
April 29, 2021

Subject: Strategic Growth Council February Meeting Minutes Reporting

Period: February 2021– April 2021

Staff Lead: Sarah Newsham, Executive Fellow

Recommended Action:

Approval of the February 24, 2021 Strategic Growth Council Meeting Minutes.

Strategic Growth Council
February 24, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order

Chair Gordon called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Agenda Item #2: Roll Call

Council Members and Representatives Present:

Kate Gordon (Chair), Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR);

Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA);

Jared Blumenfeld, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA);

David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA);

Lourdes Castro Ramirez, Secretary, California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH);

Mark Starr, Deputy Director, California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS);

Juan Sánchez Muñoz, Public Member;

Nicole Capretz, Public Member;

Mike Flad, Public Member;

Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) (*joined at 1:11 p.m.*)

Agenda Item #3: **ACTION**: Approval of Minutes

Motion was made (Blumenfeld) and seconded (Kim) to approve the [December 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes](#). Motion passes 8-0-1* (Starr abstains).

*marks abstention or absence from vote

Agenda Item #4: Council Member Updates

Blumenfeld (CalEPA): New Chair of Air Resources Board, Liane Randolph, whose first board meeting is tomorrow. Lauren Sanchez and Steve Cliff are leaving CalEPA to work for the federal government. CalEPA has been doing a priority-setting exercise with

racial equity and environmental justice as top priorities. DTSC reform effort is ongoing. The fourth version of CalEnviroScreen was rolled out on Monday and is open for public comment. Cap-and-Trade auction last week sold out and was above the floor price, which is good news for SGC programs.

Secretary Ross (CDFA) joined at 1:11 p.m.

Kim (CalSTA): ZEV market development strategy came out last week, led by GoBiz. CalSTA's Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) will guide future efforts to invest discretionary transportation dollars. A draft will be released in March for a 30-day public comment period.

Crowfoot (CNRA): Kicking off update to State Adaptation Strategy with OPR, which will be an online framework to identify how sectoral efforts are connected, working with local and regional leaders to build resilience. Issued a wildfire and forest resilience action plan, which is a roadmap to invest the Governor's proposed billion-dollar investment in wildfire resilience. Wildfire and Forest Resilience Taskforce will lead implementation of the plan, focusing on regional plans and priorities. Developing a pathways document to achieve 30 by 30 goal, which is now shared by the federal government. Developing a Climate Smart Lands Strategy with CDFA and CalEPA. CNRA is moving into a new building and using the opportunity to rethink workspace and remote work.

Starr (CHHS): One Health Approach recognizes the connection of human, environmental, and animal health. Already doing much of this in CA and a lot of the work of SGC fits under that approach. CA is the first in the nation to establish a COVID equity metric, which is one of the three metrics used to move counties between reopening tiers. Every county must target its most disproportionately impacted communities. Health Equity Playbook has tools for counties to use to address communities that need the most support. Finalizing statement on climate change as a public health crisis. Met with CalEPA to collaborate and share racial equity work.

Castro Ramirez (BCSH): Continued focus on strengthening housing finance system to focus on housing affordability. Governor's budget contains \$1.75 billion for preventing and ending homelessness, including funding for the Homekey initiative. Governor signed SB 91 into law to extend eviction protections and establish an emergency rental assistance program. Thankful to jurisdictions for input about how to best implement rental assistance program. Rental assistance will launch March 15. Visit housingiskey.com for more information. Tia Boatman Patterson (ED of CalHFA) transitioning to Biden-Harris Administration.

Gordon (OPR): Redesigned OPR website to showcase who we are. There has been a lot of media attention around budget surplus, underscoring the unequal impact this pandemic has had. This surplus reflects the fact that a small percentage of Californians have continued to do very well. Most Californians are not doing well, and as government we have a heightened responsibility to take care of those who have been hurt by the COVID crisis and climate crisis. Budget: focuses on reducing emissions, climate resilience, getting ahead on climate crisis and supporting economic recovery.

Equity and regional diversity underly everything in the budget. OPR updates: Working with CNRA on the Adaptation Strategy. Producing a Just Transition roadmap of how resource-dependent communities can transition to a carbon-neutral future. Roadmap will be a starting point of core principles with a public process beginning in April. ICARP vulnerable communities platform will help identify which communities are particularly vulnerable to climate change. Will not replace, but will be complementary to, CalEnviroScreen. Greenlining Institute and APEN have been thought partners from the beginning of this project.

