

# PacifiCorp Equity Advisory Group (EAG)

December 2022 Meeting Notes

Wednesday December 7, 2022, 1-4pm Pacific Time

*These notes were synthesized and summarized by E Source, PacifiCorp's meeting facilitation partner, without EAG member attribution.*

## Executive Summary

This meeting focused on thanking and recognizing the members' contributions to WA EAG results in 2022, sharing how the EAG has influenced PacifiCorp's work, and reviewing EAG survey feedback to discuss and plan for 2023.

## Session Objectives

- Thank you and recognize your contributions to WA EAG results
- Share how the EAG has influenced PacifiCorp's work
- Review your survey feedback to discuss and plan for 2023

Slides available in Spanish below:

## [December 2022 EAG Meeting Slides](#)

2022 Equity Advisory Group member	Organization
Erendira Cruz	Sustainable Living Center
Todd Hilmes	Northwest Community Action Center
Adam Rieker	Perry Technical Institute
Sylvia Schaeffer	Blue Mountain Action Council
Giovanni Severino	Latino Community Fund
Jonathan Smith	Yakima County Development Association
Paul Tabayoyon	Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
Norman Thiel	SonBridge
Not In Attendance	
Nathan Johnson	Yakima Health District
Angelica Reyes	Las Casa Hogar
Heidi Silva-Morales	Opportunities Industrialization Center
Ray Wiseman	Yakama Power

## Opening (1:05pm)

E Source shared meeting objectives and the agenda to start the meeting.

## EAG Member Check-In (1:10pm)

All EAG members "checked-in" by responding to the prompt: *What were the 2022 EAG topics that resonated the most with you?* Themes in their responses included: PacifiCorp's time of use program; education program in schools; community outreach, including at fruit packing warehouses; low-income bill assistance program; shutoff prevention efforts; weatherization program; electric transportation, especially in rural and less affluent areas; translation of website and other materials; learning about

what our different communities need and what we can provide together to keep energy affordable and accessible for everyone.

## Thank You (1:15pm)

PacifiCorp recognized the contributions of the EAG members including:

- Providing PacifiCorp a better idea of the work community-based organizations do, the challenges they and their constituents face, and the various priorities each member is trying to address in the growing and changing communities they serve.
- Guiding PacifiCorp's understanding, addressing, and investments in energy equity, especially around low-income assistance, shutoff prevention, demand response, and electric transportation. And influencing, through PacifiCorp staff, industry partners like the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA).
- Helping inform PacifiCorp's internal efforts to integrate equity across all decision-making, operations, culture, and customer programs.

## Community Connections & EAG Feedback Loop (1:25pm)

PacifiCorp highlighted items on 2022 Community Calendar through January 2023. PacifiCorp is seeking to join more community events and continue to strengthen connections with the community in 2023.

EAG Members and others can contact Kimberly Alejandro at [Kimberly.Alejandro@PacifiCorp.com](mailto:Kimberly.Alejandro@PacifiCorp.com) to communicate any incorrect information or updates to be made, including adding new events to the 2023 Calendar.

## How Has the EAG Influenced Our Work (1:40pm)

PacifiCorp displayed, in retrospect, the primary reasons EAG members shared for participating in the EAG when it first kicked off in 2021. It discussed the origins of the EAG, and the contributions members made in 2021. It recapped 2022 EAG meetings and topics discussed, as well as how the EAG's input provided perspective on how to understand areas of inequity and improve the utility's communications. PacifiCorp shared that though the EAG was originally legislatively driven, it has proven value time-after-time to the utility: it has enabled PacifiCorp to hire talented staff members to focus on equity issues, and its internal staff are constantly lobbying to get in front of the EAG.

PacifiCorp staff discussed how EAG input helped the utility assess and refine the Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP) utility actions and other programs, including in its:

- Community Outreach and Engagement
- Energy Efficiency
- Non-Energy Impacts
- Transportation Electrification Grant Program
- Demand Response –Agricultural/ Commercial and Irrigation
- Low Income Bill Assistance and Arrearages
- Time-of-Use Pilot

In response, EAG members said:

- I appreciate PacifiCorp's expansion of its residential energy efficiency financing for customers who don't own their homes, as well as PacifiCorp's engagement with local agricultural workers.
- My interaction with PacifiCorp staff is rewarding and meaningful because I can learn about and then provide input on utility offerings.
- I was amazed to hear about the breadth of our contributions and proud to represent my community, especially around energy equity, which is a new space for many of us and our constituents.
- It's cool to see all the pieces moving together.

## Break (2:25pm)

## The Year Ahead (2:35pm)

PacifiCorp discussed the EAG end-of-year survey results, including:

- Every EAG member plans to continue participating in the EAG in 2023
- Data transparency continues to be a priority for EAG members, and PacifiCorp plans to continue improving in this area, maintain accountability, and provide more accessible channels for engagement and learning.
- EAG members recommend considering additional perspectives in EAG meetings from different community stakeholders, including agricultural and trade workers, small business owners, school districts, and youth.
- EAG members recommended meeting monthly, for 2 hours each session, and in a hybrid, online and in-person format. PacifiCorp immediately adopted the meeting frequency and format recommendations but is maintaining meeting lengths of 3 hours, given the CEIP progress report due July 2023 and a busy 2023 agenda. PacifiCorp committed to conduct meetings with intentionality.
- EAG members indicated they want to learn more about utility best practices, updates from the field, and insight into utility struggles. EAG members also requested to see continual improved outreach for income-challenged customers and to receive regular updates of policies/practices at Pacific Power that have been changed based on EAG input. PacifiCorp committed to providing these items.

PacifiCorp set the tone for the EAG work in 2023.

