

PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION MINUTES

February 13, 2020

Phoenix City Hall
Room 12 Central
200 West Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Allee Taylor, Penny	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Allen, Dwayne via phone	Mark Hartman, Phoenix Office of Sustainability (OOS)
Bendor, Josh via phone	Joe Giudice, Public Works (PW)
Chapman, Darren	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Guidas, Elyse via phone	Tricia Balluf, OEP
Groman, Kevin via phone	Cindy Salazar, OEP
Howell, Park	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Lobo, Caroline	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Ruht, Kimberly via phone	Cuong Dinh, Parks
Sandweg, Bill via phone	Can Xiao, Water Services Department
Torres, Ginger	Lucas Mariacher, PW
Tetreault, Colin	Jake Wilson, PW
	Shereen Warrayat, City of Phoenix
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Barr, Kelly	Trevor Root, HDR
Nelson, John	
Porter, Sarah	

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 3:09 p.m. There were 10 members present at roll call. The following commissioners arrived at the times stated below:

- Penny Allee Taylor at 3:10 p.m.
- Darren Chapman at 3:43 p.m.
- Park Howell at 3:10 p.m.
- Caroline Lobo at 3:25 p.m.

Chair Colin Tetreault called for announcements from commissioners and staff. He reminded the Commission about the Meeting of the Minds Annual Summit from February 19-21 and the scholarship available to any commissioner that wished to attend.

2. Review and approval of January 9, 2020 Minutes:

ACTION:

Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor made a motion to approve the January 9, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Park Howell seconded the motion and it carried 10:0.

3. Public Comment – No one spoke:

Chair Tetreault indicated that attendees wishing to offer comments to feel free to do so. There were no public comments.

4. Solid Waste Rate Increase Update

Joe Giudice, Assistant Director for the City of Phoenix Public Works Department, presented an update on the proposed Solid Waste Rate Increase. This was the first rate increase in eleven years and was approved by City Council 7:2. This rate increase will maintain current levels of service. The rate will increase \$3.75 in April 2020 and then again by \$3.25 in January 2021. The rate will then increase by 2% per year to account for inflation until 2026. Asst. Dir. Giudice thanked the Commission for their support throughout the process, including the letter of support, attendance of Commissioners Ginger Torres, Dwayne Allen and Penny Allee Taylor at village meetings, and for comments made during the Council meeting. Asst. Dir. Giudice spoke about the efforts made by Public Works to obtain community feedback, including 13 community meetings, block watch meetings, 5,800 online surveys and 12,000 phoenix.gov/trashandrecycle website visits. The survey results indicated that majority (75%) of participants said that diversion was very important to them. Public Works will continue to strive towards the 40% diversion goal by 2020 (currently at 36%), but more than this rate increase will be required to reach that goal. Further efficiencies are being investigated and those savings may be used toward sustainability goals. Such efficiencies include route optimization and hiring more drivers to decrease overtime required to meet current customer needs. Some of the newer diversion programs include the deconstruction program that Asst. Dir. Giudice has previously presented and a partnership with Goodwill to divert textiles.

Commissioners Penny Allee Taylor and Park Howell asked about the results of the City Council vote. Asst. Dir. Giudice indicated that some Council members had reservations about increasing the rates of another service (Water Services rate recently was increased) and how it compared to other cities in the Phoenix metropolitan area. He also said that the City of Phoenix would continue to remain cost competitive by submitting bids against private contractors. Chair Colin

Tetreault inquired as to the next steps for sustainability initiatives now that current services would remain and encouraged Public Works to seek partnerships with private companies to increase diversion goals. Asst. Dir. Giudice said they were looking at all sources of support, including federal funding for municipalities to invest in recycling under the Recover Act and conducting conversations with the Economic Development Department about RISN.

Asst. Dir. Giudice announced a compost giveaway on April 25 at North Phoenix Baptist Church.

5. Commission Vice-Chair Selection

Chair Tetreault reminded the Commission about the bylaws regulating the appointment of a new vice-chair. The vice-chair could be nominated by the Commission, but would be approved and appointed by Council. He indicated that those who are interested in the position contact him to learn more about the responsibilities.

