

April 2021 Meeting Minutes

Welcome chat, introductions

Attending: John Doherty, Nancy Atwood, Barbara Menne, Chuck Jensen, Sue Lepore, Mary Forman, Virginia Lohr, Pete Weymiller, Fred Ramey, Claire Hovde, Aja Irons, Marti Lambert, Elly Claus-McGahan, Jason Berkowitz.

Danny Richter CCL National Call video—"The Current State of National Carbon Pricing Policies"

--Biden's infrastructure bill can still be changed to include a price on carbon, and CCL tries to support all carbon price bills

--EICDA is "the best first step, but it doesn't do it all to get to net zero by 2050." CCL supports complementary bills and policies which are needed as well.

--Why only 40 co-sponsors? The text wasn't finalized yet because Deutch was hoping for a Republican to join. But this is still a good start, and that is thanks to CCL volunteers.

--100% of the dividends can't be distributed to citizens because it would be against the rules of Reconciliation (a budgetary) Process.

Action Team Reports

Sue Lepore, Book club: meets May 5 at noon, and we are reading Bill Gates' How to Avoid a Climate Disaster. Join us, even if you haven't read it yet!

The April **newsletter** came out last week and will be archived on the website.

The **website** has some new features, such as the Earth Day word cloud. It's beautiful, thanks for your participation! It will stay up a few more days. Suggestions or comments about the newsletter or website are always welcome.

Elly Claus-McGahan, Endorsements: We had a meeting with Fircrest councilmember Shannon Reynolds and will meet with Fircrest mayor Hunter George soon. Also hope to meet with the Chamber of Commerce, and Senators Cantwell and Murray soon.

Climate Pierce County, an umbrella organization of several environmental groups along with CCL, is working on a presentation for the Pierce County Regional Council to ask them to take an active lead in working with small cities and towns on climate issues (organizing, advising, getting grants...) Members of our chapter need to come to the meeting on May 20 to support this "ask" and make public comments! They can also write the council members beforehand.

Chuck Jensen, Letters to the Editor: Linda Cohan's op ed was published on Earth Day in the Tacoma News Tribune! Congrats to her!

Ginny Lohr, Facebook: Fred Ramey, a new volunteer, is posting great things! Many thanks to him.

John Doherty, Tabling: Some events are coming up and it looks like we can start tabling again! This is a fun and easy way for new members to get involved, with no expertise necessary. There's a meeting on May 17th to plan for upcoming events like Ocean Fest (June 6) and Steilacoom Electric Vehicle event (Sept 11). Training for newbies will be provided.

Presentations: Registrations are going well for “Climate 411,” an in-person intensive community class taught by John and sponsored by CCL Tacoma Education. There’s a promotional spot on KTAH radio too.

Featured Speaker, Lexi Brewer, “Forests, Trees and Climate Change”

(See her full presentation slides [here](#))

Lexi is Chair of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission and Manager of the Forests Communities of Interest for the Puyallup Watershed Initiative (a “forum to connect and collaborate to keep trees and forests throughout the area”)

--Trees have so many important benefits, but planting new trees is not a silver bullet (vs ceasing greenhouse gas emissions). It is much more complex than that. Takes so long to implement, and 100 years to reach full potential and provide the benefits.

--*“No silver bullet can replace halting emissions, and we are not going to plant our way out of the climate crisis”* We need *both* natural and energy solutions to stabilize the climate.

--Deforestation is a huge problem, not only in the tropics but in our area, because we have a lot of high-quality forests. Sprawl and development are threatening them, and we need to push for better development codes and policies.

--*“We need to preserve what we have, reforestation (removing mature trees and planting new ones) is not a substitute”*

--Urban trees provide multiple direct benefits to human health and well-being and mitigate climate impacts. See naturewithin.info for studies on greening cities and public housing.

--Tacoma’s canopy cover is 20%. To get to 30% would take 120,000 more big trees or almost 2 million small ones! *“Big mature trees in urban areas provide more benefits than young trees.”*

So, it is crucial for us to keep the ones we have and keep them healthy.

--Local programs, tree giveaways, and opportunities to advocate for trees include:

*May 1st Pierce Conservation District Urban Tree Sale. The PCD is now restoring Clark’s Creek area and offers the first carbon credit program focused on urban environments in the nation!

*City of Tacoma Grit City Trees, tree coupon program in the fall

*WSU Forest Health Watch/Redcedar Decline --help by observing and reporting data on iNaturalist.org. (also see <https://foresthealth.org/redcedar>)

*May 21st There is a 10 am meeting of the Forest COI. All are welcome!

*Tacoma Tree Foundation has a stewards program, webinars, and tree giveaways

--What can you do? *“Stick up for trees!”* Advocate at all levels of government for better policies, budgets, and plans to protect our existing trees. Plant more trees and hire an arborist to maintain them. They help us, and they need our help!

Breakout Rooms

Lexi gave us a group activity-- to put together a 150K spending program using the list she gave us of priced options. This illustrated the difficulty of the task, the “scarcity” mindset due to lack of funds, and the crucial need for funding advocacy.