Date: October 12, 2019  
Place: Santa Fe Public Library, Washington Street  
Attendees: Paul Biderman, co-chair; Mark Bourke, Maj-Britt Eagle, Jim Eagle, Dick Cramer, Bob Alei, Kevin Lancaster, Gary Clendenen, Gregg Manoff, Jonah Kurman-Faber (phone), Barbara Sinha

Meeting started at 10:10 am

Introductory remarks

Paul gave a history of Citizens’ Climate Lobby and Climate Defenders New Mexico for the benefit of people attending for the first time. Then each of the attendees introduced themselves.

Carbon Pricing Summit

The Carbon Pricing Summit (aka Carbon Solutions Summit) organized by Climate XChange was held in Santa Fe on October 2nd and 3rd. Here are the highlights:

1) Wednesday, October 2nd, morning: **Carbon Pricing Deep Dive** (aka Advocacy event) ~ 80 people attended; an overview of Climate XChange by Executive Director Michael Green; presentation about communication and social media related to carbon pricing by Communications Director Maria Virginia Olano; presentation about Carbon Pricing in a Just Transition by Research Associate Jonah Kurman-Faber; audience participation in the form of small break-out groups

2) Wednesday, October 2nd, evening: **An Evening with Climate XChange** (reception) ~ keynote speaker Claudine Schneider now living in Colorado and remarks by Joel Briscoll, a representative in the Utah House of Representatives

3) Thursday, October 3rd, morning: **Key Stakeholder Conversation** ~ representatives from New Mexico’s Department of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources and New Mexico’s Environment Department were present, among others; they expressed interest in following up on state carbon pricing; the heads of these departments are the lead people on Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s Interagency Climate Change Task Force.

Paul mentioned that Climate XChange is interviewing for a regional manager to be based in Santa Fe. It would not be a lobbyist position since Climate XChange is a non-profit organization and therefore is not allowed to lobby.
Five people in attendance at this meeting participated in at least one event of the Carbon Pricing Summit. They relayed some of their impressions of the summit. Barbara said she was impressed by the diversity of people and organizations the summit attracted, including ranchers and people from the Navajo Nation. Gregg stated he also noticed the diversity and thought Climate XChange did an excellent job both in organizing the summit and in giving the presentations. He figured Climate XChange might have been surprised by the amount of opposition they encountered in New Mexico. Mark said he was aware of impatience in the room during the first event, that people wanted action to be taken and not just more discussion. He said the event was an example of the slow process of democracy. Dick commented on the tension he was aware of, that some participants were resistant to the idea of people from Massachusetts taking charge of the meeting and even presenting possible solutions based on their experience.

**Status of state legislation**

Paul reviewed the history of state carbon pricing legislation in New Mexico for the benefit of new attendees. Paul noted that Matt McQueen was at the summit last week. He is the chair of the (New Mexico) House Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee. There is a good chance this would be the first committee to hear the proposed carbon pricing legislation during the next legislative session.

Paul, Robb and Tabatha Hirsch, and Wendi Odai had a meeting with a Deputy Head of the Department of Transportation to discuss how a carbon pricing bill might be structured and how the revenue might be used.

There will be more meetings about the proposed state legislation, which would focus on a fee or surtax on gasoline and diesel fuel. It will be important to get the support of the Governor. Paul thinks the Governor will need to not jeopardize the revenue stream that the oil and gas industry produces for New Mexico and yet somehow encourage decreasing our use of fossil fuels to combat climate change. He said she likes to be viewed as an innovator. There was discussion of where the revenue generated by the proposed carbon pricing legislation would be distributed. The 2019 version of the legislation had four proposed distribution avenues and these need to be re-examined.

**Progress toward national legislation**

Citizens’ Climate Lobby will have a Lobby Day in Washington, D.C. on November 11th and 12th. No attendees at this meeting plan to go to Washington but they may have phone conversations with staff of our representatives and senators. Paul reported that he gave Representative Ben Ray Lujan’s staff the contact information for Ben Pendergrass, CCL’s Senior Director for Government Affairs. Talking with Mr. Pendergrass might be helpful in getting H.R. 763 on the agenda of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

[Jonah joins the meeting by phone at 11:35 am]

CDNM minutes
Jonah stated the summit events were amazing and there was great energy in the room. He found the state administration people at the events to be receptive to considering carbon pricing for New Mexico. On the other hand, there were definitely people who were skeptical of the ideas presented. Climate XChange’s conclusion is that getting legislation for carbon pricing in New Mexico will require a coalition process yet there is currently no structure to do that. Paul commented that one approach to getting enthusiasm and energy behind the proposed bill would be to first get support from the Governor and her administration.

Questions for Jonah:

1) Mark’s question: You have looked at lessons from other states. We need a suggestion from you regarding the structure to build a coalition.
   Jonah: The Energy Transition Act had a good coalition supporting it yet the bill was (is) still contentious. You could follow the way a coalition was made for that act. Also, Tim Cronin and Michael Green with Climate XChange might have specific suggestions.

2) Gregg’s question: I noticed tension at the summit at the idea of carbon pricing as a solution to climate change. Do you think Climate XChange could convene a coalition or would it need to be a different entity?
   Jonah: That is still to be decided. We have the same concerns.

3) Paul’s question: We recognize the difficulties around this legislation. That is why a good approach is to get the Governor’s support. You hear a lot of opposition to something brought up by people from another state.
   Jonah: The way I see it you have two options:
   Option 1 – make the legislation a slice of a larger pie; make it incremental toward achieving the state climate goals, or
   Option 2 – make the legislation all-encompassing; this is much harder and there would be a battle with the extractive industries; the end result might be a cap and trade approach
   Jonah: You might want to consider even changing the terminology of the bill. It is a gas tax, so do not even emphasize climate change.

4) Gregg’s comment: The money and the politics are with a bill that gets broad buy-in; not an incremental approach; don’t get ahead of the group.
   Jonah: The way the current incremental bill is perceived by environmental and other advocacy groups may lead them to oppose it.

5) Paul’s comment: Yes, it is piecemeal but transportation is the next biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Electricity generation has been addressed.

6) Mark’s question: Probably there will be a bill introduced in the next session. A pragmatic decision needs to be made. Is there a chance to build a coalition?

7) Discussion: Dick said we are going in the right direction. Jim agreed and noted New Mexico might be the only (blue) state with large gas and oil production that is
addressing the issue. Jonah would like to know what 350.org has to say about the proposed bill.

8) Discussion about Option 1 and Option 2: Gregg believes it does not have to be an either/or decision. Jonah felt there is a risk connected to Climate Defenders New Mexico going with Option 1. Jim said public opinion is changing in the direction of more support for taking action about climate change.

9) Jonah’s comment: The deliverable has to be open to sudden shifts and amendments. We may need to listen to the legislators and then modify the bill. In general, he recommended we “stay on our toes.”

(Call ends at 12:05 pm and the meeting ends)

Next meeting

The next meeting will be Saturday, November 9th, at the Public Library downtown.

Minutes taken by Barbara Sinha