

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. There were 8 members present at roll call.

Chair Torres reminded subcommittee members that this is the last scheduled meeting before the subcommittee sunsets.

2. Review and approval of November 9, 2021 Minutes

ACTION:

Vice Chair Myers made a motion to approve the November 9, 2021 minutes. Subcommittee member Chandler seconded the motion. The motion carried 8:0.

3. Public Comments

Stacey Champion commented on the history of the subcommittee and her involvement in tree and shade work before its creation. She also commented that subcommittees should represent city residents and their values and should not sunset after this meeting. She also requested that members of UHITS and EQSC should disclose any conflicts of interest if they exist.

Ryan Boyd commented the subcommittee should not sunset and more detailed work on trees, shade, and heat needs to continue. He suggested that EQSC extend the subcommittee at their next meeting.

4. Report from Heat Office

Chief Heat Officer Hondula provided an update on the hiring process for the Urban Tree Program Manager and asked for input on the Built Environment Specialist position as they develop the job description. Additional ARPA funds will be available later this year and it is possible heat mitigation projects may fall under ARPA goals. Projects could include increasing tree planting in residential areas, tree plantings at schools, city facility tree planting, increased home weatherization programs, shade structures in the right-of-way, CERT heat response, and cooling center power backup infrastructure. Hondula asked for input on these ideas and possible additional ideas. Hondula provided ideas for public community engagement on heat after the subcommittee sunsets, which includes EQSC standing agenda item with public comments, EQSC maintains their ability to create subcommittees as needed, and the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation will host monthly in-person and virtual conversations throughout the city.

Subcommittee Rodriguez expressed concerned of a lack of a public conduit for public comment on trees, shade, and heat. The schedule and platform shouldn't be determined by the city only. Residents needs to have a platform that they can depend on and initiate. Vice Chair Myers agreed.

Chair Torres supports the idea of going directly to residents in their neighborhoods for their comments and making it easier for them to provide comments as they are the ones most impacted by heat.

Subcommittee member Esposito supports the ARPA fund project ideas and supports a separate committee that is not under EQSC as there is a lot of work to be done regarding heat and trees. Either way there needs to be some form of public engagement process.

City Attorney Wetherell stated that EQSC functions under the city ordinance and any committee that does work that parallels EQSC would need to be mayor and city council approved. Under the current ordinance EQSC can continue to create subcommittees with set objectives, tasks, or projects. There are many ways for work to continue.

Subcommittee Rodriguez asked what the ordinance code was. Wetherell stated Chapter 2 Article 23 enables and details EQSC. Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked what the process is to create a new commission. Wetherell stated there is not specific language detailing this, but there would need to be council buy-in for staff to craft new ordinance language with eventual approval from council. Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked for clarification on sunset determination. Wetherell stated that the chair of EQSC, with input from the commission, makes the decision on appointing subcommittees and the EQSC bylaws state subcommittees exist only as long as necessary. At the time UHITS was created it was determined that it would sunset in December 2021 which allows for the commission to review the work performed and reevaluate the need for additional work. Subcommittee member Rodriguez asked what meeting EQSC set the sunset date. Chair Torres and city staff stated that EQSC mentioned the sunset date at the October 2020 meeting and an exact date was determined at the February 2021 meeting. Chair Torres mentioned that agenda item 6 will discuss sending a memo to EQSC reviewing UHITS accomplishments and discuss future work that still needs to be done.

5. Cool Roofs Policy Memo

Vice Chair Myers overviewed the draft memo document edits since the last meeting, including The Nature Conservancy cost benefits report and expanding on the recommendations provided by subcommittee members at the last meeting.

Subcommittee member Bettis and Chair Torres thanked Vice Chair Myers on all her work putting this memo together.

ACTION:

Subcommittee member Chandler made a motion to approve the Cool Roofs memo and send to EQSC. Subcommittee member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion carried 8:0.

6. Heat Equity Policy and Methodology Update

Chair Torres overviewed the draft memo and thanked subcommittee Chandler for her input. The memo recommends an overall heat equity policy for all city heat projects to follow.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez suggested adding tree protection language to recommendations regarding tree planting and adding tree shade to the introduction. She also asked for clarification if the Phoenix heat office is the first in the nation as mentioned in the memo. Chief Heat Officer Hondula clarified that the office is the first publicly funded in the nation.

ACTION:

Subcommittee member Chandler made a motion to approve the Heat Equity Policy and Methodology memo with Subcommittee member Rodriguez's edits and send to EQSC. Subcommittee member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion carried 8:0.

7. Review of UHITS Accomplishments and Wrap Up

Chair Torres drafted a memo summarizing the accomplishments and products UHITS completed over the last year, including 4 memos sent to EQSC, comments on the Phoenix 2021 Climate Action Plan, and supporting the budget requests for the creation of the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation and cool corridor development. Chair Torres asked for input on additional work regarding heat and shade that UHITS didn't have a chance to address that they could if given more time.

Subcommittee member Rodriguez suggested additional text amendment and policy recommendations to protect the current tree canopy and new development growth recommendations to include more sustainable practices.

Subcommittee member Esposito suggested tree canopy inventorying and goal tracking and increased ongoing community led engagement.

Subcommittee member Chandler suggested providing feedback on the C40 Urban Forest Commitments.

Vice Chair Myers suggested further, more detailed cool roofs policy recommendations.

ACTION:

Vice Chair made a motion to approve the Accomplishments and Future Work memo with the edits from subcommittee members and send to EQSC. Subcommittee member Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion carried 8:0.

8. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist