



## Equity Advisory Group – Equity Lens Session

Meeting Date: April 20, 2022

Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

### Attendees:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	<b>EAG Members:</b>
Amber Lenhart	Clyde Abrahamson
<b>Avista:</b>	Jupiter McGee
Tamara Bradley	KJ January
Renee Coelho	
Kim Boynton	
	<b>Guests:</b>
	Shay Bauman – Public Counsel
	Molly Brewer – Washington Commission Staff

### Agenda

Topic	Topic Owner
Welcome & Introductions	Amber
Overview of the Meeting: rules and intent	Amber
EAG Value & Structure Recap/Outcomes	Amber
EAG Member Spotlight	Amber
Public Participation & Clean Energy Implementation Plan	Tamara
Survey Results and Discussion	Amber
Your Support Team and Next Meeting	Amber

## Meeting Notes

### Agenda Item 1 – Recap March EAG Meeting

Reviewed value and structure of the EAG format.

**Member** – enjoyed the time gathered at the Scott Morris Innovation Center – might consider for future EAG Meeting as an in person visit.

**Member** – field trip!

### Agenda Item 2 – EAG Member Spotlight

Margee Chambers featured as the inaugural Member spotlight to help the other EAG participants get to know each other. Two meeting days and times does not always allow everyone to see each other or learn about their organization.

### Agenda Item 3 – Customer Barriers to Participation

Tamara - Discuss the barriers for customers to participate, engage, have their voice heard. Specific barriers were identified and listed in CEIP:

- Non- English speaking
- Language/Communication Methods
- Cultural Barriers
- Economic Barriers

Survey was sent to EAG and ~600 customers to gain insight about these initial barriers that were identified. Avista is reviewing the responses and will review with you how each group answer to these questions. Will utilize this information to help develop an over-arching strategy to develop a participation plan going forward.

Amber – reviewed the survey questions and the results

**Q1** - Majority of survey respondents were interested in learning more about Avista and clean energy

**Q2** - Most of the survey respondents aligned with advisory group to inform and consult. Are there more topics that you would like to give more information?

**Member** – people will engage if they know are familiar with a topic or have an interest in learning more that is when they will be more engaged.

**Member** – agree with colleague – usually just in the inform category; if topic was DEI, I have a lot more information that I can collaborate and consult on

**Member** – agree with the others – more I am learning the more I see how it affects the communities I am a part of – different lens and perspective as to how things overlap

**Q3** – Majority of responses requested as email to be the primary tool for participation opportunities.

**Member** – agree with email

**Member** – email would be best; paper may be a bill, less likely to open

**Member** – cleaned office and moved out a lot of paper; transferring to paperless; organization is looking at more technology-based opportunities (Teams, Microsoft 360). As individuals learn the technologies – seems to be getting a lot better for this type of communication.

Facilitator – COVID has pushed many things online

**Member** – email can tie to the calendar invite

Tamara – every Sunday she receives an automated phone call from child's school – likes that it is pushed to her instead of opening an email. Why is this not a good way to communicate? Survey responders did not choose it as an option.

**Member** – don't answer the phone if I don't know the number

**Q4** – Social media preference was Facebook

Facilitator – this may not be the way to reach a lot of people; only 1% of the responders from the larger group picked this method.

Q5 – Responders preferred to provide Avista feedback via online survey and email. The EAG members appreciated the Zoom approach.

Facilitator – how can we be more collaborative and get ideas

**Member** – drawing or money for completing a survey; nothing crazy – ice cream for participation

Tamara – 2100 customers who have volunteered to complete surveys for Avista on a variety of topics; just started an incentive opportunity - \$50 gift certificate – participation level has seen a slow tick upwards.

Facilitator – how we can encourage customers to participate

**Member** – feels people are interested in their utility bill/usage; smart meters help with this; it will all depend on the topic.

Kim – are you interested in practical ways or academic ways to learn about your bill?

**Member** – both – what is a high energy user in a basic household – often surprised at what is or what isn't.

Kim – agrees that many are interested in the relationship to the bill – could the utility provide levers to change your behavior to affect that.

**Member** – electric vehicles – might want to purchase one – but how does that affect my energy bill?

**Member** - For public participation I think making explicit what they would be contributing and what the topic is. Even using phrases like lived experience and focusing on self-expertise might provide folks some extra level of confidence that they have something valuable to contribute. I own an EV :) limits places to live as no apartments have chargers.

Facilitator – has only seen chargers in places like Kendall Yards

**Member** – suburban sprawl – lower income apartments are in the suburban areas, public transit available downtown

Q6 – larger group of survey respondents identified economic and health barriers

Q7 – English is the primary language spoken between both groups of respondents

Q8 – Friends and Family barriers – communication, economic, health barriers

Facilitator - What are the best ways to find out what barriers people may be facing.

**Member** – Native and other cultures – education level factors into participation- may be shy or reserved as well as how they may have been raised. Hard to draw out and get them to converse. Older I get the less shy I am.

**Member** – I agree with that, some part lack of interest, some part not feeling your opinion and insight is valuable. Most who work minimum wage jobs would likely feel unqualified to give a major private business their feedback. (Facilitator – power dynamics)

Member – totally agree with what they are saying – not sure how but need to say “there are no wrong answers” you are representing your neighborhood and communities. Not sure how to empower that aspect of it.

Q9 – Why are you interested in Public Participation. EAG – understanding clean energy, learning how the transition will affect the communities. Other responders – how will the transition affect me and ability to comment about the issues.

What from this survey resonated with you? Anything that was missing? How can we work around these barriers to make sure people's voices are being heard?

One of our members in a previous session has suggested using laundromats to communicate information – do you have any other ideas?

**Member** – considering way to provide community education about solar; will provide large screen tv in the local school – show in real time how these solar panels work at their peak time in the summer and winter. Visual education to explain solar and conserving energy. Need young people interested at this age – it is their future.

Facilitator – brought the big screen tv right to them vs. trying to have the people come to you

**Member** – speaking of schools – organization hosted vaccine clinics in East Valley – lot of parents showed up that were parents – could there be a survey within a school district email to help reach people?

Facilitator – good idea to utilize existing communication channels that people may receive messages.

**Member** - school might be the main way parents are involved in the community.

Facilitator – if we were to have a big public participation meeting – was there anything you experienced that was engaging or other ideas like polls or other interactive activities

**Member-** polling is good – annotate function in Zoom – all writing on the same screen – a little confusing at first. oh, also zoom integrates some apps too like Miro that has mind mapping, I'm sure those apps are hit or miss though :P

Facilitator – poll on cell phone shown in real time – if you come across other options – do let us know!

## Wrap Up

Thank you – always rich conversation for the Wednesday evening meetings.

May meetings – May 18<sup>th</sup> or May 20<sup>th</sup>

Email to follow up later to wrap up the details of the call

All members interested in the upcoming EV Initiative Meeting in May – will provide their names to the invitation list.

Member – EV charging station within a carport to integrate with solar – housing office and admin building.