

Green New Deal Oversight Board Meeting Minutes

MEETING SUMMARY	Date: 07/17/2023
	Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm
	Location: Zoom / UW Othello Commons
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Nina Olivier, Keith Weir, Eunice How, Andrea Ornelas, Matt Remle, Steve Gelb, Jess Wallach, Emily Myers, Kristina Chu, Peter Hasegawa, Tomas Madrigal, Maria Batayola
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Dennis Comer, Rachel Heaton, Ken Workman, Debolina Banerjee (on leave)
GUESTS:	Lylianna Allala (OSE), Deepa Sivarajan (member of the public), Robin Briggs (member of the public), Elise Rasmussen (OSE), Sara Cubillos (OSE), KL Shannon (member of the public), Gus Williams (OSE)

DECISIONS MADE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPROVED: Meeting Minutes approved for the May 15, 2023 meeting. APPROVED: Board votes to approve signing UNITE HERE LOCAL 8's letter in support of the Living Hotels Ordinance.
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FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS			
#	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	TARGET DATE
1	Continue to refine and finalize the Board's Workplan	Elise + Board	August 21
2	Identify which Board members would like to seek reappointment.	Elise	Early August

Meeting Notes

P. Hasegawa and N. Olivier Green New Deal Oversight Board (Board) Co-Chairs and Elise Rasmussen, Climate and Environmental Justice Associate facilitated the meeting.

Notes taken by Lauren Hogrewe.

WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Nina started the meeting, facilitated introductions of members, and said the land acknowledgement.

APPROVING PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

BOARD ACTION Motion: Tomás moved to approve the minutes from the May 15 meeting. Keith seconded the motion.

BOARD VOTES TO APPROVE the May Minutes: Unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Deepa Sivarajan is the Local Policy Manager for Climate Solutions and spoke on behalf of a coalition of organizations working to advocate for Seattle's Building Emissions Performance Standards (BEPS)

legislation, including proposing amendments when the legislation goes to Council. The coalition includes 350 Seattle, Unite Here Local 8, Sierra Club, and many others. Deepa spoke about how BEPS will produce a new revenue stream, but said the revenue amount is unclear because it depends on how many building owners will comply with the legislation. The coalition wants to pitch collaborating with the Board on language that would lead to the Board's involvement in BEPS revenue spending decisions. Deepa's proposed timeline was to work in the next month to come up with a proposal in time for a Councilmember to pick up that amendment before passing BEPS. **Steve** asked if Deepa was suggesting that the Board decide how to allocate BEPS funds. **Deepa** confirmed that was the ask.

Vote: [Living Hotels Letter of Support](#)

Eunice How and **Stefan Moritz** presented on behalf of UNITE HERE Local 8 which is a labor union that supports hospitality workers, in addition to other workers. Eunice presented on a possible local ordinance UNITE HERE is working to draft the Living Hotels ordinance. The ask is if the Board would be willing to sign a letter in support of this ordinance. Key points from the presentation:

- Hotels produce massive amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. Eunice recognizes that the labor movement has not always been well integrated with the climate movement and there is a desire to make this connection clearer. Many union members are BIPOC and low-income workers that bear the brunt of climate impacts. Eunice has taken union members to health centers/hospitals for treatment for health issues related to the climate crisis, as one example of this connection.
- The Living Hotels ordinance would be in alignment with Green New Deal goals. The ordinance would create a 25% development bonus for new hotels and would incentivize hotel owners and investors to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels, including reducing carbon impacts from construction. The Living Building Pilot Program has extremely high standards with many pilot projects already open.