6. Tree and Shade: Tree Portal Update, Tree City Budget Recommendation

Mark Hartman, Chief Sustainability Officer, presented information updating the Commission on Tree and Shade activities being conducted by the City of Phoenix. After the approval of the Tree Portal by the Transportation, Infrastructure and Innovation (TII) Subcommittee, he will be going to the full Council meeting to talk about trees. 14,000 trees were lost in 15 years. Individual departments are determining the “true cost” of planting and maintaining a tree to be proposed for inclusion into the city budget. The proposed budget would also include the tree administrator position that the Commission recommended to Council. He suggested that all attend the budget hearings that begin in April. Office of Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen reminded those present to utilize the Phoenix Budget Tool available online as those recommendations would be reviewed by council members (<https://phoenix.abalancingact.com/PhoenixBudget19-20>).

Chair Tetreault requested an update on the associated tree and shade text amendments that the Commission had recommended previously. Administrator Allen assured the Commission that the Planning and Development Department was holding community meetings to get the amendment. He also inquired as to the source of funding and the timeline of hiring the tree administrator. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman indicated that even if funding were available immediately, it would still entail a two-month hiring process. Most likely, the soonest that this position could be filled is late this calendar year.

7. Green Infrastructure/Low-Impact Development Handbook Support Letter Request

Tricia Balluff, Environmental Programs Coordinator for the City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs, returned to present information on the Greater Phoenix Metro Green Infrastructure Handbook Low-Impact Development Details for Alternative Stormwater Management prepared by Arizona State University's Sustainable Cities Network (SCN) and request a letter of support for the incorporation of design details included in the Handbook to be used by the City. Coordinator Balluff and Commissioners discussed the process by which the Handbook was approved and how effective it will be if it is not required to be included as part of any design. Coordinator Balluff indicated that the design details were created for right of ways, but were applicable to other areas and may be included in private developments. She indicated that it would be difficult to predict

the timeline as to when these details would become requirements as the Waters of the US rule was still up in the air. Chair Tetreault offered to host a meeting between members of the development community to discuss the Handbook as Commissioner Torres, who is a part of the development community, was concerned of the degree of inclusion of the development community in the review process. Chair Tetreault offered to author a letter containing the comments from the different commissioners by February 21, 2020.

8. Food Action Plan Update

Environmental Programs Coordinator Rosanne Albright presented the City of Phoenix 2025 Food Action Plan and requested a letter of support. The TII Subcommittee recommended the Plan on February 5, 2020 and it will be presented to Council in March. This first iteration of the plan is a move towards meeting the goal in the General Plan: for each person to have a healthy food outlet within a quarter mile. Coordinator Albright described the Plan and its emphasis on local food systems. The process of creating the plan had a high degree of community engagement, including areas like South Phoenix and Maryvale. She described the goals and associated recommended actions. One specific goal was to Celebrate Local and Diverse Agriculture. The action recommended was to update codes and ordinances to eliminate barriers to develop healthy food infrastructure with a completed date of December 2021. Commissioner Allee Taylor inquired as to the prolonged time period that it would take to achieve this. Coordinator Albright described the process, which includes public hearings and planning committees and the timing involved in getting to Subcommittee and Council. Commissioner Dwayne Allen indicated his support to decrease food waste and if this focus was included in the Plan. Coordinator Albright referenced the “Accelerator” which would provide businesses the opportunity to be more sustainable by creating a local network of farmers and restaurants that would include ideas like food recycling or “food rescue.” Chair Tetreault offered to author another letter containing the comments from the different commissioners by February 21, 2020. He then reiterated the importance to secure funding for the Food Action Plan and Tree Administrator to see successful outcomes.

9. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Future possible agenda items include:
Vice-chair Guidas proposed stepping down as vice-chair
Status of AZ Recycling Industry
Permitting for Rooftop Solar: City and State
Working Together: Trees and Green
Batteries / Storage & Fire Codes
Mayor Kate Gallego
Rio Reimagined
EQSC Branding
Solid Waste Update – after community meetings
Food Policy Update
Air Quality Update
Phoenix Water Drought Pipeline Project
Opioids in Water
Increase in population of individuals facing homelessness
SCN Green Infrastructure Handbook
Walkability throughout the City

Commissioner Kevin Groman suggested tapping into schools for leaders in climate change issues with Chair Tetreault indicating the inclusion of a young professional to join

the Commission to tackle these issues. Nancy Allen told the Commission about the inclusion of the Youth Climate Strike in the Planning for a Resilient Community event being hosted by The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco along with the City of Phoenix and LISC Phoenix. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman indicated that he has a program that involves establishing sustainability officers at various high schools with main goals to include “greening their proms.”

10. Adjournment

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist