on Climate bill Hearing is Wednesday, February 3rd - all are encouraged to call their senator and submit a written or virtual testimony
- b. Coffee Hour, date & time TBD
 - i. Elected to postponed at the last meeting due to confusion on how this legislative session would work
 1. As of Friday, January 29th, legislative leadership has been announced - new Coffee Hour date to come
- c. Legislative agenda discussion and process (PolComm on Monday, Feb 8, 4:30)
 - i. Still early in the session but we will begin voting on bills to follow and prioritize at Feb. 8 meeting

ii. How do bills get on ECRI agenda?

1. ECRI takes a position (for, neutral or against) so that we can 1) formally weigh in and 2) keep records for the Green Report Card
2. Members bring a bill to PolComm meeting.
3. PolComm votes on whether bill should go on watch list or as ECRI priority.
4. PolComm then brings their vote to ECRI for Full Board Vote

iii. Debrief on Act on Climate Hearing (Act on Climate bill Hearing is Wednesday, February 3rd - all are encouraged to call their senator and submit a testimony)

d. Barry Schiller:

1. Vulnerable Road User Bill - enhances penalties for automobile drivers if they kill or injury other road users. ECRI supported last year - H5093, hearing is 2/2/2021 (<http://status.rilegislature.gov/documents/agenda-17039.aspx>)

ii. Bill H5031: requiring a plan for EV public charging stations (sponsor: McNamara), has a hearing today at 4pm.

iii. Transit rider members has Providence Journal op-ed regarding voting "No" on Question 4: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/opinion/columns/2021/01/31/opinion-sgouros-time-rethink-our-transportation-priorities/4249770001/>

e. Jonathan Berard: Vote Yes on 2 Kick-off Event tomorrow (2/2/2021) - event will be streaming live from [Clean Water Action FB page](#)

1. Barry Schiller (chat comment): note early voting on bonds begins Feb 10, just 9 days, so it's good we are getting going on the bond!
2. Johnathan Berard (chat comment): Thanks Barry - and if you want to vote by mail, your mail ballot application needs to be RECEIVED by BOE by February 9th so get them in the mail ASAP if you haven't already!

5. Strategic Planning and President's Report

a. Strategic Planning

i. At last month's ECRI meeting, Priscilla De La Cruz and Nicole DiPaolo led a grounding session (outlining strategic plan framework in racial equity and racial equity resources and language)

ii. Initial tentative timeline has shifted a bit - this timeline is what we submitted in our RFP

1. Timeline will evolve and expand

- a. Committee is working on narrowing down consultants: finalized a matrix for comparing consultants
- b. Next steps will be to announce consultant(s) that committee recommends

b. ExComm typically meets second Monday of the month (after PolComm) - we are working on moving the day and time (will remain on the second week thought) - February ExComm meeting date & time TBD

6. Reports from ECRI fiscal agency projects
 - a. Green Infrastructure Coalition
 - i. Submitted a proposal to Rhode Island Foundation for \$75,000
 - ii. Completed and submitted reports for 2020
 - iii. E-blasts will focus on Bond campaign this month
 - b. School Recycling
 - i. No updates
7. Announcements
 - a. Gasoline-powered car bans webinar hosted by Green Energy Consumers Alliance webinar with national experts and advocates; February 25, 2021 at 12 pm: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2246709487481745678>
 - b. Climate Jobs Rhode Island: many ECRI members are on this new coalition to create shared goals and expectations for labor groups; <http://climatejobsri.org/>
8. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn by Peter Trafton. Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.