Agenda Item #5: Executive Director's Report

Louise Bedsworth, Executive Director, SGC

Council Discussion:

Crowfoot (CNRA): Commendation for PACE cohort. Would love to have them interact with SGC at some point.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Agenda Item #6: Discussion Item: Resilient California: Economic recovery and climate resilience through smart growth strategies, a review of state programs

Jeanne Merrill, California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN)

Presentation of findings from a [review of AHSC and SALC programs](#) by CalCAN

Council Discussion:

Capretz: What would a regional pilot program look like?

Merrill: Identify appropriate communities based on needs and appropriate planning documents. Not recommending combined application, but rather improved TA and planning support.

Capretz: Interesting to see where programs are concentrated. Connects to the discussions **we've had** about AHSC and will continue to have going forward.

Ross: Thank you for the report. Glad that we have been getting more applications for planning grants. We want to get co-benefits from everything we do. We know that the difficulty of getting long-term leases is related to this as well.

Merrill: One of our recommendations is for AHSC to consider a planning grant option. If you had planning grants available on both sides of the equation, you could bring together both parts.

Crowfoot: Want to make sure we are getting projects that address unique regional needs. **We're never going to have** enough public money to create an inflection point on land use. Want to know what policy we can advance to complement these programs and create broader drivers to retain open space and build more affordable housing in cities.

Gordon: Report has a specific recommendation about Sustainable Communities Strategies. Could you speak more on policy recommendations?

Merrill: Regarding pilot proposal, think about regions where you have strong regional SCS plans but lack implementation dollars. Need to figure out where in the State is ripe for investment on planning grants and technical assistance. The people who work on agricultural land conservation and infill development **don't** know each other. Need to support bringing those sides together.

Muñoz: You saw overlap percentage was 32%. What was your hypothesis/hope and what do you hope it will be in the future?

Merrill: We were not expecting much overlap. Understood that there were a lot of silos. The **finding itself was not surprising**. **We've done a great job of building** two independent programs, now the challenge is to consider how we can work better together. For the future—want to see a commitment to the process (rather than a goal percentage).

Secretary Ross (CDFA) left the screen at 2:19 p.m.

Castro Ramirez: Appreciate the recommendation to create an environment where infill and conservation people can work together. Would like to offer a sit down with HCD teams to discuss intersections with Infill Infrastructure Grant program.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Agenda Item #7: **ACTION**: Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program

Virginia Jameson, Department of Conservation

7a: Recommended Action: Approve the staff recommendation to increase by 15% the amount of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program award made in FY 18-19 (Round 5) to the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County because the appraised value is higher than awardee's estimated value of a conservation easement on the

Jalama Canyon Ranch, as specifically allowed by the Round 5 program guidelines dated December 18, 2018.

7b: Recommended Action: Approve the staff recommendation to increase by 10% the amount of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program award made in FY 18-19 (Round 5) to the Solano Land Trust because the appraised value is higher than awardee's estimated value of a conservation easement on the Martin Ranch, as specifically allowed by the Round 5 program guidelines dated December 18, 2018.

Undersecretary Jenny Lester Moffitt steps in for Secretary Ross (CDFA).

Council Discussion:

Kim: Would these funds come from future rounds?

Jameson: No, from funding allocated in past rounds to projects that dropped out or came in under budget.

Starr: Had question about dollar amount in final slide.

Jameson: Will double-check dollar amount.

Muñoz: Is the permissible percent increase different in 2018 guidelines and current guidelines?

Jameson: No, the percent has not changed since then.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Motion was made (Crowfoot) and seconded (Flad) to approve the staff recommendation to increase by 15% the amount of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program award made in FY 18-19 (Round 5) to the [Land Trust for Santa Barbara County](#) because the appraised value is higher than awardee's estimated value of a conservation easement on the Jalama Canyon Ranch, as specifically allowed by the Round 5 program guidelines dated December 18, 2018. Motion passes (10-0-0).

