

OC Jobs First Collaborative Meeting Abridged Notes

June 28, 2024

Maria Linares

After the last collaborative meeting, staff invited folks interested in participating in the strategies workgroup to finalize the strategy language for the full collaborative to approve today. The meeting was facilitated by Jesse and was held in person last Friday. Jesse will provide an overview of the discussion and the outcomes of the meeting. This will be an action item on today's agenda, which means we will be voting and we will require a motion and a second.

Jesse Ben Ron

After several months of deliberation, we either cut off the research prematurely to give you the document in advance, which isn't ideal, or risk you not seeing it in advance. To avoid that, we're pushing forward to ensure you have ample time to review the deliverable. You have a document in front of you, crafted by the working group. A backup document was also created by consolidating various concepts from staff input. This backup exists in case you choose not to move forward with the collaborative's decision, as we need something to send to the researchers. Some members preferred a broader approach, focusing on top-line strategies and detailed action items. A subcommittee with representatives from each group worked meticulously on the draft you have now. With that, I'm open to discussions and questions. Before that, I invite members of the collaborative who participated in last Friday's meeting to elaborate or clarify anything I might have missed.

Linda DiMario

I'm going to circle back to the same concerns and comments that I made when we all last met. The vote that was taken to proceed with one document over another was misinformed and perhaps misunderstood. I still don't think it's wise or reflective of the almost two years of work this group of 60 plus people have invested. The new document is an interpretation and a translation, an enhancement and a set of things that just weren't entirely aligned with how we had approached it as a group these last months. The staff interpretation, which was bringing our work in a consolidated format, is still the document that we ought to be advancing.

Andrew Gonzales

I also attended Friday's meeting because I had very similar concerns to Linda. What we were presented, was sort of like a consolidation of a spreadsheet into something that was more easily to read. And what we got was a reinterpretation of our words and a whole new set of strategies that were not voted on, which were not worked on by this collaborative for months. What this document does is subvert the efforts of this collaborative for them in the months that we've taken, working on this project, the many months and weeks we spent refining strategies, it's averted all of that work.

Ana Urzua

I'm truly sorry Andrew that you feel that way because I feel like it's a mischaracterization. There's nothing that wasn't already surfaced through prior iterations of the work that we've done for years, that we've all been here for, and that we've all really given ourselves to. This was one of the instances

where we took the time to actually dig deeper as opposed to rushing through decisions. We took time to piece together something that could reach the people who are left out, and that's what I think is super important.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

If I understood the process that has unfolded in the last couple of weeks, this particular HRTC was ahead of the curve in coming up with strategies and we were poised and ready to go and we got new information from the state in terms of the guidelines. If our goal is to be competitive on the statewide level as our own region, then we had to adapt our approach and modify the original strategy document in order to align with the state.

Garry Brown

When we sat down and went over the top line strategies that we had on a document, I didn't see any new terms in a new language that I hadn't seen before through this process. It may have been formatted differently and said differently, but I don't think we lost anything that we had worked on before. What Linda and Andrew support and love doesn't even comply with the state guidelines. It doesn't mention many of the things that the guidelines say we do. We talk about climate resilience, that's not a foreign term to any of you. But it wasn't in the voted on strategies. Do you want to be competitive with the state? Do you want to be competitive with the 12 other regions?

Linda DiMario

If you read the California Regional Plan, and all of its mandates for equity in the environment, just as the examples that you've raised, what I am arguing, is that by calling out all these individual strategies, we have pigeonholed once again, and siloed. Once again, what we have all believed were overarching necessities and mandates, equity, and the environment and sustainability. I'm arguing that the original work that we did, is broader, is more capable of shouldering all of the elements that we purport to be concerned about, that this most inclusive group that I've ever worked with, is capable of surfacing and supporting.

Melanie Schlotterbeck

I just wanted to point out, Linda, that I thought I had attempted to address that concern about two thirds of the way down on page one. I added the sentence that "woven into these strategies is the deep inclusion of environmental health and economic equity focused on disinvested communities."

Sarah Riggs

We're all coming from a lot of different sectors. So, I find that Friday was helpful. We're approaching all of the strategies with the same mindset focused on the disinvested communities.

Garry Brown

What Linda just said is something that we proposed when Melanie and I gave a presentation to the collaborative last November, it was the environment and equity must be a part of each strategy must be a part of each potential project and that's what we've said all along.

Iosefa Alofaituli

I think I speak for a lot of the folks on this call who have been unable to be a part of those conversations in that subgroup, including the one on Friday. We're kind of catching up through this conversation. Based on comparing all of those dozens of strategies and tactics that have been developed, they all seem to roll up into one of these top line strategies. The group has left it broad enough, but also specific enough to be competitive. I'm curious to hear from those who are opposed. What else is being left out that we feel is important?

Linda DiMario

Iosefa, do you ever remember voting for a group of people to take the staff driven and HRTC developed strategies and rework them? The answer is no, we didn't vote for a group to do that. What you're hearing is that we have imperiled and in some way, corrupted the process of us working together to develop a set of overarching strategies that yes, are still very much in alignment with the California State document. It's not a matter of what was left out. All the issues that are being discussed, we're just being siloed. I didn't like or appreciate the reinterpretation, retranslate, retranslation, of our original work.

Jasmine Pachanda

I was there on Friday as well and I think I understand that there are different opinions on the different documents. This was the first time where I felt like we all got in and did some of the really hard work of trying to summarize things. I'll add that I think maybe there felt like there was a small group that took charge. But part of it could be because I think that document that was presented resonated with people in comparison to the first document and I don't think that's bad. I think the last few weeks have been a really good reflection of the way this collaborative is coming together.

