

PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

November 18, 2021

Phoenix City Hall
Online Using Webex

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Allee Taylor, Penny via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Barr, Kelly via phone	Mark Hartman, Office of Sustainability
Chapman, Darren via phone	David Hondula, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation
Franquist, Timothy via phone	Rick Peters, Public Works (PW)
LaSlavic, Nicole via phone	Amanda Jordan, Community and Economic Development
Lobo, Caroline via phone	Tina Phanmanivong, PW
Odegard-Begay, Andrea via phone	Veridiana Cervantes, PW
Porter, Sarah via the phone	Alexis Yapple, PW
Ruht, Kimberly via the phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Sandweg, Bill via phone	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Torres, Ginger via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Tetreault, Colin via phone	Ariel LeBarron, OEP
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Groman, Kevin	Alisa Lyons
Knoop, Kathy	Jak Keyser
Sainz, Columba	Rick Kroon

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 3:02 p.m. There were 8 members present at roll call. The following commissioners arrived after the initial roll call:

- Darren Chapman at 3:05 p.m.
- Kelly Bar at 3:08 p.m.
- Ginger Sykes Torres at 3:09 p.m.
- Caroline Lobo at 3:17 p.m.

There were no announcements.

2. Review and approval of October 14, 2021 Minutes

ACTION:

Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor made a motion to approve the October 14, 2021 minutes. Commissioner Tim Franquist seconded the motion and it carried 9:0.

3. Public Comment – One speaker.

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

Rick Kroon from The Honest Water Company spoke about a new business venture that could provide water and reduce plastic waste in Phoenix.

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

Vice Chair Ginger Torres, Chair of the Subcommittee, informed the Commission that a meeting of the Subcommittee occurred on November 9. Vice Chair Torres provided an update on progress made towards policy recommendations for cool rooftops and equity policy that would be presented to the Commission in December. Vice Chair Torres expressed the interest of the Subcommittee to continue this work.

5. Extended Producer Responsibility

Agenda items 5 and 6 were taken up after item 7.

Community and Economic Development Department Project Manager Amanda Jordan presented information regarding Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), a policy approach strategy that places the responsibility for the post-consumer phase of certain goods on producers and manufacturers. This will shift financial responsibility from municipalities and taxpayers and address environmental impacts of waste disposal. Current EPR developments and implementation in the USA were discussed. In Arizona, the most recent EPR legislation for large electronics died in committee in February 2021.

Commissioner Tim Franquist asked about inflation and if there were economic studies of the costs of the products to internalize those costs. Project Manager Amanda Jordan indicated that early studies had been done with paint and batteries, but that there may be more issues to consider with plastics and EPR.

Chair Colin Tetreault asked how can the city work with the state legislature to promote these kinds of policies. Project Manager Amanda Jordan said that Maine and Oregon's EPR packaging law just passed and that Phoenix is a member of the US Plastics Pact, a group comprised mostly of private sector members interested in achieving a circular economy for plastics. It was suggested that these efforts

need to be driven at the state-level to be effective and that the timeline to readdress this at the legislature would be in 2023.

6. Circular Economy

Community and Economic Development Department Project Manager Amanda Jordan presented information regarding the Circular Economy, where used materials are able to be reused instead of requiring additional raw materials and eventual disposal. The city of Phoenix had a diversion goal of 40% by 2020 with zero waste by 2050. (Note: The city of Phoenix only processes single-family residential waste and the 2020 goal was for that waste stream, but the zero waste goal is for all waste throughout the city, including businesses and multi-family housing.) Project Manager Amanda Jordan also spoke about the city's investments and partnerships in the circular economy, including the Resource Innovation Campus, which has a materials recovery facility as well as compost facility, and Resource Innovation and Solutions Network (RISN), which will help create economic opportunities to further this work. The future of the circular economy was also discussed with additional opportunities available in the federal infrastructure bill, internal city policies, knowledge sharing with groups like C40 Cities and Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and working with universities.

Commissioner Darren Chapman led a discussion on creating a circular economy that is inclusive and includes outreach to communities and organizations so that the investment and workforce development opportunities are available to them. Project Manager Amanda Jordan indicated that work is being done to develop those relationships and that an education and training program is scheduled to launch next year.

Chair Colin Tetreault indicated interest in are policy-based efforts, like creating code for "zero-waste neighborhoods." Chair Tetreault also reminded the Commission about the city of Phoenix only addressing single family residential waste and that partnerships and work would need to be done with the private sector to meet the zero-waste goal.

7. Office of Heat Response and Mitigation Goals and Priorities Discussion

This agenda item was taken up after item 4.

Office of Heat Response and Mitigation (OHRM) Director Dr. Dave Hondula provided an overview of the Office's budget, organizational structure, and purpose – to respond to and mitigate urban heat. The OHRM is currently convening a city staff heat response team and in the process of hiring an Urban Tree Program Manager, with the description provided to the Commission. The OHRM is also working to support the Cool Corridor program and pursuing external funding, along with determining paths to the next iteration of the UHITS.

Vice Chair Ginger Torres asked if the city staff heat response team meetings would be open to the public and to include EQSC informed and involved as needed with the progress of this work. OHRM Director Dr. Dave Hondula responded that the initial meetings would be only city staff, but in the future there would be opportunities for public input.

Commissioner Kelly Barr and OHRM Director Dr. Dave Hondula entered into a discussion about the development of "right tree, right place" and future placement of trees, especially for the cool corridors. The cost of placing these trees would be

significantly higher, as they would need to consider not only the overhead utility lines, but also the water supply infrastructure needed for the trees, and that alignment opportunities are being investigated. Non-tree shade structures will also be used, with the Office of Arts and Cultures being able to provide examples of effective structures that are also aesthetically pleasing.

Chair Colin Tetreault asked how the Commission could contribute and what the immediate plans were for the first half of 2022 with OHRM Director Dr. Dave Hondula indicating that long-term mitigation was the primary concern before and now more immediate responses would be undertaken by the city. The first heat death usually occurs in April, so a better strategy needs to be developed before that time using the more than 20 years of public comment that is available to the Office. Significant opportunities are available from the federal funding bills, including the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and the infrastructure bills being considered by Congress. Commissioner Caroline Lobo inquired as to the amount in these bills available to the city of Phoenix for this work. The total amounts, not just for shade, provided to Phoenix are \$198 million for 2021 and \$198 million for 2022 from ARPA, with the infrastructure bill amount not available. Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman indicated that the infrastructure bill mentions cool pavement and cool corridors and that part of the funding in that bill may be used for projects like this in Phoenix, especially in vulnerable neighborhoods.

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

Chair Tetreault asked for announcements and summarized the meeting's discussions.

Future possible agenda items include:

Permitting for Rooftop Solar: City and State - TBD
Batteries / Storage & Fire Codes - TBD
Rio Reimagined – TBD
Air Quality Update – TBD
Opioids in water – TBD
Increase in population of individuals facing homelessness – TBD
Walkability throughout the city – TBD
Clean Water Act and Waters of Arizona – TBD

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist