

Pacific Power Equity Advisory Group (EAG)

March 2024 Meeting Notes

March 14, 2024, 1:00 – 4:00 pm, Pacific Time

These notes were synthesized and summarized by E Source, Pacific Power’s meeting facilitation partner, EAG member attribution.

Executive Summary

There were 16 participants in attendance at the Washington EAG meeting on March 14, 2024, including five EAG members. The meeting was hosted in a hybrid setting with attendees joining in person at South Central Workforce and virtually via the ZOOM platform.

The following is a summary of the content and feedback received during the public meeting.

Session Objectives

1. Outline Pacific Power’s regulatory timeline for key events and dates
2. Re-engage the Equity Advisory Group on community priorities
3. Communicate Energy Efficiency and Transportation Electrification updates

2024 EAG Members	Organization
Erendira Cruz	Sustainable Living Center of Walla Walla
Todd Hilmes	Northwest Community Action Center
Jonathan Smith	Yakima County Development Association
Paul Tabayoyon	Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
Norman Thiel	SonBridge
Paul Tabayoyon	Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
Todd Hilmes	Northwest Community Action Center

Presenters

Christina Medina	Stakeholder Policy & Engagement Manager
Jay Olson	Senior Program Manager, Pacific Power
Jeffrey Daigle	Facilitator, E Source
Kimberly Alejandro	Equity Advisory Analyst, Pacific Power
Melissa Huynh	Senior Communications Representative, Pacific Power
Morgan Westberry	Facilitator, E Source
Nancy Goddard	Senior Program Manager, Pacific Power
Stephanie Meeks	Regulatory Manager, Regulatory Policy & Operations, Pacific Power
Jeffrey Daigle	Facilitator, E Source
Morgan Westberry	Facilitator, E Source

Pacific Power Affiliated Attendees

Jennifer Senner	Pacific Power
Marcelino Osorio	Wattsmart Business Program
Tag Galvin-Darnieder	E Source, Facilitation Team
Zanya Morgan	E Source, Facilitation Team
Zanya Morgan	E Source, Facilitation Team
Public Attendees	
Stephanie Chase	Washington Public Counsel
Paul Koenig	Washington State Utilities & Transportation Commission

Opening

Pacific Power’s Kimberly Alejandro opened the meeting by greeting all attendees and thanking the host for providing the meeting space for the onsite portion of the March EAG. Kimberly Alejandro reviewed the background of the host, South Central Workforce Council, emphasizing the focus on employment and training opportunities

E Source’s Morgan Westberry then shared meeting experience items, objectives, the agenda, and introducing presenters.

EAG Member Check-In

E Source’s Morgan Westberry “checked-in” with meeting attendees by posing the question: *What is on your mind this month?* The group shared experiences and resonated over the various personal and professional goals the members are striving to accomplish.

- Morgan Westberry shared thoughts about balance and restoration, reflecting on her journey with restoration as it relates to her personal life, work, and community.
- Sustainable Living Center of Walla Walla voiced plans for remodeling one of the 10 gardens managed with new flower beds and fencing and more farming as spring approaches.
- Asian Pacific Islander Coalition cited the Filipino resilience during historical triumph as it relates to nonprofits in valley, 100-year history, brainstorming ways to restore community togetherness – working with organizations collectively & communicating.
- Marcelino Osorio continues to be busy with energy efficient projects in highly impacted communities. Over 50% of current projects are in highly impacted communities. 2024 projects are expected to exceed 300 lighting projects with the majority in highly impacted communities.
- Yakima County Development Association is brainstorming what are the things that help everybody versus individualized experiences with small business owners and balancing those appropriately according to current policies and infrastructure.
- Stephanie Meeks is taking a minute to breathe in the beauty around and awaiting spring.
- Kimberly Alejandro is planning for 2025 CEIP, resurfacing earlier conversations and meeting standards by given deadlines. Public engagement and participation in Washington is growing and she wants to provide opportunities to learn more about distribution system planning.

Community Calendar

Pacific Power's Kimberly Alejandro presented the community calendar, including the following events:

March Events –

- March 8-10 - [Central Washington Home & Garden Show @ Yakima SunDome 1301 S Fair Ave. ALL DAY](#)
- March 14 - [HYBRID - Pacific Power's Equity Advisory Group Meeting @ 1205 Ahtanum Ridge Dr, Union Gap, WA 98903 1pm-4pm](#)
- March 14 - [Addressing Summer Hunger in Washington: 2024 Stakeholder Summit \(Yakima\) @ Yakima Valley College, South 16th Ave, Yakima, WA 98902 8:30AM – 4:30PM](#)
- March 19 - [Drip Irrigation Educational Workshop w/ Kate Frey @ 640 Water Center Dr, Walla, Walla, WA 99362 5:30PM - 7:30PM](#)
- March 19-20 - [Wattsmart Vendor Training – Yakima @ the Yakima Convention Center 7:30am-12pm](#)
- March 28 - [Financial Aid Night for School @ Walla Walla Public Library \(238 E Alder St.\) 5:00pm - 6:30pm. Bilingual event.](#)