Andrew Gonzales

The vote we took on June 7, and what the argument I'm making is that that vote was based on a misrepresentation, what the top line strategies were purporting to be.

Toni Symonds

We were very transparent. In fact, the version that you saw when you went to the vote, showed exactly which of the strategies that everyone had voted on, and how they had been then translated to what you saw. Not only did you see the name of the strategies, but you had the column and the cell number that it came from. I apologize if you are feeling that this isn't going in the right direction. But I don't believe that it was a lie. I think it was quite clear what the translation was.

Gloria Alvarado

I have to agree with Linda, and with everyone that has actually got the time invested and months in working the strategies. What I'm going to say is that sometimes in the interpretation, the elements are missing. I am not questioning the document as it was presented a few seconds ago. What I'm questioning is the translation because we are missing some key elements and it is very important to go back to the original information.

Sarah Riggs

I just want to confirm that after we vote today it'll be sent back to the research team.

Jesse Ben Ron

Yeah, this will be the primary document they will work off of.

Nate Greensides

First thing I want to do is ask the question that was asked earlier, what is missing from the document? Second, when we use language like poisoned fruit and then we say that a small select subgroup of individuals are trying to influence the outcome, I think it behooves us. I seek clarification on what is meant when those terms are used, who's being referred to here?

Annette Kelly-Whittle

I was there at the meeting last weekend, also have been a part of working on the theory of change with that group. It's a challenge even working on a logic model and theory of change, trying to put all these things and concepts into a singular idea when we're talking about a whole county. But I feel like we did address everything, the one thing that we discussed was having guiding principles. Not that we don't want to include language as far as equity and climate, but to make certain no matter what project, or strategy, no matter what we do, it will include these guiding principles.

Luis Sarmiento

I feel like there's not a real conflict. We felt like some general guidelines, were necessary to make sure that language was present and there has never been an attempt to remove strategies in any way. If anything, the attempt is to be more inclusive and I feel like the majority of us feel that way. I would prefer at another time, we were able to address the use of some of this alarmist and divisive language that's being thrown around. I feel like that's harmful to our democratic process.

Maria Linares

The action item is approved strategies to be analyzed for the Regional Plan Part Two the motion on the floor will be something like to approve the strategies developed by the collaborative subcommittee for the research team to draft the Regional Plan Part Two for the state guidelines. If anyone would like to motion and second, please state your name and your motion.

Jesse Ben Ron

If people would like to edit it, we have the ability to do so. So, for the person making the motion, please make sure this is what you're comfortable saying stating

Melanie Schlotterbeck

This is Melanie. I would move that language on the screen.

Maria Linares

Okay, thank you, Melanie. We have a motion, we would need a second before we can move forward.

Garry Brown

I'll second it.

Maria Linares

Thank you, Gary. We have a motion on the floor. And we also have a second.

Andrew Gonzales

Point of order, I would like to make a substitute motion. My motion is to accept the default document, which has been referred to as the default document as the strategies going forward. I'm requesting that we accept what has been referred to colloquially as the default document.

Maria Linares

With the substitute motion, the vote is the original document that the staff had introduced before you and your team had introduced subgroup strategies.

Jesse Ben Ron

The voting poll will remain open. It's either going to be one document or the other based on this vote, but we cannot delay this. We've had some version of this for several months now, a decision needs to be made by this collaborative.

Andrew Gonzales

You can only take one item at a time.

Maria Linares

Yeah, we would have to have one motion. And then the document or the voting poll has to say substitute motion instead of motion to approve.

Jesse Ben Ron

We will have that window for people who did not attend.

Luis Sarmiento

I don't understand why we're limiting the vote. I think doing a vote where it's one document or another would be a pretty helpful vote.

Maria Linares

The reason is that Andrew has a substitute motion on the floor and Gloria seconded it. So, we need to move forward with that. Just like at the previous meeting, we moved forward with your motion once you introduced your motion.

Jesse Ben Ron

The default document is the staff drafted final strategies.

Maria Linares

Andrew, can you put your motion in the chat? So everybody can just read it and understand what that'd be? Okay.

Andrew Gonzalez

What's written right there on the screen is my motion.

Jesse Ben Ron

The next step is if this motion does not pass, we go to the set as the inverse. If this document, the default document does not pass, then we will be going with that subcommittee document. This is going to be voted on electronically. If this does not pass by July 3 at 11:59 pm, then we will email another poll. The more you delay this, the less time you will have to review the final document, which will probably be 100 pages. I fully appreciate everyone's time and commitment, this is never going to be an easier process and now that we're making tough decisions, it's normal for something like this to occur. We're here to build a more equitable and environmentally sustainable economy. I thank all of you for your commitment and I know these are going to be tough decisions, and we're going to disagree, but we're going to have to make decisions to improve our region.

Maria Linares

If anybody has any questions, please email us. We're quick to respond to our collaborative. If you have my number call me, if you don't, email me. I'll send it to you and feel free to text me or call me anytime. Our next meeting is scheduled in person for July 12. This will have lunch and networking starting at 11:30 am. and business matters will begin right at 12pm. We're set to adjourn at 2pm. We're still working on the agenda, it is a packed agenda. The meeting will be hosted at Spoons in Santa Ana. Kathryn has already sent an updated calendar invite with the location so please keep an eye out for an email from me regarding the meeting logistics and to everyone who submitted the RSVP form thank you for submitting it by the deadline. The deadline was yesterday but I will be extending it until today at 12pm because I do need to send the RSVP count to the catering manager. With that, I adjourn this meeting at 9:42 am.

Jesse Ben Ron

Thank you everyone. Have a great weekend.