Board Member Questions:

- **Steve** asked for clarification of how the hotel bonus incentive works if the hotel complies with the Living Buildings Challenge. **Stefan** replied that the Challenge allows for a floor area ratio (FAR) bonus, so hotels get to build a bigger building. The ordinance would have a similar incentive. **Steve** asked about possible negative impacts from that incentive. **Stefan** replied that negative impacts would be clearer after the ordinance undergoes environmental review.
- **KL Shannon** (member of the public) asked for clarification around how this ordinance would serve Black and brown communities. **Eunice** replied that the hotel industry employs mostly Black and Brown people and other people of color, which are the same communities that are most impacted by the climate crisis. **KL Shannon** also asked if other organizations could endorse or sign onto the letter. **Eunice** confirmed that other organizations can sign.
- **Maria** asked if there was a provision for hotels that want to redevelop so they can also have these incentives if they comply with the ordinance. **Stefan** replied that the ordinance will likely be focused on new development, but the BEPS focused coalition is working to push for incentives for current buildings.
- **Matt** asked if the Challenge also considers which bank and insurance companies a hotel has. **Stefan** replied that banking decisions are not directly considered, but he is hoping to create a space where partners can bring issues like these to the table.
- **Steve** asked if the current Living Building Pilot covers hotels. **Nina** confirmed that the Pilot covers current hotels and clarified that this ordinance differs in that there is an additional

consideration of workers' rights, health, and social equity impacts, while also forming relationships with worker unions. **Eunice** added that performance standards petals are: place, water, energy, health and happiness, materials, equity, and beauty. **Nina** responded that this new ordinance would hone in on equity petals. The Living Building Pilot Program is unique because it includes an equity section. Whereas, other building certificates, like LEED, do not include equity considerations.

- **Tomás** shared his concerns around enforcement. He asked if the ordinance relies only on volunteers and wondered if there was a guarantee that hotels would participate. **Stefan** shared that they are proposing that this ordinance be a requirement. **Nina** asked if UNITE HERE Local 8 has draft ordinance language to share. **Eunice** replied that the Living Building Challenge is currently a pilot program and relies on volunteers, which is why they are proposing a requirement for all hotel projects. New hotels would need to meet all Living Building Challenge standards, so it would move from being a voluntary program to a requirement.

Board Member Comments:

- **Peter** commented that he has appreciation for the hotel workers figuring out how to work in a in a decarbonized environment and supports sending this letter as a Board. **Nina** thanked Eunice and Stefan and offered support as they work to draft the ordinance language. Nina also added that Seattle will be hosting the 2026 Men's World Cup, which will lead to a major increase in tourism. **Steve** also added that he is very supportive of the Ordinance. He is especially supportive of incorporating more requirements and equity provisions. He added that the ordinance may require more work, and could be expanded to more buildings.

BOARD ACTION Motion: **Peter** moved to have the Board sign UNITE HERE Local 8's letter in support of the Living Hotels Ordinance. **Tomás** seconded the motion.

BOARD VOTES TO APPROVE signing UNITE HERE LOCAL 8's letter in support of the Living Hotels Ordinance.

- Note: **Steve** voted "yes, with reservations". **Eunice** abstained.

Discussion: Board Workplan and Priority Setting

Elise shared the first draft of the Board's workplan and made it clear that there is a lot of time between now and August to refine the plan. Elise asked the Board to treat this discussion as the first round of feedback. Elise shared that the priorities in this workplan come from what was discussed at the Board's 2023 retreat. She also acknowledged that not all Board members were present at the retreat, so OSE staff is encouraging more discussion between now and August so the workplan is as inclusive as possible. Elise then went over the draft workplan's content with the Board. Some key points were:

- Timelines are only an estimate, and OSE staff are expecting some activities to go into 2025.
- New Board member appointment and confirmation processes were taken into consideration.
- The 2023-2024 priorities listed in the draft workplan are: Community Engagement and Communications, Board Function and Capacity, 2025-2026 Budget Priorities & Policy Recommendations, and Indigenous Sustainability Projects. Each of these priorities has specific Board activities.

Elise then shared a proposal for the workplan development process and asked for Board member feedback on that process. The goal is for the Board to be prepared to vote on the workplan by August's meeting.