Closing the Feedback Loop

Pacific Power's Christina Medina provided a snapshot of some of the things that the group heard and saw in the February 2024 session. Some of the central themes the last time the EAG convened included:

February Themes:

- Continued the conversation on the Transportation Electrification WA Community Grant Program and discussed how to anchor equity in the selection process
 - Potential measurements, feedback, approach suggestions
- Provided a Weatherization overview from the utility perspective
 - Frontline Impacts, community partners
- Introduced Pacific Power's Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) in the engagement space
 - IRP as it relates to engagement, organizing ways to accomplish clean energy goals

February Feedback Highlights:

- Guided activity around Transportation Electrification that centered around equity, community benefits and innovation
- Critical repairs needed in homes is still a barrier to Weatherization Program participation
- Income guidelines negatively impact some applicants (seeing more just above what is required for program eligibility)
 - Surfacing participation barriers
- Meeting participants appreciate being kept informed on emerging topics and issues

Impacts:

- Circled back on the topic of weatherization, surfacing, and discussing barriers to participation
- Ongoing planning of the EAG space to include elements important to members and the communities they represented

- Using member feedback to guide prioritization of activities for Washington

Pacific Power continues to plan with previous themes, feedback highlights and impacts in mind whilst continuing to welcome feedback and prospective opportunities of where the EAG space will go this year.

Regulation Updates

Pacific Power's Stephanie Meeks provided information on regulation activities in Washington. The updates provided were regarding the 2024-2025 Clean Energy Implementation Plan, which was approved with conditions by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) in [Docket UE-230904](#), citing specific actions to accomplish pathway to non-emitting by 2045 while simultaneously assessing risk of changes needed to implement and cost of compliance and tracking throughout emission reduction process.

The Biennial Conservation Plan outlines actions the utility is putting into place to achieve its total conservation (energy efficiency) goals. The plan has been updated with interim targets to clarify metrics. Mrs. Meeks also shared information on incremental energy efficiency and public participation.

Northwest Community Action Center questioned Pacific Power's readiness for 2045 goal and any challenges that may arise in meeting the goal.

1. *Where does Pacific Power feel it's readiness for the 2045 date is?*
 - a. Kimberly reassured that Pacific Power is keeping the community in mind to keep rates low without compromising on providing safe and reliable energy, however, Pacific Power could not speak to readiness for non-emitting goal at the current time. During the next EAG meeting, Kimberly will follow up with more specific details.
2. *What are the challenges of hitting that goal?*
 - a. Kimberly addressed the difficulties of planning for vulnerable communities as it has shown to be a well thought out process that has to be carefully curated.
3. *What is Pacific Power bringing to the vulnerable populations space? Are EAG members invited to these spaces?*
 - a. Kimberly hopes to increase participation in community engagement spaces, but it is difficult to outline progress at a given moment as things are changing rapidly.
 - b. Stephanie Meeks reassures the group that reliability is key and indicated the importance of being cautious but intentional to consider all communities and not leave anyone behind.

Washington State Utilities & Transportation Commission questioned *where are people that put resources together for the community? What are hangups for charging stations within specific demographics?* Emphasizing the need for more regular and accurate engagement spaces.

- Stephanie Meeks plans to have feedback with communities through demand side management.
- Kimberly Alejandro touched on hangups for charging stations, specifically considering long term planning and difficulty to maintain due latest information or market changes.

SonBridge questioned the cost curves and what they do overtime? Pacific Power must consider that innovative technology could become more efficient and widely available, however, individuals have a

challenging time forecasting the future. This could work for or against Pacific Power if individuals choose to go the other way after already investing financial resources and infrastructure.

- Stephanie Meeks explained usage in households has changed over time, emphasizing the need to keep adapting and changing demand curve.
- Christina Medina cited legislative and regulatory environmental impact, Oregon HB 2021. Washington could build and develop small scale renewables, to help fulfill requirements in Oregon.

Activity Discussion: Revisiting Community Priorities

Kimberly introduced the activity by taking a trip down memory lane, comparing progress over the years, and addressing some EAG members who have been involved since beginning of the program. Kimberly also reviewed new organizations and representatives; before revisiting primary expressed reasons for participation and understanding goals and timelines Pacific Power is committed to as planning and preparation advances. Pacific Power thanks the EAG members for being committed and generous with time and feedback and anticipates seeing the results of teamwork.

