

Re: Climate and Environment Commission Response to the Draft Renewable Energy Plan Report, 2021

To: Columbia Mayor and City Council

Date: February 23, 2021

The Climate and Environment Commission (CEC) approves the draft Renewable Energy Plan Report 2021.

However, we have the following reactions and input.

- The Climate and Environment Commission (CEC) is disappointed to find no growth in attainment for 2020 and in fact a small decrease in the amount of renewable energy as a percentage of the system used for electricity by Columbia Water and Light (CWL). Calendar year 2019 resulted in an achievement of 15.87% and 2020 resulted in 15.41%. The 2020 result was even lower than the 2018 result of 15.65%. The CEC acknowledges the identification of 2020 production problems due to maintenance and other issues, however, we want to strongly encourage Columbia Water and Light to work with a greater sense of urgency and additionally to obtain sufficient renewable energy production to accommodate negative impacts of productions going off-line for maintenance moving forward. We need to see measurable progress towards our goals reflected in the annual report.

The CEC would like to encourage Columbia Water and Light to move ahead with great urgency to achieve the next milestone of 25% of electric retail usage well before the deadline specified in the ordinance of December 31, 2022. We note that the report states the current plan does not anticipate reaching 25% until after the December 31, 2022 deadline. Efforts should be made to expeditiously return to the rate of progress to reach renewable energy goals on time

- The CEC appreciates the content in the report addressing future achievement of the Columbia Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) goals. The Columbia Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) which was adopted unanimously by the City Council in June of 2019 has a stated goal to achieve 100% renewable clean energy for electricity by 2035. Although this goal has yet to be formalized in an ordinance, we thank Columbia Water and Light and the Integrated Electric Resource Master Plan (IERMP) Task force for including this goal in IERMP planning. We look forward to working with the Integrated Electric Resource Master Plan (IERMP) Task Force and the Water and Light Advisory Board to submit an ordinance before year end 2021 to achieve 100% renewable clean energy by 2035 or earlier.
- As the City of Columbia is investing in renewable energy in a desire to fight climate change and reduce pollution, the CEC feels that purchasing unbundled Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) such as the 20,000 purchased in 2020 are not helping the cause. Investing in renewable energy projects where the REC is tied to the underlying

electricity production would help drive the creation of new renewable energy capacity. We encourage CWL to plan sufficient electricity production from renewable energy to exceed the stated goals, accommodate maintenance and avoid the need to purchase unbundled RECs in the future. The CEC encourages the City Council and the Utility to consider using the funds normally used for purchasing RECs to fund local investments to accomplish CAAP goals.

The Climate and Environment Commission appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Renewable Energy Report, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Amparan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Amparan

Chair, Columbia Climate and Environment Commission

References

1. <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aaa512/meta>, Does replacing coal with wood lower CO2 emissions? Dynamic lifecycle analysis of wood bioenergy John D Sterman, Lori Siegel and Juliette N Rooney-Varga, Published 18 January 2018. Published by IOP Publishing Ltd