PacifiCorp shared the 2023 EAG Meeting Schedule and encouraged members to invite additional stakeholders or propose additional topic areas for discussions and presentations in upcoming EAG meetings. PacifiCorp also discussed the various online and hybrid meetings (in both Yakima and Walla Walla), as well as local visits and other PacifiCorp public meetings planned for 2023.

**Discussion & Exercise:** *EAG members were asked to share their thoughts on their year ahead, in terms of their challenges, opportunities, and considerations.* They shared the following:

- There are great cost savings opportunities from weatherization and energy efficiency activities. But there's lots of work to be done, in partnership with city and county governments, to transition to a cleaner energy future. Part of my goal is to educate local officials on energy savings and electrification opportunities. I'm concerned whether the region's workforce is

sufficient for the work necessary in the energy transition. I'm thankful to be a part of solving these challenges, to help make our communities more sustainable, and lower rising electric costs.

- Next year poses big challenges for journey-level electricians: Washington is becoming an apprenticeship state next year for the first time, which will result in less people in the workforce (potentially 2,200 trainee jobs at stake in Eastern Washington alone), and rising costs to hire for businesses. This is unfortunate timing during the clean energy transition and in a fragile economy. There's a lot of opportunity for electricians in the clean energy transition, but there are many policy and workforce development challenges ahead as well.
- With great opportunity comes great challenges. Workforce issues will be significant as federal funding sources hit the state, but it's hard to find professionals including contractors, electricians, auditors, building professionals to do the work needed. The demand is there, especially with funding, but I see bottleneck of workforce development, and a lack of desire for young people entering workforce to do this work, which isn't seen as important.
- There's an opportunity to come up with more creative ways to help our youth seek employment in this industry and to give them exposure to the industry, because it's important to help them see themselves in this industry. I'm eager to collaborate with other members to make that happen and explore what's out there.
- There's lots of funding in my field, so that's optimistic, but we need more education and outreach around funding opportunities. I'm eager for PacifiCorp to continue the education programs in schools in multiple counties.
- With one local nonprofit focused on utility assistance shutting down, what's next year going to look like without that partner? And our local organization providing e-scooters left town. Can we find an interim solution to promote electric transportation, like e-scooters or e-bikes, for those who can't afford an electric car? Gasoline and diesel prices may go up and down next year, which will make public opinion on electric transportation fluctuate throughout the year. One opportunity is that Walla Walla University has a student program studying electric transportation: could we include them in one of our meetings next year? They are passionate and would be eager to learn what the EAG does. *PacifiCorp responded that they are very interested in that idea, especially in mentorship opportunities for students.*
- There's an opportunity to add more electric vehicle charging stations in local new development, and we're working on a renewable gas project as well. The real challenge is to see the EAG have "sticking power": to continue to gain momentum, and for this equitable, clean energy transition to persist and remain a priority amidst changing conditions. The challenge is to continually improve emphasizing community outreach, translation into other languages, and low-income assistance and financing programs.
- In response, PacifiCorp shared that it is "enterprising" equity across all company operations, policies, and processes: in other words, it is committed to applying an equity lens across the company, constantly improving, and creating a safe space internally for employees to address equity issues for the first time. It's often hard to challenge the status quo in the regulated utility space, but PacifiCorp is challenging this by giving everyone permission to question inequities. PacifiCorp is hearing and spreading information on community needs and challenges throughout the company. And equity is the highest priority of the company, at the highest levels.

## Updates (3:30pm)

PacifiCorp provided updates to:

- CEIP Status, including regulator proceedings and 2023 timeline
- Draft Demand Response Residential Program, including the program timeline and an upcoming technical workshop it's hosting for the public.
- Rate Design Considerations, including:
  - A planned rate case filing in the first quarter of 2023, including proposed changes to residential prices, the elimination of tiered rates over 2 years, the addition of seasonal rates, and lower multi-family basic charges. There will be more details to come in the next EAG meeting.

## Public Comments (3:45pm)

There were no public comments.

## Check Out & Next Steps (3:55pm)

PacifiCorp closed by thanking all the EAG for their time and detailed feedback and is excited to get additional EAG feedback in 2023. PacifiCorp asked EAG members: *What's your big takeaway from today's conversation?* They shared the following:

- I appreciate the EAG, as well as the opportunity for assembled organizations to step in and help where other organizations have folded in current economic conditions. This is an opportunity to be a part of a process bigger than yourself. The program changes we've informed have been a great start. And we know equity can result in cost savings across *all* communities, so no one feels left out, which has its own political considerations. Participating in this group has been a great opportunity to make real impacts.
- The world keeps changing and organizations must meet these changes to serve their constituents, so it's an ongoing opportunity for all of us to grow and change.
- I'm proud to be part of this group and we've done a lot of great work. PacifiCorp reflects the work we do at our organization. I especially found value in the Community Calendar. I appreciate the other EAG members and enjoy learning more as we go along.
- We don't always take the time to look back and celebrate successes, so this was a good exercise in today's meeting.
- When I joined, I wasn't aware of what other EAG member organizations did, so it has been rewarding to learn about them and see what everyone brings to the table. This will be critical as we look to our 2023 agenda, especially around PacifiCorp's residential rate case.
- I'm looking forward to our conversation next year, and it's been rewarding to see this year's recap. It's been motivating to keep joining these conversations, to keep improving the way we serve our communities and influence the way PacifiCorp serves us. Thanks for being intentional: inviting us to learn and contribute is exciting and rewarding. Thanks for giving us this platform.

Attendees were reminded that meeting materials and notes are posted to the website, and that the next meeting is on January 12 from 1-4 pm PT, online.