ISLAND COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – REGULAR SESSION
JUNE 27, 2012

The Island County Council of Governments met in regular session on June 27, 2012 in the Commissioners' Hearing Room 102B, located at 1 NE 6th St., Coupeville. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Nancy Conard at 9:00 a.m.

The Council of Governments Minutes and recordings of meetings may be located at http://www.islandcounty.net/commissioners/cog/2012/

Members Present: Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Kelly Emerson, Island County Commissioner
Angie Homola, Island County Commissioner
Larry Kwarsick, Mayor, City of Langley
Curt Gordon, Commissioner, South Whidbey Port District
Benye Weber, Commissioner, Coupeville Port District

Members Absent: Scott Dudley, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor

Also Present: Cheryn Weiser, Executive Director, Senior Services of Island County
Ron Nelson, Island County Economic Development Council

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Nancy Conard called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved, seconded, and approved to correct the minutes of the May 23, 2012 meeting. Under the Port of South Whidbey section in the first paragraph line seven should read "complete installation of public commercial and emergency access for the deep water dock". By unanimous vote the May 23, 2012 minutes were approved as corrected.

SUSTAINABLE WHIDBEY COALITION

Voucher for Sustainable Whidbey Coalition was provided. It was moved and seconded to approve the SWC voucher. Motion carried. Commissioner Emerson abstained.

Chair Conard passed out information on the Sustainable Whidbey Coalition (SWC) and asked Cheryn Weiser who has been involved with the SWC since the beginning to join the discussion.

SWC values or guiding principles are:

- Recognizes that community sustainability is a dynamic and complex arena that integrates the environment, the economy and community culture
- Is flexible and responsive
- Emphasizes efforts that expand communication and increase opportunities for collaboration, innovation and replication

Chair Conard went on to say that there is room for flexibility with the guiding principles to deal with environment and climate change, with local economy sustainability or in developing community sustainability. They have not tried to define everything that they do except to recognize it can be in any of those areas that they may have talked about and shared.

When starting SWC they were looking for members who have a long term commitment to Island Sustainability. Their primary purpose was to act as a hub of information and resources so that they could collaborate together about sustainability and learn what others are doing to try and replicate it in our own organizations, which is probably the strongest thing that has resulted from their collaboration. They also hope to provide professional education about best practices and sustainability, serve as a starting place and think tank for collaborative efforts, provide support and technical assistance for project design and fund development and to provide a link to the Island County Council of Governments on sustainability issues and projects.

Leadership:

- Nine member Steering Committee of four elected officials and four representatives from private organizations or local business that are directly involved with sustainability i.e. Island Transit, Puget Sound Energy, Whidbey Sun and Wind, Cascade Gas
- Part-time Coordinator- members support coordinator's salary by assessing themselves modest dues
- Participation from member organizations

Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss what's happening, what the coordinator is doing, provide instruction and guidance to coordinator, and to shape an annual work plan as well as go on month to month in recognizing what things they can do and how they can share and collaborate.

Members of the Steering Committee:
Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville
Walt Blackford, Community Service Manager, Puget Sound Energy
Angie Homola, Island County Commissioner
Kelly Keilwitz, Owner, Whidbey Sun & Wind
Gary Piazzon, President, WEAN
Martha Rose, Executive Director, Island Transit
Jim Sundberg, Councilmember, City of Langley
Cheryn Weiser, Executive Director, Senior Services of Island County

Coordinator, Sustainable Whidbey Coalition – Melody Kuschnereit

There are two classifications of members: regular members who contribute by their dues and affiliate members that have two classifications. Those who participate in Whidbey Green Seal are given a free year affiliate membership and they also provide the opportunity for people to join as affiliate members to be in the loop for communication and information and be able to participate in any of the networking or educational activities.

History
In 2007 Nancy Conard was invited to attend a meeting that was put together by Cheryn Weiser and Gary Piazzon of people who were interested in exploring what interest there was in working collaboratively on issues of sustainability. Initially they were more directly focused on climate change and over the next couple of years evolved to a broader platform to include not only environment but also economy (saving money). They met informally and reached out to as many tax agencies as they could over the next year and a half. During this time by meeting monthly, they were able to share ideas and things they were doing at each of their entities and thereby pick up ideas to replicate and to provide information to the COG, which resulted in a resolution that was adopted by the COG regarding the support of climate protection. They formalized the structure for the Sustainable Whidbey Coalition and asked the Council of Governments if they could work under the umbrella of the COG rather than starting a new agency.

In 2009 they developed a fee structure for those who chose to participate and used these monies to employ a part-time coordinator. At the monthly meeting staff from the City of Langley, the Town of

Coupeville and the City of Oak Harbor were able to share ideas One of the projects that came from this was a program that Langley had called the "Porch Light Campaign" where each of the three cities had a coordinator who sought volunteers who could go door-to-door in their communities and offer CFL bulbs to people to replace their conventional light bulbs with an information packet about how to achieve energy savings by doing that. That year they also responded to an opportunity from Puget Sound Energy to conduct a "Green Power Challenge" where again the 3 municipalities agreed to support an effort to encourage people to sign up for green power through PSE's energy program. They were successful getting a 1000 people on the Island to do this. PSE was committed to use the extra money to either produce or buy that amount of sustainable power. SWC met the challenge and as a result was awarded a $25,000 grant from PSE and solicited proposals from people who would like to use the money for a sustainability project. One of these projects was partnering with the Port of Coupeville who used this seed money to develop a private/public partnership that developed the solar panel project at the Greenbank Farm.

Another example of a project that came through SWC collaboration is the weatherization program for low income residents. Through contact made with Jody Bailey of the Opportunity Council Weatherization Program they were able to learn how to obtain federal funding and get interested people that qualified for and had significant energy retrofits done on their homes. This symbolizes the greatest benefit of this coalition has been by sharing information.

