

**PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION MINUTES**

January 14, 2021

Phoenix City Hall
Online Utilizing Webex

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Allen, Dwayne via phone	Mayor Kate Gallego
Barr, Kelly via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Franquist, Timothy via phone	Mark Hartman, Office of Sustainability (OSS)
Groman, Kevin via phone	Willa Altman-Kaough, Office of the Mayor
Lobo, Caroline via phone	Tricia Gomes, Planning and Development Department
Porter, Sarah via phone	Sina Matthes, Office of the Council
Torres, Ginger via phone	Alexis Yapple, Public Works Department
Tetreault, Colin via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
	Matthew Potzler, OEP
	Katrina Gerster, OEP
	Cindy Salazar, OEP
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Allee Taylor, Penny	Alisa Lyons
Chapman, Darren	Cesar Cordova
Ruht, Kimberly	Rachel Dunn
Sainz, Columba	Helen Heiden
Sanders, Penny	Jonathan Maranville
Sandweg, Bill	Mary Baron

1. Call to Order/Roll Call:

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 3:07 p.m. There were 7 members present (1 short of quorum) at roll call and agenda item 2 was presented as information only. The following commissioner arrived after the initial roll call and quorum was established with 8 members present at that time:

- Caroline Lobo at 3:10 p.m.

2. Office of the Mayor Visit for Information Only

Mayor Kate Gallego spoke about the environmental quality and sustainability goals and achievements of the city of Phoenix. Mayor Gallego said her public life began on this commission and that many other commissioners have gone on to public office from this commission. The city of Phoenix has influenced state-level environmental quality and sustainability standards and practices, like fireplace standards and installation of solar. As commissioner, Mayor Gallego worked on the city's first climate action plan and now as Mayor on this plan that staff has worked so hard on, especially Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman. Mayor Gallego spoke about being asked to participate in the mayors climate efforts in this country. As mayor, Phoenix joined C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) and that they were most interested in the work that Phoenix was doing regarding solid waste and heat readiness. Mayor Gallego mentioned that the new administration in Washington, D.C. had contacted her office regarding recovery from COVID-19 and climate change.

Mayor Gallego recognized the work being done by the commission on trees and shade and announced that she asked the City Manager for a tree administrator position be included in the trial budget for 2021. Mayor Gallego spoke about the unusual budget process this year as councilmembers are term-limited and will be leaving mid-budget process. Mayor Gallego also encouraged the commissioners to advocate for the tree administrator and other sustainability items.

Mayor Gallego acknowledged the work being done (50th solar project) and national rankings, like 6th nationally for solar jobs and second largest landfill project after Houston. Mayor Gallego also acknowledged Commissioner Kelly Barr's assistance with utility partnerships in making more solar possible.

Mayor Gallego then spoke of the future of a "greener Phoenix" and the work being done regionally to address environmental quality, like air quality, and sustainability. Chair Colin Tetreault thanked Mayor Gallego for all her efforts and asked what issues to move the city forward on. Mayor Gallego suggested a wide variety of solutions in heat and shade, making the city more walkable and bike-able and to consider innovative solutions that can be piloted in Phoenix for other cities to emulate.

3. Announcements

Chair Tetreault announced he was working on the year-end wrap-up letter to be sent to City Manager's Office and City Council.

4. Review and approval of December 10, 2020 Minutes:

ACTION:

Commissioner Barr made a motion to approve the December 10, 2020, minutes. Commissioner Kevin Groman seconded the motion and it carried 8:0.

5. Public Comment – Two people spoke:

Chair Colin Tetreault indicated that attendees wishing to offer comments to feel free to do so.

Jonathan Maranville favored efforts to increase trees and shade.

Rachel Dunn stated support for the climate action plan and wanted to learn more about it.

6. Planning and Development Text Amendment Update

Tricia Gomes, Planning and Development Special Projects Administrator, provided an update to the Text Amendment regarding trees and shade. Special Projects Administrator Gomes provided the commissioners with a schedule for the Village Planning Committee (VPC) meetings (Laveen and South Mountain VPC meetings already occurred) where the Text Amendment will first be presented for information only. Special Projects Administrator Gomes said that the initial comments are related to street and right-of-way landscaping and overall, the response has been positive, since the intent is to increase shade. Special Projects Administrator Gomes also said they are still in talks with APS and SRP about safety considerations. A timeline of the text amendment adoption process was presented with additional VPC meetings for a request for action to occur in March, Planning Commission request for action in April and then to Council for briefings with eventual request for action by May.

Vice Chair Ginger Torres said that the schedule and timeline was also provided to the Urban Heat Island Tree and Shade Subcommittee and that the subcommittee members were encouraged to attend.

Chair Tetreault asked for more details on the talks with the utilities. Special Projects Administrator Gomes indicated that the utilities are requesting for clear language within the Text Amendment regarding maintenance near their facilities. Commissioner Kelly Barr, Chief Strategy, Corporate Services and Sustainability Executive at SRP, said that they are not quite there, but are working to get it resolved.

7. Urban Heat Island and Tree and Shade Subcommittee (UHITS) Update

Vice Chair Ginger Torres, serving as UHITS Chair, and Commissioner Allen, serving as UHITS Vice Chair, provided an update from the most recent meeting. The subcommittee sent the memorandum regarding Urban Forest Infrastructure Manager Position Justification that was approved by the subcommittee on January 12, 2021. The memo was prepared and authored by a work group composed of the following subcommittee members: Tabitha Myers, Dwayne Allen, Nicole Rodriguez, David Hondula, Aimee Esposito, and Anna Bettis. The memo contains a description of the position and responsibilities, benefits to the city, and costs. The working group looked at other cities for guidance on the position, including Sacramento, California, Atlanta, Georgia, Austin, Texas, and Tucson, Arizona. UHITS prefer this position be focused on trees as the source of shade. The 2010 Tree and Shade Master Plan found here

https://www.phoenix.gov/parkssite/Documents/PKS_Forestry/PKS_Forestry_Tree_and_Shade_Master_Plan.pdf

does not specifically call out for a tree administrator, but does call for an urban infrastructure team (UFIT). The subcommittee felt that the need for a team would require a position to lead the UFIT. The subcommittee acknowledged the great work being done at the department level and suggested a person in this position could pull all that work together to make it more effective. Chair Tetreault asked for the document to be distributed to the commission for review and consideration at a future meeting. Vice Chair Torres suggested adding urban heat goals, discussed

during the subcommittee meeting, to the climate action plan, which can be found here

<https://www.phoenix.gov/oep/climate>

Commissioner Sarah Porter asked for water consumption required by the Tree and Shade Master Plan to be considered. Chair Tetreault asked that the subcommittee consider creating a city policy matrix and to identify those policies that are siloed. Chair Tetreault also requested that commissioners and subcommittee members attend the budget hearings and Village Planning Committees to provide advocacy for the Text Amendment, tree administrator position, and additional policies.