Lessons learned from initial input given from EAG members to Pacific Power include:

- Building trust is fundamental to EAG
 - The voices of needs are the key focus
 - Elevating voices of historically under engaged and underrepresented
 - Plans for processes, programs, approaches
- There are a broad and diverse array of community needs
 - Community members may be facing unique circumstances, it is recognized that some are lifelong
 - Committed to re-engaging and understanding needs
 - Considering where work can be most meaningful and keeping that top of mind, asking *how can Pacific Power + EAG make positive impact?*
- Community needs and concerns
 - Importance of data availability and transparency
 - COVID-19 impacts still being felt in Eastern Washington
 - Communications need to improve
- Named communities
 - Highly impacted communities versus vulnerable populations
 - Terms do not fully capture who or what is represented
 - Continuous improvements and adjustment

Break

Activity Discussion: Revisiting Community Priorities (Continued)

Jeffrey Daigle kicked off the activity by sharing what was top of mind for him – FERC 2222. Also expressing traffic concerns in Washington and inquiring about access to transportation outside of cars, for all types of mobility. Jeffrey acknowledged that communities are not static therefore, overtime change is needed

especially since 2021 may have caused priorities to shift and new voices have come into the engagement spaces.

How is importance ranked?

Most important

- **Access to broadband**
 - There are black holes in Yakima County that will expand as population grows, broadband is needed for commercial and residential
 - Intersectionality between broadband, economic vitality, equal access
 - Calling to pay bill versus going online makes a difference
 - Electric utility as it relates to broadband utility, greater opportunity for agreeance with joint use
 - Cost saving opportunities when utilities are involved in broadband conversation
 - Ability for Pacific Power to amplify community voices
- **Electronic vehicles and parking**
 - Residents are zoned out of street parking
 - EV charging stations are not operational and are prohibiting normal parking
 - Lack of handicap EV parking and equal access for handicapped drivers
- **Immigration status**
 - Humans that need to be protected from policy
 - Cross sectional issue
 - Uncertainty about future of immigrants
 - Developing nature of conversation becoming increasingly frightening
- **Trust building & access to information are one in the same**
 - Advising Pacific Power on equity
 - Building psychological safety & trust, while quantifying the number of resources and people in the community EAG members are trying to help
 - Pacific Power could market itself better
 - Cannot change all emerging issues, but can consider issues and weave them into future actions

Moderately important

- **Education & employment**
 - Conservational savings = more money to invest
 - Importance to have influence or agency to make change
 - More agency = better future
- **Rural communities**
 - Unique challenges that do not fit opportunities that are available
 - More travel = higher costs
- **Language barriers**
 - Ambassadors do not have lived experience
 - Lack of understanding furthers equity gaps
- **Federal versus state versus local legislature**

- **Affordable housing**
- **Cost of living**
- **Access to transportation**
 - Solution to inflation is not to commute further – shifts burden versus addressing issue
 - Utility is the infrastructure and should be looped in at that level to maximize the profit

Least Importance

- **Representation**
 - There are not enough options for those not participating in digital use
 - Local community leaders need to get more involved
 - More accurate reflections of the community
 - Goes hand in hand with access to broadband
 - Is there a way to deliver friendlier interaction? Not just technical solution but human solution, some people need to be given another channel
 - Restraints for visually impaired in grocery stores for example
 - Age dynamic of Washington’s population
 - 90% of state processes based on population density
 - Declining populations equal loss of investors
- **Technology barriers**
 - Digital literacy
 - Accessing services to connect with out
 - Not enough options for those not participating in digital technology

Jeffrey Daigle noted that while each issue may be viewed independently, they are all connected and directly or inadvertently affect one another. Christina Medina reiterated that Pacific Power is looking back to move forward making sure the baseline information captured is still real, felt, and relevant. She shares the next step of synthesizing the conversation, April’s closing the feedback loop will dive further into points addressed.

Energy Efficiency

Pacific Power’s Nancy Goddard leads the energy efficiency conversation by giving updates about CBI metrics preliminary results from 2023.