By 2010 they had enough money to hire a part-time coordinator which accelerated what they have been able to do, increased membership, and started exploring the opportunity to collaborate with Sustainable Connections which is an organization in Whatcom County with similar interest. They are very advanced in that they have been able to obtain funding from the federal government for what SWC has been talking about doing. SWC is looking to partner with this organization to launch a program in Island County to assist small businesses to do energy retrofits on their buildings for energy savings. This also employs contractors to do the retrofits. They would like to offer a program that Sustainable Connections has called Community Energy Challenge where businesses and residents could retrofit their homes for energy efficiency. They received federal funding and partnered with the Opportunity Council to implement this program. They are interested in launching a similar program in Island County as well and SWC is working with them to apply for a grant. This program not only helps businesses by reducing overhead but it also puts contractors to work doing the energy retrofits.

Commissioner Emerson questioned if the energy saving retrofits had any unintended consequences i.e. indoor air pollution. Chair Conard stated that she had not heard anything about this type of unintended consequence and added that with Commissioner Emerson's participation with Northwest Clean Air, who funded some of these programs, would be the place where these issues would be developed.

Sustainable Whidbey Coalition now has a website that has information about Whidbey Green Seal members and projects they are working on. SWC currently has 54 businesses that qualified for the Whidbey Green Seal. Last year SWC held their first annual forum inviting key leaders of communities i.e. elected officials and others to inform them of activities that are happening in environmental protection and sustainability. This also provided an opportunity to showcase Whidbey Green Seal members with a video supported by the city of Oak Harbor and premiered at the annual forum which allowed businesses to talk about the benefits of being a Whidbey Green Seal member and some of their practices.

In 2011 SWC developed the affiliate membership and offered that at no cost for Whidbey Green Seal members and hopes are to expand the affiliate membership this year to include those who don't meet the basic membership criteria but would still like to be in the loop. They are also expanding and committing to existing programs including focusing on the Whidbey Green Seal program.

In 2011 they launched the Community Trip Reduction program that was piloted by Coupeville and expanded County wide. This program was very successful in significantly reducing the amount of gasoline used, reduced carbon emissions and saved money by using public transit and carpools.

Cheryn Weiser added that SWC provides a great vehicle to take advantage of opportunities to bring people together and combine resources to enhance the community and to make it possible for small businesses to gain some advantage in terms of money savings. SWC is focused more on energy than anything else and they have created an amazing network that provides an opportunity for people to learn, save and be more vital on Whidbey.

The funding so far has been by the money that members have contributed in addition to a small grant of $4,000 received from Northwest Clean Air Agency to help start out with a coordinator and with outreach efforts. Last year they received a $5,000 grant from Whidbey Island Bank to support the Whidbey Green Seal Program. SWC operates as a subset of the Council of Governments in that it reports to the COG on what they are doing and the money is put through the COG accounts.

SWC has planned their first Green Networking Program for members on July 12, 2012 at the The Chiropractic Zone Healing Center. Janet Hall will give a presentation on group purchasing and there will be opportunities for sharing ideas on how to have a green office/business.

FUTURE MEETING AGENDA TOPICS

- Emergency Preparedness – Eric Brooks to give an update on new coalition
- Affordable Housing – Jackie Henderson and Lynda Richards to give an update
- Island County Tourism Promotion and Update combined with EDC - quarterly? 2 times a year
- EDC Update – quarterly
- State Parks Update – prior to legislative update
- Senior Services Update – IC future – demographic, their strategic planning
- Marine Resource Committee /WRAC– requested time for periodic updates
- Legislative Updates – early fall?
- County-wide Planning – i.e. population projections
- Water – Keith Higman, Doug Kelly and lead people from municipalities – could combine with MRC & WRAC

REVIEW OF DRAFT APPLICATION FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

Ron Nelson and Commissioner Homola handed out the revised draft application, application instructions, and score sheet that they worked on. They also provided copies of relevant RCWs. Ron took the format that the Department of Ecology used for processing (.09 Funds Application Instructions) and merged it into the Island County document. Application and Score sheet remained the same. The DOE's had information that would be a check sheet for reviewing applications.

It was suggested that the application instruction be pared down and finalized and then given to the applicants so they would know if they were awarded the grant they would be subject to these conditions.

Contracts should include sunset date and an expectation that it be completed by a certain time and if this doesn't happen then it does get revisited automatically.

It was also suggested that the total number of points available for each area be shown on the application so the applicant would know how much weight goes to these topics in the application. This would make it easier to compare applicants.

Need to keep scoring whether considering one application or multiple competitive applicants. Need to be flexible – open it up and advertise on an annual cycle and still accept application s that may come up outside of the annual cycle. Members are encouraged to provide Ron feedback for revisions to trim down the instructions.

OTHER ITEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST

Parks

Commissioner Price Johnson informed the members about a front page story in the Skagit Valley Herald June 24th about state parks reinventing themselves. They are trying to get feedback from the public on what we want them to do i.e. should they be an enterprise unto themselves, a community non-profit, or be some kind of a public asset and how they can move forward.

Ferry

Commissioner Price Johnson announced that there are late night runs on Friday and Saturday at Port Townsend/Coupeville ferry. She attended an update on the Mukilteo Multimodal Project in the City of Mukilteo workshop. They are talking about their own shoreline redevelopment process. She informed them that RTPO, Island County, Island Transit and the Port of South Whidbey have expressed interest in being partners to try to increase parking availability and have better access to the multimodal. She has handouts if anyone is interested.

Chair Conard adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

Dated this 27th day of June, 2012.

Nancy Conard

Approved