

April 24, 2024

Subject: Strategic Growth Council February 28, 2024, Meeting Minutes
Reporting Period: February 2024 - April 2024
Staff Lead: Alex C. Walker, Executive Fellow, SGC

Recommended Action

Approval of the February 28, 2024, Strategic Growth Council Meeting Minutes.

Strategic Growth Council February 28, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order

Chair Sam Assefa called the meeting to order at 1:06 PM, welcoming Secretary Tomiquia Moss of the California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, and the Honorable Ron W. Goode, Chairman of the North Fork Mono Tribe.

Agenda Item #2: Roll Call

Council Members and Representatives Present:

Sam Assefa, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

Noaki Schwartz (Designee), Deputy Secretary, Equity and Environmental Justice, on behalf of Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency

Yana Garcia, Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency

Tomiquia Moss, Secretary, Housing and Consumer Relations at the Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency

Toks Omishakin, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency

Rohan Radhakrishna (Designee), Deputy Director, California Department of Public Health Office of Health Equity, on behalf of Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary of the California Health & Human Services Agency

Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food & Agriculture

Juan Sanchez Munoz, Public Member

Frank Cardenas, Public Member

Nicole Capretz, Public Member

Agenda Item #3: ACTION: Approval of Minutes

Approval of the December 14, 2023, Meeting Minutes.

Council Discussion

No Council discussion.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Motion by Secretary Garcia and seconded by Secretary Ross.

Motion passes (9-0-1*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #4: Executive Director's Report

Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC

Council Discussion

Assefa: Expressed excitement about Factory-Built Housing Pre-Development Program. Noted it is a transformative program, with fast advancing technology, that can cut costs on housing and construction. Thanked staff for their work.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Agenda Item #5: ACTION: Consent Calendar

Motion to move the Consent Calendar.

- a. Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Round 9 Award: Acquisition Application PP48*
- b. California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Nominee*

Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC

Council Discussion

Garcia: Thanked the Goodes for joining today's meeting and for their time working with staff to develop a solution.

Munoz: Expressed appreciation that staff worked to resolve the issue expediently with the Tribes, developing the best possible solution.

Public Comment

Chairman Ron W. Goode and Myra Kirk-Goode.

Motion by Secretary Ross and seconded by Secretary Omishakin.

Motion passes (10-0-0*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #6: ACTION: Community Resilience Centers: Round 1 Planning Grant Awards

Approve Staff Recommendations for CRC Round 1 Planning Grants.

Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC

Amar Cid, Deputy Director of Community Investments & Planning, SGC

Dora Monterroza, Program Analyst, Community Resilience Centers, SGC

Council Discussion

Assefa: The need for these applicants stands out. What happens on the ground informs the criteria of programs. SGC continuously improves its process by seeing the work on the ground and visiting completed projects. Expressed importance of having a two-way connection. Impressive to see quality, number, and diversity of applications. Appreciates staff's work on this round of awards.

Capretz: Echoed Chair Assefa's appreciation for staff and their hard work. Excited to see that Orange County and Santa Ana are being considered, this is a huge step forward for these communities. Expressed that Orange County is a desert in climate investment, and that it is good to see movement in communities that need it. Excited to vote in favor of staff's recommendations.

Ross: Appreciates comments from fellow Council Members. Emphasized the importance of criteria and that SGC programs prove there are ways to bring communities together. Noted that flexibility on how communities come together creates success and sustainability.

Moss: Excited for Tribal inclusion and diverse set of applicants. Hopes to see continued outreach, especially in Central Valley and Sierra. Asked whether applicants were asked for matching funds.

von Koch-Liebert: No, this program did not require matching funds to reach communities most in need. SGC looked across applications to see need and themes, and identified federal connections, or direct technical assistance to help them reach resources to help meet the incredible demand across the state.

Radhakrishna: When this Council approves dollars that address multiple threats, we are doing our mission. Focused on two efforts. First criteria setting, SGC staff took it to the next level by being specific. Being specific helps those left behind, adding that this program is a model for how state dollars should be spent. Second, expressed appreciation for the flexibility of adding an eleventh awardee, allowing SGC to stretch state dollars further. Applauded creative thinking of staff.

Cid: This program created structure on operating dollars. Excited to see how to move forward with operating dollars, such as VPP and opportunities with federal funds.

Cardenas: Acknowledged the impressive task of staff to meet challenges and adapt.

Garcia: For those not awarded, your efforts are not for not, thank you for submitting your applications. We see you and hope to continue diversify the ways we can support.

Assefa: In terms of total distribution, what percentage went to tribal and disadvantaged communities?

Cid: All eleven recommended awards reflect priority needs and statutory requirements.

Capretz: Wanted to center that the San Deigo floods were an unmitigated, ongoing disaster. Loved hearing public comments. Expressed that relationship building is one of the long-lasting benefits of this grant.

Omishakin: The impact these investments have in communities and make a real difference. Appreciate the diversity of awardees, Humbolt, Redding, north state who don't get a lot, will make a difference. Thanked staff and grant awardees.

Public Comment

Christopher Danch, Miguel Luna, Miki'ala Catalfano, Joel Cazaves, Luis Sarmiento, Joann Lo, John Friedrich, Marty Estrada, Raymond Salas, Flora Brain, and Carlos Hernandez.

Motion by Secretary Moss and seconded by Secretary Capretz.

Motion passes (10-0-0*). *Marks abstention or absence from vote.

Agenda Item #7: DISCUSSION: SGC 2024 Catalyst Conference Draft Summary Report & Catalyst Policy Models

Summary of the 2024 SGC Catalyst Conference and key themes.

