

PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

June 11, 2026

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Sotiria Anagnostou	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Darren Chapman	Lahayla Curiel, OEP
Chris Erickson	Elizabeth Zima, OEP
Eric Gorseger	Erin Beasley, OEP
Kevin Groman	Carla De La Chapa, Office of Sustainability (OOS)
Andrea Odegard-Begay	Emma Goethe, OOS
Kathy Knoop	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Amy Scoville-Weaver	David Hondula, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
Colin Tetreault	
Ginger Torres, Vice Chair	
Kelly Barr, Chair	
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Penny Allee Taylor	Maggie Soffel, Arizona State University (ASU)
Caroline Lobo	Mark Carlisle, ASU
Sarah Porter	Cecilia Reviere, ASU
Bill Sandweg	Mikayla Qian
	Martin Rodriguez

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 2:07 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

2. Announcements

Vice Chair Torres opened by congratulating the City of Phoenix team for successfully advancing and unanimously passing the Food Action Plan. The commission also acknowledged that Rosanne Albright will be retiring from the City of Phoenix.

The group welcomed new commissioner Chris Erickson, who introduced his background as the founder of Pangaea, a hardtech organization focused on planetary health and advanced materials. He reviews roughly 1,200 startups per year and believes some of these innovators could be valuable to the City-. Pangaea primarily invests in early-stage- companies with commercial products and revenue, and Erickson currently serves on the boards of five portfolio companies. He shared that he is stepping back from Pangaea duties after June 30th and is enthusiastic about contributing to the EQSC. He also noted his love of trail running and praised Phoenix's exceptional trail system.

3. Review and approval of May 14, 2026 Minutes

Commissioner Tetrault made a motion to approve the May 14, 2026 minutes. Vice Chair Torres seconded the motion, and it carried 9-0.

4. Public Comment

No members of the public requested to speak.

5. Heat Response and Mitigation Office Update

Dr. David Hondula presented the City's 2026 Heat Response Plan and emphasized that broader heat-related work extends beyond the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation. He reviewed heat--related 911 call data through May, noting diverse case types and the significantly higher risk for unsheltered individuals. He reaffirmed that the heat response plan is Council- adopted and supported by numerous C-ity departments and community partners.

He summarized the plan's six strategic priorities and 23 actions, highlighting the Heat Relief Network with over 60 municipal sites and the City's efforts to expand support for partner organizations. Discussion followed on the Cooling Ordinance's 86 degrees Fahrenheit threshold- for spaces with evaporative coolers; its origin is unclear, and commissioners inquired about the health basis for the standard.

Program updates included trailhead safety outreach, added extended hours and 24/7 respite operations, and the new citywide employee heat- training program. In 2025, these services supported over 5,600 people and facilitated 751 placements into shelters or treatment. Early in the current season, 40 families have already been assisted with placements. This year's operational changes include continued 24/7 respite at the 20 W. Jackson site, extended hours at Cholla Library and the Justa Center, and UMOM's family-- focused services. Commissioner Chapman inquired about the process for nonprofits to establish heat relief spaces in the network, which Dr. Hondula responded confirming there is an onboarding process, participants must be able to accommodate a cooling site, and participants commit to site standards established by MAG. -

Additional updates covered FEMA funded employee training, the TNC Urban Heat Leadership Academy's record participation, the All Thrive 365 supply program, increased mobile home community engagement, and increased Red Cross outreach. Weekly heat- season reporting is available online, and the county has recorded declines in heat- related deaths. Phoenix continues to receive widespread interest from other jurisdictions and participates in the C40 Cool Cities network. Dr. Hondula noted data showing a rise in heat related deaths between 2015 and 2023, but the last two years have seen decreases in heat related deaths. Risks for heat related deaths include homelessness, substance use, and nonfunctioning AC units; Dr. Hondula called out that not all heat related deaths among persons experiencing homelessness involve substance use-.

Dr. Hondula suggested long-term strategies for Commissioners to consider, including residential weatherization, private sector investment, resource mapping, and technological investments. Dr. Hondula noted that effective root cause solutions could reduce dependence on cooling centers. Vice Chair Torres raised questions about built- -environment cooling strategies; more evaluation is needed. Chair Barr suggested further collaboration with TNC, ASU, and partners on gap analysis and research.

Commissioners proposed engaging Urban Heat Leadership Academy graduates to support nature-based solutions and review KPIs. Chair Barr concluded by reaffirming the Commission's focus on sustainable economic development and heat, encouraging continued data--driven- dialogue.

6. GO Bond Project Brainstorm

Chair Barr opened the discussion by revisiting the GO Bond introduction presented at the previous meeting and asked how EQSC can influence departments early in the next GO Bond cycle, as well as how to increase public interest. Initial brainstorming ideas included low-cost air- conditioning, organic material upcycling, data center point- source carbon capture, tree- canopy satellite imaging, seasonal rainwater- capture technology, trail improvements, -chilled drinking water, and low--cost EV charging for -multiresidential- properties.

Commissioner Knoop emphasized the importance of low-cost EV charging in multifamily settings and asked how previously funded programs could be expanded or how unfunded 2023 proposals might be incorporated in the next cycle. Chair Barr suggested a presentation on past unfunded projects, and Chair Knoop agreed to review the 2023 GO Bond project list. De La Chapa noted that departments are currently working through a sustainability checklist and that staff could present information on the projects not selected last cycle, including the highlighted 27th Avenue solar project.

Commissioner Gorseigner observed that public safety often dominates GO Bond discussions and suggested exploring how sustainability could be integrated into public safety or parks projects. Chair Barr encouraged deeper research and benchmarking against other cities, emphasizing that sustainability should be embedded in all City efforts, including GO Bond packages. Commissioner Groman agreed that adding a sustainability layer across the board is essential.

Commissioners Knoop and Gorseigner will continue researching these topics and return with findings.

7. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

De La Chapa will tentatively speak in September to review GO Bond materials. The July meeting will feature a presentation on Community and Economic Development.

Vice Chair Torres suggested a future meeting focused on water, potentially featuring Max Wilson, noting that if he is scheduled, it should be the sole agenda item. Commissioner Scoville--Weaver raised interest in the heat impacts of data centers and referenced new ASU research, including work by Dr. Sailor. Allen reminded the group that EQSC can write letters to the Mayor and Council around policy on issues they care about, including data centers.

Chair Barr shared updates from the knowledge exchange network, which is producing three outputs: a municipal guidebook, a community focused- resource, and a data center engagement guidebook. Commissioners expressed general interest in continuing discussion on these topics.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emma Goethe, Management Assistant II