



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



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Energy Advisory Work Group

DATE: June 29, 2022

June 30, 2022

TIME: 11am – 12pm

Oregon Department of Energy – via WebEx

Meeting Attendees		
EAWG Members	ODOE Staff	Guests
<p>June 29, 2022 Fred Heutte, NW Energy Coalition Mary Moerlins, NW Natural Nate Rivera, Hermiston Energy Services Nicole Hughes, Renewable Northwest</p> <p>June 30, 2022 Brooke Brownlee, Portland General Electric (alternate for Sunny Radcliffe) Kerry Meade, NW Energy Efficiency Council Kyle Roadman, Emerald People’s Utility District Tony Schacher, Salem Electric</p>	<p>Janine Benner, Director Christy Splitt, Government Relations Coordinator Danae Hammitt, Finance & Operations Manager Erica Euen, Public Affairs Specialist Gordon Conness, Office Assistant Jenny Kalez, Communications Director Linda Bures, Assoc Director Human Resources Mary Knight, Budget Analyst Max Woods, Asst Director Nuclear Safety Michael Williams, Asst Director Central Services Monty Schindler, Senior Budget Analyst Ruchi Sathir, Assoc Director, Strategic Engagement Stacey Heuberger, Office Operations Analyst Todd Cornett, Asst Director Siting Division</p>	<p>June 29, 2022 Adam Jim Abrahamson</p> <p>June 30, 2022 Anthony Samperio Kevin Duell Leah Navarro Ruarri Day-Stirrat</p>

These meetings were a continuation of the [June 28, 2022](#), meeting of the Energy Advisory Work Group to cover the remaining 2023-25 Budget presentation. Both meetings covered the same material. Questions and feedback from both meetings are incorporated into the notes below.

Administrative Services

[Paid Internships POP](#) (*Linda Bures, Associate Dir Human Services*)

- ODOE has a history of providing valuable unpaid internship opportunities to university students. ODOE acknowledges that there is an entire student population that does not have the financial means and support to accept unpaid internships and ODOE feels that students should not have to choose between a valuable experience and pay.
- ODOE’s strategic plan commits to enhancing the internship program to provide paid opportunities to help build a more diverse network of energy-related employees.
- This POP establishes two full-time equivalent positions and approximately \$400,000 General Fund, which will provide the funding to hire 12 part-time interns.

Questions and feedback (6/29):

Nate Rivera asked if this POP would still move forward if it was not able to be funded with General Fund. Michael Williams replied that it would have to be moved to a different funding source by either the Governor or the legislature.

A question from the chat asked about equity and Ruchi provided a link to ODOE's strategic plan that outlines the agency's goals on making sure it supports all Oregonians who want to work in the energy industry.

Equity and Engagement POP (*Ruchi Sadhir, Assoc Director Strategic Engagement*)

- Incorporating input and feedback from environmental justice communities and other underrepresented communities makes ODOE's work better.
- ODOE has absorbed a lot of the work and direction from the Governor and legislature related to equity and environmental justice, such as the requirements in HB 4077, Diversity Impact Statements, and the federal Justice40 initiative, but have seen the need for increased expertise.
- This POP would allow ODOE to hire a position to support equitable engagement and would cost \$406,000, including \$123,00 of ESA.

Questions and feedback (6/29):

Nate Rivera said that he thought that when HB 4077 was being discussed in the legislature that ODOE indicated that the work from that bill could be absorbed in the current budget. Ruchi replied that was true, but with the compilation of that with other work, like the Justice40 requirements and the Racial Equity Impact Statements, ODOE needs more of an expert to be able to do that work more effectively.

Nate stated that this work seems more like a multi-agency effort that should go through DAS and not to individual agencies. Ruchi replied that even if this effort was provided through DAS, the cost would be distributed to agencies through the State Government Service Charges and ODOE would still be paying.

Nate expressed that it would be helpful to review ODOE's strategic plan because many of the POPs are undefined and seem like they cannot be defined until they are approved and staff are in place. It would be beneficial to have a plan with questions answered beforehand rather than ODOE asking for money up front and coming back later to relay what the agency is going to do with it. Ruchi thanked Nate and said these questions/comments are exactly what ODOE is looking for and will help define what these POPs should look like. When this group comes back together in July, ODOE will be able to provide even more information based on these questions and comments. Continued discussions with EAWG will also provide a better understanding of how the budget can further be refined when it is out of ODOE's hands and with the Governor's Office and legislature.

Nicole Hughes shared that she understands the concerns about the uncertainty, but ODOE has always demonstrated value in all of the other work given to them by the legislature and is supportive of this POP.

Janine clarified on the lack of definition for this position. She said that if this position were filled today, that person would already have a full job with their hours filled every day. ODOE appreciates feedback on the lack of clarity and will work to better communicate that to this group.

Fred Heutte asked about the environmental justice mapping tool and assumed this proposed position would be directly involved with that. Ruchi expects this position to help identify how ODOE's work can be reflected in the EJ tool with things like ODOE's incentive programs, EV charger locations, and information to help with facility siting questions.

Questions and feedback (6/30):

Kyle Roadman agreed that this seems like important work but does not see a direct benefit to utility customers and doesn't think ESA funding is appropriate.

Kerry Meade said that she supports this POP.

Navigator for Community Capacity Building (*Christy Splitt, Government Relations Coordinator*)

- The Oregon Legislature has passed new energy programs and Congress has passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and these will bring state and federal dollars to Oregon. Language in these newly passed laws make it clear that money should flow to the communities that need them most. Some communities, especially rural and tribal, do not have the resources or capacity to apply for these funds. The same barriers prohibit traditionally underserved communities from participating in energy decision making.
- ODOE will be proposing a legislative concept in 2023 to establish a program and one position to provide information about funding resources and other technical assistance to rural, tribal, and other environmental justice communities as they work to develop energy projects or build their own energy-related capacity. This POP goes with that legislative concept and is supported with General Fund.

Questions and feedback (6/29):

Nate asked if this POP could be combined with the Equity and Engagement POP. Christy said that ODOE did discuss that but think there is a need for two positions to do the work that is envisioned. Nate replied that he wasn't concerned about having two positions but rather just combining them in one POP. Christy said that because this is attached to a legislative concept, it will be easier for the legislature to consider this POP without having another position attached that doesn't relate to the program in the LC. Nate asked if ODOE could come back at the EAWG meeting in July to confirm that is the case or if there is another reason these cannot be combined.

Budget Wrap Up

Michael shared a table of the State Government Services Charges that EAWG members showed interest in seeing at the June 28 meeting. This table compares charges from the 2021-23 Legislatively Adopted Budget to the charges for the 2023-25 CSL budget.

Michael also shared a slide showing a table with estimates of what percentage of each sub-program the ESA would fund. He reminded members that this is only an estimate using projections from prior biennium actuals. The final estimate for how the Agency Request budget will affect ESA will be available in July after ODOE's budget is entered into the budgeting system and audited by the CFO's office. As of right now, the 2023-25 CSL budget, without the POPs, would result in an ESA increase of 7.3% from the 2021-23 CSL budget.

Questions and feedback (6/29):

Nate encouraged ODOE to look at expenditures knowing that ESA went up 12% in the last biennium and another 7% for 2023-25 and that is hard for Oregonians right now. Michael said that ODOE realizes the uncertainty about the inflationary environment and reiterated that ODOE anticipates the proposed POPs would decrease the percentage of the ESA.

Closing Comments/Q&A

Michael thanked EAWG members for their engagement on the budget process. The next step for ODOE is to enter the selected POPs to determine the Agency Request Budget. There will be a public meeting to provide additional detail about the next budget phase on July 25 at 4pm. There will also be another EAWG meeting in July to further discuss the work envisioned in ODOE's POPs.

Jennifer Joly asked if public stakeholders could get the updated ESA percentage based on the agency request budget. Michael indicated that ODOE will provide that at the July 25th budget meeting and reminded attendees that the percentage will remain an estimate until the legislature approves the final budget next June.