Overview of 2024 SGC Catalyst Policy Models.

Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC

Sean Kennedy, Deputy Director of Energy Investments, SGC

Council Discussion

Capretz: This is an incredible, groundbreaking document. Easy to understand and clear. Extended appreciation to staff who authored the document.

Schwartz: Echoed and aligned with colleague's comments. Conference was wonderful and well organized. One of the things CNRA is working on is updating their environmental justice and equity policies. Will share summary papers with others.

Ross: Would like to attend future conferences. It was structured very well, SGC has a great partner with the Milken Institute to create the setting. Climate finance, capacity building, tribal engagement, technical assistance, and capacity building, will create the infrastructure. Posed the question: are we engaging the financial community in this space? Expressed desire to create opportunities for youth and Tribes. CDFA is evaluating their Tribal engagement with a report available in June 2024.

Moss: Thanked SGC for putting on this conference. Feels like they were there from the report. Appreciated the critical feedback from attendees. Taking feedback in real time to create a more robust opportunity for communities to engage. Excited for the Tribal Capacity Building Program, and housing and climate funding opportunities from BCSH. People live in community, encouraged a wholistic approach to bring funding, streamline process, and break down bureaucracy to access resources.

Radhakrishna: Three things HHS is working on: community collaboration, tribal engagement, and youth workforce development. The ones most impacted should be guiding and leading the work. Health in All Policies Taskforce explores ways to pay community advisors, finding ways to eliminate waivers of sovereign immunity requirements, and lastly, workforce development for

youth. Supportive of empowering youth to sit at table, we need their leadership and perspective.

Cardenas: Extended appreciation to Executive Director and SGC staff for putting the conference together, this year was next level. One of the main takeaways was the repeated nature of technical assistance and capacity building. Summary papers are a very helpful resource. We should all be excited for SGC's Connecting Communities initiative.

Capretz: Is there more to the story to explore to help people enter the clean economy? Community members would be interested in entering clean economy, would appreciate leads.

von Koch-Liebert: Will take your question as a lead and review further.

Assefa: Success of the conference will make expectations for next year higher. Emphasized the need to highlight and elevate SGC, continuing to express appreciation for SGC. Posed question: what are we doing to move forward?

von Koch-Liebert: Plan is to take the Summary Papers and think through how we capture what we learned at the conference and where can we apply it to our work? Hearing theme of communication, awareness, pushing out the information available, particularly around the tools and solutions available. Working on these elements in the coming weeks and will present an action plan to Council.

Garcia: Prioritization is critical, please do not shy away from recommendations. Extended appreciation to leaning into challenges, as it is such an important piece.

Assefa: Reflected on Governor's comments at Tribal Summit on Monday, hearing from Tribal leaders on their priorities. It is a continued journey, with continuous improvement, to meet these needs and address the challenges.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Agenda Item #8: INFORMATIONAL: Virtual Power Plants (VPP) for Community Benefit

Overview of Request for Proposals (RFP): process, outcomes, and timeline. Opportunity for SGC Council agency engagement.

Lynn von Koch-Liebert, Executive Director, SGC

Sean Kennedy, Deputy Director of Energy Investments, SGC

Council Discussion

Capretz: Are there successful models of public ownership?

Kennedy: Some of it is to be determined. Some VPP have these models, private, public, and Public-Private Ownership (PPP) as well. There are opportunities for both models.

Capretz: Would encourage a public model to transform in communities what is possible.

Ross: Fairgrounds would be a good space for this. Expressed the importance of electrifying farms.

von Koch-Liebert: The key here is yes, we could do this on individual farms if said farm received state dollars.

Kennedy: Currently, we are examining the State's role on unlocking federal opportunity. This draft of the RFP is structured on bringing on a private provider and would need to examine public ownership further.

Ross: Promoted state buildings as another space.

Moss: Echoed Secretary Ross' comments. Exciting opportunities to explore farm working housing, migrant centers, operational income as a benefit for these spaces. Integrating VPP into programs, would like BCHS staff to meet to discuss further.

von Koch-Liebert: SGC is meeting with the Department of Energy to explore what constitutes state support. Excess lands could be a very interesting model to dig into.

Cardenas: Impressive that if you become a Transformative Climate Community or Community Resilience Centers Program applicant, we will help you pursue federal funding. SGC is a sustaining partner throughout programs to receive additional dollars.

Munoz: Appreciated Vice Chair Cardenas' comments. Encouraged SGC to think about having college campus, CSU, UC, and community colleges to participate in this space. Interested in exploring this space as an option for VPP, developing a proof of concept in the higher-ed space, with SGC's support.

Assefa: Factory built housing combined with VPP is an opportunity to support energy efficiency and student housing. Opportunities are tremendous in a higher ed setting.

Munoz: Student housing shortage makes housing in communities unavailable for community members. Addressing this space is important.

Capretz: Communicated that utility companies have been fighting VPPs. Expressed that this model disrupts this, and it is the dream for survival, equity, and resiliency.

Assefa: Suggested California Jobs for All as a space to explore for this program.

Schartz: Expressed excitement in this space and thanked staff.

Omishakin: Commented that state facilities are a good space for this type of program, such as Caltrans, DMV, etc. Curious on accountability of power entities, is there a way to approach utility companies with a partnership on this, and not as a bottom-line issue?

Kennedy: PG&E has one VPP in their service territory that they run. Can explore opportunities to engage.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Agenda Item #9: Public Comment



Thelmy Alvarez, Pepi Jackson, and Phil Barber.

Agenda Item #10: Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:51 PM.