

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Standing Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Spencer Thibodeau (D2), Chair
Councilor Belinda Ray (D1)
Councilor Brian Batson (D3)

Draft Minutes October 24, 2018

Members Present: Councilor Thibodeau, Councilor Ray, Councilor Batson

Staff Present: Troy Moon

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 PM. Minutes for the prior meeting were not available and will be presented at the next meeting.

Sustainability Program Updates

Solar Project at the Ocean Avenue Landfill - construction is nearly complete, last step is to connect to the power lines. Event to announce opening of solar project to be scheduled for the near future.

New Sustainability Associate, Ashley Krulik, to be starting 10/25.

LED control panel - island controls to be completed in the next few weeks. Contact Troy Moon with any dimming issues.

Recycling carts - Councilor Ray asked that Public Works employees return recycling carts to the curb after emptying.

Energy Expo - 10/20 - strong turnout and interest from the community.

NOFA - Organic Land Care Certification Course - 40 students attended course and 5 city employees took certification course

PMAC - one seat needs to be filled before interviewing members

Climate Action Planning - RFP has been issued, reviewing responses and interviewing, anticipate a January start

Energy Benchmarking Ordinance Workshop

The Sustainability Office has been working with Central Maine Power (CMP), local property owners, and Efficiency Maine to collect building data and enter into Portfolio Manager. Due to data collection challenges City staff has proposed an amendment postponing the deadline for property owners to report their energy data to the City.

During the previous committee meeting Councilor Thibodeau and Mayor Strimling asked staff to invite CMP to appear before them to discuss data access. CMP representatives Eric Robie, Manager of Key Accounts; Jamie Holland, Manager of Customer Service Quality; Linda Ball, Director of Smart Metering, and Mark Morissette, Manager of Smart Metering were in

attendance. Others in attendance included Michael Stoddard, Executive Director, Efficiency Maine Trust; Barry Hobbins, Public Advocate; and Dave Lowe, 2030 District.

Jamie Holland, CMP Manager of Customer Service Quality, gave presentation on products and services available for customers to access their own data. Next generation of Energy Manager service will include "Green Button Connect My Data" option for customers to allow third parties to see energy data -this new portal is still 2+ years away. This option may be a good way for the City of Portland to access data in the future. "15 minute interval data" service is accessible but is not useful for business community as it's too granular.

Linda Ball, CMP Director of Smart Metering, addressed the committee on new Smart Care System. Each address has one unique identifier with ability to pull information at different layers (building, unit, etc.).

Councilor Thibodeau asked how do we make it easier to see all data associated with the City of Portland buildings. The City of Portland has multiple accounts and in CMP's Energy Manager system the customer can only look up one account at a time which is cumbersome.

Linda Ball emphasized the need to understand the City's exact data needs prior to building a solution. Councilor Ray shared the need to be able to download the information into an Excel spreadsheet and the ability to get access to data for non-City buildings.

Linda Ball asked how frequently data needs to be updated. Troy Moon responded that in order to be in compliance, the City needs annual data in total kWh usage, broken into 12 billing periods. Data will be prorated and available one month after usage.

Councilor Batson asked if the next generation of Green Button Connect My Data portal can be rolled out sooner for the City of Portland. Jamie Holland responded that it would not be doable, but that CMP can pull usage data yearly. City of Portland will need to provide CMP all 800 building meter numbers. Councilor Thibodeau suggested a registration process for all building owners for the City to monitor usage. Troy Moon responded that would likely be too cumbersome and that building owners also need to be able to understand their own energy usage.

Councilor Batson referenced the EverSource portal page for individuals to sign-in and see energy usage. Linda Ball asked for more information on the EverSource page for reference.

Councilor Ray emphasized the need for building owners to access energy data for whole buildings to be in compliance with the ordinance and asked if CMP can aggregate that information. Jamie Holland said that CMP cannot aggregate data for the whole building.

Councilor Ray asked if CMP could create an aggregation threshold. Linda Ball responded that they would need to talk to PUC to see if determining a threshold is possible from a privacy perspective. Jamie Holland responded that changing data formats would be complicated and time consuming.

Jamie Holland outlined that her understanding is that there are two goals - 1) gaining access to accurate data and 2) engaging customers. Councilor Ray clarified that the City of Portland does not want to manage the data for private building owners, but that building owners need to be able to access and manage their own data.

Linda Ball asked how data should be provided to customers. Councilor Ray responded that building owners should be able to pull the data themselves and that it doesn't need to be pushed to everyone.

Michael Stoddard, Executive Director of Efficiency Maine Trust, addressed the committee about his experience so far with this process. Recognized the need to create an aggregation threshold and the potential privacy issue for buildings with less than 2 tenants. Based on information to date, Michael Stoddard thinks that Efficiency Maine can step aside and the City can work directly with CMP.

CMP thinks that the City of Portland should reach out to the PUC.

Barry Hobbins, Public Advocate, addressed the committee. Need to push for a better process for communities and customers to understand energy usage and need to look at aggregation and privacy issues.

Former Councilor John Hinck addressed the committee. Suggested that CMP should interface with EPA Portfolio Manager for benchmarking.

Dave Lowe, 2030 District, addressed the committee. Reiterated that CMP should put data directly into EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager. Can begin conversations with other utilities that are already using EPA Portfolio Manager.

Councilor Ray suggested next steps - 1) City of Portland to have Corporation Council look into if there are any legal barriers that need to be changed to allow for the aggregation threshold. 2) City of Portland to help CMP and 2030 District to meet with other utilities to learn what they are doing to aggregate data.

Julie Rosenbach, South Portland Sustainability Director, communicated her support of the aggregation of the energy data.

Councilor Thibodeau asked Troy Moon if it's possible to get necessary data by November 1st. Troy responded that it is not possible given the discussed constraints and asked for 6 months to work with CMP to aggregate data.

Councilor Thibodeau asked for timeline for Corporation Council to look into legal barriers. Troy Moon responded that it sounds like more than a 6 month process.

Councilor Thibodeau asked whether City of Portland should use the same process that South Portland used to get the data that is available and begin process. Troy Moon voiced concern that City of Portland's buildings are very different from South Portland and that there are significantly more buildings affected.

Councilor Thibodeau asked Dave Lowe, 2030 District, if the City should start reaching out to building owners in the meantime. Dave Lowe responded that it would be a difficult, time-consuming process. Without ordinance tenants may not be willing to share data.

Councilor Ray expressed that the City needs to get aggregate data and navigate privacy issues before beginning process.

Councilor Thibodeau asked Julie Rosenbach, South Portland Sustainability Director, what they did with incomplete information. South Portland has 30 buildings and it has taken a significant amount of time to collect data. Might be difficult to get building owners on board if City approaches them with incomplete process before developing streamlined process.

Lucy Brennan, South Portland Sustainability Coordinator, addressed committee. Emphasized that South Portland would like to partner with Portland and CMP to develop a solution that works for everyone.

Councilor Thibodeau asked for update on the legal barriers by the next meeting. Add updates to the website for the public to follow the process.

Councilor Ray OK with amendments. City will come into compliance as quickly as possible - within 6 months. OK with leaving in the language that people have no more than 1 year after the department has certified that the data is accessible to report their energy data and by May 1st every year after that.

City should be compliant by May 1, 2019 (about 50 buildings).

Building owners should be compliant one year after the data becomes available (about 800 buildings).

Linda Ball ask whether a tool is needed from CMP if EPA Portfolio Manager can be used. Troy Moon stated that a tool is needed for building owners to get data directly from CMP. Jamie Holland suggested pushing CMP data directly to EPA Portfolio Manager. Agreed that would be the best case scenario. Jamie Holland stated that that would be the easiest solution to implement. City of Portland to provide CMP with list of 850 buildings and begin educating building owners on process.

Troy Moon outlined next steps - 1) City of Portland staff will work with CMP to finalize solution and determine whether it's doable.

Councilor Thibodeau would like to circle back during next meeting on progress on integrating with Portfolio Manager, and legal barriers (working with Barry Hobbins).

Councilor Ray asked how process would work with EPA Portfolio Manager when new buildings need to be added. Troy Moon responded that City staff should speak with other utilities on best process to work with building owners.

Energy Benchmarking Ordinance Amendment

Councilor Thibodeau opened for public comment on delay of energy benchmarking to May 1 for the City and a year later for building owners.

Maggie Wolf, 28 St. Lawrence St. Portland, addressed the committee about frustration with delayed timeline.

Councilor Ray moved to pass amendments to ordinance with the caveat that the City will be in compliance by May 1, 2019. Councilor Thibodeau seconded. All in favor. 2-0.

Sustainability and Transportation Committee Next Meeting Times

Wednesday, November 7

Motion was made by Councilor Thibodeau to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 pm. Motion was seconded by Councilor Ray. All in favor. 2-0.