Motion was made (Blumenfeld) and seconded (Castro Ramirez) to approve the staff recommendation to increase by 10% the amount of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program award made in FY 18-19 (Round 5) to the [Solano Land Trust](#) because the appraised value is higher than awardee's estimated value of a conservation easement on the Martin Ranch, as specifically allowed by the Round 5 program guidelines dated December 18, 2018. Motion passes (10-0-0).

Break at 2:33 p.m.

Reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

Secretary Kim (CalSTA) has been replaced by Deputy Secretary Darwin Moosavi.

Agenda Item #8: **ACTION:** Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines

Ryan Silber, SGC

8a: Recommended Action: Adopt the Final Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Fiscal Year 2019-20 Round 6 Guidelines (the "Final Guidelines").

Council Discussion:

Muñoz: Please elaborate on the tribal set-aside.

Silber: Tribal projects are eligible to compete within project area types. Tribal set-aside is there as a guarantee. If at least one project isn't awarded through the first 80% of available funding by being a top-scoring application, then it can be awarded with the remaining 20%.

Gordon: Clarification: Discretionary funds are available to be used if stated goals are not met in the allocation of the first 80% of funding.

Blumenfeld: Thank you to Louise and staff for reaching this proposal. Exemplifies what SGC is all about. Important to have clear articulation of aspirations, which we have here. Good road map to move forward. **I don't think everyone got exactly what they wanted, but we didn't lose the** basic principles and goals of the program. Building decarbonization is important—giving extra points for all-electric and electric-ready projects. Shows a level of creativity. I would have liked all-electric this round, but I think this is showing a trajectory to get there in round seven so I will happily support this proposal.

Castro Ramirez: Appreciation to SGC staff and councilmembers and entities and organizations who worked on this. Believe that our best work is done when we do it in conversation with the people most impacted, so commend that we took a little longer to ensure proper engagement and dialogue. Very supportive of geographic priorities that have been established. Especially in affordable housing, important to look at geographic and racial equity, this proposal does both. Workforce and economic development: important to look at how we embed economic development strategy, especially because COVID has hit BIPOC communities especially hard, including economically. This lays the groundwork for that.

Capretz: San Diego felt like their voice was heard. This is a step forward. This is not the end, but the beginning of imagining how we make this program even more effective. Considering regional criteria would be one possibility in the future.

Silber: **We've had a lot of attention and interest around geographic question internally as well. We're committed to working internally for guidelines updates immediately, start assessing all aspects of the application, take a holistic look at geographic distribution. Take a look at it with an equity lens. Need to figure out how we fit into the State's broader goals around affirmatively furthering fair housing, GHG reduction, workforce development, etc.**

Public Comment:

Moira Topp, City of San Diego

Scott Littlehale, Northern California Carpetners Regional Council

Hasan Ikhata, San Diego Association of Governments

Mayor Alejandra Sotelo-Solis, City of National City

Jovana Morales Tilgren, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Kevin Hall, Valley Climate

Secretary Ross (CDFA) has returned and replaced Undersecretary Lester Moffitt.

Motion was made (Crowfoot) and seconded (Flad) to adopt the [Final Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Fiscal Year 2019-20 Round 6 Guidelines](#) (the "Final Guidelines"). Motion passes (10-0-0).

8b: Recommended Action: Amend Sections 104 and 111 of the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Round 3 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council Comment:

No Council Comment.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment.

Motion was made (Blumenfeld) and seconded (Crowfoot) to amend Sections 104 and 111 of the [Fiscal Year 2016-17 Round 3 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines](#) according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Motion passes (10-0-0).

8c: Recommended Action: Amend Sections 104 and 111 of the Fiscal Year 2017-18 Round 4 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council Comment:

No Council Comment.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment.

Motion was made (Castro Ramirez) and seconded (Moosavi) to amend Sections 104 and 111 of the [Fiscal Year 2017-18 Round 4 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines](#) according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Motion passes (10-0-0).

8d: Recommended Action: Amend Sections 104 and 111 of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Round 5 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council Comment:

No Council Comment.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment.

Motion was made (Ross) and seconded (Starr) to amend Sections 104 and 111 of the [Fiscal Year 2018-19 Round 5 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Guidelines](#) according to staff recommendations made to accommodate project delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Motion passes (10-0-0).

Agenda Item #9: Public Comment

Richard E.T. Sadowski, Home Front Environmental Justice, Morro Bay

Kevin Hall, Consultant

Agenda Item #10: Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.