Board Member Questions and Feedback:

- **Maria** provided feedback that the Board is past the vision and mission stage, and instead wants to refine the Board's 2-3 year goals and objectives. She also commented on the Board Function and Capacity priority and noted the importance of building staff capacity. Maria added that it would be important for the Board to do an analysis of the environment so when we overlay the Green New Deal's triple goals, we will have a better sense of the scale of goals with the 2030 immediacy.
- **Tomás** commented that the Indigenous Sustainability Projects priority should include language about engaging Urban Indian populations and Indigenous peoples, which is different than formal Tribal government consultations.
- **Steve** commented that the City commits to creating a Green New Deal for Seattle, but he still struggles to answer the question of "What is the Green New Deal"? He reminded the Board that they have a much broader mandate than just providing budget recommendations. Steve shared he thinks we need a City Green New Deal plan that's reflective of communities' needs so the Board is moving forward in a more proactive, not reactive, way.
- **Peter** shared that he would favor a process that is shorter and faster, even if it is less complete. He said he wants identify ways to support projects that protect people from extreme weather. Peter said there needs to be studies with a bottom-line dollar amount to help advocate to get those studies done. Peter said he would like to see the Board play a role in setting up studies and making judgements on what needs to be addressed. He would like to see climate resilience as a significant area of focus for these studies. Peter would like to ask community members what they need to be prepared for climate related events, which could then lead to specific studies.
- **Jess** commented that the Board is well positioned to push the City to care for people. As a community organizer, Jess hears everybody talk about how climate change is impacting them. Jess seconded Peter's idea that we could do visioning on an accelerated timeline because we have done work with communities to ask what they want and need. Jess said the Board should honor the energy and time that community members have put into past proposals and projects.
- **Tomás** pushed back on Peter and Jess. He said that it was not true that a majority of Seattle's population has been engaged in the past and that there is an entire base of people who have not been engaged. He said the Board should take the time to plan engagement in a way that allows for those communities to be at the table, rather than hoping that we have already highlighted their concerns. He said that takes time to organize and build relationships and we are just coming out of the pandemic where we could not address all these concerns.
- **Maria** wondered if the Board is looking at how the City is organizing itself to go after state cap and trade money and federal Inflation Reduction Act money. She asked if Elise could help articulate a pathway and process to funding. Maria would like to push for more staff. Maria shared that she believes the amount of work should not be about capacity of volunteers but should be on building staff capacity because there is available funding.

Updates and Announcements

Elise introduced Gus Williams, the new Climate and Workforce Development Advisor at OSE, to the Board. **Gus** shared that he is excited about the Green New Deal work. He grew up in south Seattle and spent time working in County government and nonprofits focused the energy transition and workforce development. Gus said he is excited about how we create a just transition and a sustainable workforce. He is currently working on a project with the Office of Economic Development and Cascadia Consulting about what it looks like to create more clean energy jobs and will reach out to Board members.

Elise provided an update about the Board appointments process. Sara and Elise met with Mayoral and Council staff. As of now, the Mayor and Council are okay to re-confirm any Board members seeking re-appointment. **Maria** and **Matt** stated they would like to be reappointed. **Elise** shared that we are looking at early to mid-fall to have Council confirmation. Staff are working on recruiting for those vacancies, but will also ask the Board to send announcements. Elise noted that the application process looks different for those applying for the first time versus current Board members seeking reappointment. She will likely also be reaching out to Board members to support with application reviews and interviews. After interviews, staff will work with Mayoral and Council staff to put forward recommendations for who should be appointed to the Board, after which the Council and Mayor's office will go through their process of confirming seats.

Next Steps & Adjourn

Steve noted that the hybrid meeting setting makes it difficult to hear people who are attending the meeting in person and wonders if the Board would be amenable to moving the meetings to be fully virtual. The Board took a straw poll and there were some mixed opinions, so it was decided that staff would discuss more with the Executive Committee on best next steps.

BOARD ACTION Motion: **Keith** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Maria** seconded the motion. Board votes unanimously to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.