- Home energy efficiency
 - Number of households participated, completed project, direct installation of equipment
 - Utility actions are to specifically drive numbers up in highly impacted communities
- 2022 versus 2023 preliminary data, trends show increase in households and businesses participating between 2022-2023
 - Higher concentration in highly impacted communities
 - Over 4500 participated, 1600 in HIC
 - Tribal participation indicate that actions are having direct effect and impact
 - Energy efficiency expenditures
 - More paid or spent for direct expenditure

- Size of incentive per household or business can vary based on size/type of installation
 - Totaled \$11M in 2023, \$4M in highly impacted communities, \$500,000 in tribal
- Wattsmart Business Program
 - Raw data of utility actions focus on small business
 - Small businesses total in 2022 = 127 reached unique customer sites
 - Small businesses total in 2023 = 246
 - Increased number credited to program design and incentive
 - 90% of project cost
 - 100% of cost for small business located in named communities
- Hosting energy workshops
 - Refrigeration operation training 66 attendees
 - 100% attendance compared against RSVP
 - Perfect example of industry needs and access
 - CBI metric on number of staff supporting program delivery for home energy saving & Wattsmart business
 - Staff count as of Oct 2023, 46 – 24 women & 7 minority

Jay Olson, Pacific Power, introduced a new home energy savings program supporting named communities highlighting program advancements from 2022 to 2023 and the benefits seen. The 2023 goal was to shift the focus of delivery channels that can be easily targeted to different customer groups. While 2022 focused directly on manufactured homes, 2023 focus shifted to highly impact community locations as the program scaled, extended, and expanded to single family homes. This shift resulted in a jump from 317 customers in 2022 to 1381 customers in 2023. Previously, the home energy savings program ran from summer into fall. In 2023, the program started in the spring and pushed well into December creating more opportunities to reach, serve and support customers.

Jay introduces the Tree Planting Conservation Program, proposed to be implemented upon approval that it meets cost-effective requirements. The proposal outlines the 2024 goal to plant 300 trees for energy saving benefits with additional benefits including carbon storage, wildlife habitation, air pollution removal and storm water impacts. The program is slated to be offered exclusively in highly impacted communities utilizing the Yakima area arboretum and collaborating with community-based organizations to assist with planting efforts.

Washington State Utilities & Transportation Commission reminded the group of the history of Yakima, removing thousands of apple trees from the orchard in West Valley, Yakima leaving the city with a heat sink due to unused land, questioning a correlation between cost of power before and after removal as it relates to temperate control.

Melissa Hyunh, Pacific Power, shared the goals and implementation timeline of the Wattsmart Small Business Multicultural Campaign. Goals include increasing awareness and participation in energy efficiency program amongst Spanish speaking customers while incorporating local influential partners. The program was first launched in 2023, engaging communities where they are through language and culture utilizing television, print and landing pages to encourage customers to take action to reduce energy intake. 2024 goals include continuing to spread the word with planned radio and television.

Transportation Electrification

Jeffrey Daigle recalled previous activity and key objectives encouraging shift to Transportation Electrification by grant funding. Last month's feedback was shared to help refine criteria, it was incorporated in the draft criteria to include CBI and sustainability. 3 key themes stuck out 1) applicant should show need and how project would addresses need 2) quantifiable benefits asking *what are the emotional aspects that can be addressed* 3) innovative projects means vastly different projects that should not hurt score. The revised criteria merged and simplified criteria reducing the total from 8 to 4. New criteria categories are CBI, sustainability, equity and project feasibility and timeline. Sub criteria focused on direct feedback from meetings including being visible and reachable in community, ensuring funding is not one off and it can thrive in community. There is a high likelihood of advancing transportation electrification for applicants and the community. The project feasibility and timeline is intended to make sure the project is successful and to track milestones and applicant readiness.

Kimberly Alejandro shared that the Transportation Electrification team took feedback and found ways to incorporate feedback using time behind the scenes to ensure timely updates after initial meeting.

Jeffrey pointed out that it is not always readily apparent where feedback goes when proposed, but transportation electrification is a fitting example of digested feedback as voices have been brought in to help amplify and echo across the organization.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Next Steps

Kimberly Alejandro reviewed where the progress of Pacific Power and the EAG and what is upcoming in the future, with latest items and adjustments highlighted. The next EAG meeting will be online, welcoming Horace Ward – senior emergency management specialist with a background in the Yakima area and Washington state. Also in April, there will be an update from IRP. There is no meeting scheduled for May, individual meetings are preferred if members are available. September – guest presentation from Blue Mountain Action Council

Second hybrid meeting in September at Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center, Pacific Power is happy to provide travel and support and are taking ideas about what to incorporate.

The agenda for the remainder of the year is concrete and Pacific Power will continue to bring important topics to the group. If an EAG member wants to propose a topic, please contact Kimberly Alejandro.

- For more information: [Washington Clean Energy Implementation Plan](#)
- Washington Feedback Tracker: [Washington CEIP Feedback Tracker Through June 2023 Uploaded 10 10 2023.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)
- Energy Resource Center: [Energy Resource Center \(pacificpower.net\)](#)

Kimberly Alejandro closed the meeting by sharing the March 2024 EAG meeting survey link. The survey link provides another avenue to provide feedback on EAG meetings and is available for both EAG members and members of the public.