8. Urban Forests and Low VOC/Nitrogen Fixing Trees

Commissioner Timothy Franquist presented additional information about planting trees with low VOC emissions and the possibility of using trees to fix nitrogen, decreasing an ozone precursor. Commissioner Franquist used a PowerPoint presentation to provide information regarding the Clean Air Act, ozone formation reactions, nonattainment classifications and the economic consequences, air quality permitting and emissions offset requirements. Commissioner Franquist also delineated the differences between traditional and nontraditional offsets. Commissioner Franquist proposed the economic opportunity of using trees as a source of offsets in addition to the air quality benefits trees provide. Vice Chair Torres asked if the city or the company pays for the offset credits required by these facilities. Commissioner Franquist replied that the company is responsible for obtaining the required offsets and paying for them. Commissioner Franquist proposed asking ADEQ to be able to generate these types of nontraditional offsets in order to be able to offer these credits to companies. Vice Chair Torres clarified that overall, want the city to avoid reaching the higher nonattainment brackets. Commissioner Franquist said picking the right trees or plants should be included in the text amendment and to look at new opportunities like a “clean air park,” where the trees would be specifically chosen as having lower emissions, as part of the innovative solutions that Mayor Gallego asked the commission to consider. Commissioner Allen requested that a copy of the presentation be provided to everyone and asked who is affected by the major source requirements with Commissioner Franquist responding that these would be large facilities, like a power plant. Commissioner Allen then asked if the process would require the removal of trees to be replaced. Commissioner Franquist clarified that the goal is to have more trees, but that to obtain offsets the plant must be changed to a species that results in lower emissions. Commissioner Sarah Porter, Phoenix Parks and Recreation Board Chair, said that the commission should be mindful of how important a type of species of trees at the park is to the surrounding community and to look at the potential of this idea by looking at the city’s tree inventory. This is the link to the City of Phoenix TreeKeeper tree inventory discussed during today’s presentation.

<https://phoenixaz.treekeepersoftware.com/>

Here is a link to the Street Transportation Department’s Phoenix Tree and Shade Prioritization Map mentioned during today’s meeting. This tool was presented previously during a UHITS meeting.

<https://phoenix.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2ce7ec39970c45e5861559318c7ee54e>

9. Climate Action Plan Update

Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Air Quality and Climate Specialist in the Office of Environmental Programs, gave an update to the efforts towards producing a C40-compliant climate action plan. Dr. Potzler updated the commission on upcoming climate action plan workshops. The next workshop will be cohosted with CHISPAAZ League of Conservation Voters on January 28, 2021. Two other workshops are being planned for February, a youth-oriented workshop and another hosted by EQSC. Dr. Potzler also said that roughly 380 survey responses with comments on the framework were submitted, with half of those from youth. Chair Tetreault was encouraged by the diversity of community outreach.

10. EQSC Climate Action Plan Event Planning

Chair Tetreault and Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs Administrator, planned for an upcoming workshop to be hosted by EQSC and include members of major industries and employers, along with economic development groups. The two dates proposed for the event were February 23 or 25. Chair Tetreault asked for the commissioners to consider how best to conduct the event.

11. Copper Cactus for Information Only

Roll call was conducted and only seven commissioners were still present. The remainder of the meeting was for information only.

Commissioner Kevin Groman proposed that the city create a voluntary award program (“Copper Cactus”) to designate neighborhoods that increase sustainability. With the assistance of a PDF, Commissioner Groman suggested using a “fluid results based approach,” and that criteria would be adjusted continually to enable innovative thought. Commissioner Allen reminded the commission that the city of Phoenix already has a program called the Green Business Leader Program that has designated his restaurant as a Green Business Leader at the platinum level.

12. 2021 Agenda Planning for Information Only

Chair Tetreault would like the agenda to have a tiered structure, with examples of tier 1 items to include the climate action plan, UHITS and associated policies, and city sustainability finance policy, including the associated efforts made to reporting agencies like CDP, who employs Chair Tetreault. Tier 2 examples included advocacy and weighing in on policy like Waters of the State/Waters of the US.

13. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items for Information Only

Future possible agenda items include:

- EQSC Bylaws
- Status of AZ Recycling Industry
- Permitting for Rooftop Solar: City and State
- Batteries / Storage & Fire Codes
- Rio Reimagined
- EQSC Branding
- Air Quality Update
- Phoenix Water Drought Pipeline Project
- Opioids in Water
- Increase in population of individuals facing homelessness
- Walkability throughout the city

Commissioner Sarah Porter suggested looking at the bylaws to change the meeting schedule to every other month to improve attendance. Vice Chair Torres

inquired as to the opening on the commission, with Chair Tetreault affirming that there was one opening, and that any recommendations by the commission or otherwise would go to the City Council who would make the final decision.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist