



THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes December 6, 2023

1
2 **1. 6:32 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**

3 Chair Casino called the Thurston County Planning Commission meeting on December 6,
4 2023, to order at 6:32 P.M. Commissioners provided self-introductions.
5

6 **Attendance:** Eric Casino (Chair), Derek Day (Vice Chair), Kevin Pestinger, Scott Nelson,
7 Barry Halverson, Helen Wheatley.

8 **Not In Attendance:** Joel Hansen (unexcused), Jim Simmons (unexcused)
9

10 **Thurston Staff:** Dana Bowers, Associate Planner; Rebecca Harvey, Climate Mitigation
11 Program Manager; Ashley Arai, Planning Manager
12

13 **Guest Presenter:** Sarah Fox, Climate and Ecosystems Section Manager, Washington State
14 Department of Commerce
15

16 **2. 6:33 P.M. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

17
18 **MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hal-**
19 **verson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
20

21 **3. 6:33 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

22
23 **MOTION: Commissioner Halverson moved to approve the amended November 15,**
24 **2023 minutes. Commissioner Pestinger seconded. The motion passed (5-1) with five**
25 **votes in favor and one abstention.**
26

27 The audio recording is the official record of the above-dated meeting. The infor-
28 mation herein is provided as an overview of the meeting and a road map to the au-
29 dio recording. Audio is available online on the [Thurston County Planning Commis-](#)
30 [sion](#) website.
31

32 **4. 6:42 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which**
33 **public hearings have been held.)**
34

35 None
36

37 **New Business**

38
39 None
40

41 **Continued Business**

42
43 **5. 6:43 P.M. WORK SESSION #7: Thurston 2045 – Commerce Climate Presentation**
44 **(Staff: Sarah Fox, Dana Bowers, Ashley Arai)**

1 Ms. Fox from the Department of Commerce provided information about the legislative
2 updates to include a Climate Element in the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Wheat-
3 ley wanted clarification on what “climate sector” and “searchable attributes” refer to.
4 Ms. Fox responded climate sectors are 11 topics, such as water resources, waste man-
5 agement, and forestry, identified by the University of Washington.

6
7 Commissioner Halverson asked whether the County would work with cities with popula-
8 tions over 6,000 to create a climate plan through the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Bowers
9 stated that proposals to work together have been made to jurisdictions; however, most
10 jurisdictions work independently due to the timing of their respective Comprehensive Plan
11 updates. Ms. Arai stated a regional group convenes for the climate mitigation plan. Ms.
12 Harvey added that the collaboration they are working on is a greenhouse gas reduction
13 plan. The plan has targets shared among the four jurisdictions.

14
15 Commissioner Wheatley asked what the different requirements the county and cities
16 have under HB 1181 are. Ms. Fox responded that the difference depends on local gov-
17 ernment size, which determines what parts of the element are required. A distinction was
18 made between optional and required changes.

19
20 Commissioner Day mentioned transportation retrofit planning for environmental reasons
21 that is being completed by TRPC. Ms. Fox answered that DOT will be providing trans-
22 portation data to local governments for Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as well.

23
24 Commissioner Wheatley asked if there is a change to greenhouse gas emissions monitor-
25 ing parameters. Ms. Fox answered that the guidance is broad to allow jurisdictions to
26 choose their own parameters and that more datasets are being developed by state agen-
27 cies to provide metrics for greenhouse gas emissions. She mentioned the CalEEMod
28 Tool used in California.

29
30 Commissioner Wheatley asked about the best available science for critical areas. Ms.
31 Fox answered that there may be some changes to improve clarity in the WAC to include
32 a statement about the best available science.

33
34 Commissioner Pestinger asked how many jurisdictions in Washington have declared a
35 climate emergency. Ms. Fox was unsure and stated that the Municipal Research Services
36 Center has been tracking different climate bills and resources that have been adopted
37 throughout the state.

38
39 Commissioner Pestinger asked Ms. Fox how she would respond to citizens who say the
40 climate action is “too little too late.” Ms. Fox answered that she did not have a comment
41 on that idea specifically. Commerce works for the legislature and carries out what they
42 have made law. Commissioner Day commented that current funding and efforts should
43 be focused on implementation rather than the comprehensive plan. Ms. Fox clarified that
44 the initial round of funding would be limited to planning activities and that future fund-
45 ing allocation would be based on goals and policies in the comprehensive plan. Ms.
46 Bowers mentioned the plan to spend limited funding on the comprehensive plan updates
47 and allow for more funding on implementation planning.

Commissioner Pestinger asked how the Department of Commerce defines overburdened communities. Ms. Fox replied that there is a new definition in law. She brought up the Environmental Health Disparities Map that DSHS has online and said that the focus is on high-index areas.

Commissioner Wheatley asked about Climate Policy Team membership and participation. Ms. Fox answered that it is not required to leave communities the flexibility to implement according to their capacity. Ms. Arai added that the county's outreach strategy is to engage audiences that are underrepresented, and that engagement will be multifaceted.

Other Business

6. 8:08 P.M. STAFF UPDATES

(Staff: Ashely Arai)

Ms. Arai provided staff updates that included additions to the planning staff. Kevin Jensen has taken the role of Agriculture Manager, which will fill the last vacant role within Community Planning. The industrial lands study was presented to the BoCC. The briefing is available on the Thurston County YouTube channel.

Ms. Arai mentioned that the County has met with tribal entities to discuss Thurston 2045. The goal is to meet monthly. Their priorities include environment, natural resources, transportation, and land use. Their interest is also in water rights and watershed planning. The tribes request, when drafting policies that they would like to view them before broader stakeholder outreach happens on those particular chapters.

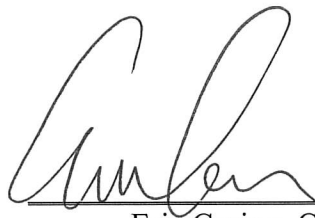
7. 8:13 P.M. CALENDAR

December 20, 2023: Cancelled

January 3, 2024: Cancelled

8. 8:17 P.M. GOOD OF THE ORDER

9. 8:24 P.M. ADJOURN



Eric Casino, Chair

Prepared by Tosha Knight