

# PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

**June 11, 2020**

Phoenix City Hall  
Online Utilizing Webex

<b>Commission Members Present</b>	<b>City Staff Present</b>
Allee Taylor, Penny via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Allen, Dwayne via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Barr, Kelly via phone	Mark Hartman, OSS
Chapman, Darren via phone	Denise Olson, Finance
Groman, Kevin via phone	Joshua Bednarek, PDD
Lobo, Caroline via phone	Willa Altman-Kaough, Office of the Mayor
Ruht, Kimberly via phone	Sina Matthes, Office of the Council
Sandweg, Bill via phone	Stephen Wetherell, City Attorney's Office
Torres, Ginger via phone	Mikaela Castle, PW
Tetreault, Colin in person	Cindy Salazar, OEP
	Matthew Potzler, OEP
	Katrina Gerster, OEP
	Lucas Mariacher, PW
	Zack Wallace, Finance
<b>Commission Members Not Present</b>	<b>Community Members Present</b>
Bendor, Josh	Helen Heiden
Guidas, Elyse	Dana Johnson
Howell, Park	Marlon Jones
Nelson, John	Nicole Hill
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 3:02 p.m. There were 10 members present at roll call.

Chair Colin Tetreault called for announcements from commissioners and staff. No announcements were made. Chair Tetreault recommended participants to mute their respective microphones while not speaking.

**2. Review and approval of May 14, 2020 Minutes:**

**ACTION:**

Commissioner Caroline Lobo made a motion to approve the May 14, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor seconded the motion and it carried 10:0.

**3. Public Comment – One person spoke:**

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

Dana Johnson provided comment about the Infill Development District and the exemption that allows for trees already in place to be removed from the properties being developed. He would like the exemption removed and that design plans include the already existing trees.

**4. Green Finance Update**

City of Phoenix Chief Financial Officer Denise Olson provided an update to talk about the market for green and sustainability bonds and the process the City undertook recently to issue bonds for the Colorado River Resiliency Project, including \$165 million in water bonds and \$228 million in sustainability bonds. Green bonds can be used for projects with clear environmental benefits, while sustainability bonds are broader in scope and include the social impact of the project. Both types of bonds sometimes offer better rates than traditional bonds. There has been considerable market growth in the green bond market from \$11 billion in 2013 to \$258 billion in 2019. The Finance Department developed Green and Sustainability Bond Framework. The Framework follows the Green Bond Principles and is guided by the sustainability goals adopted by City Council in 2016. Staff will continue to analyze the annual capital improvement project process to see where green and sustainability bonds can be used to provide funding. The utilization of these bonds will be included in annual disclosures to organizations such as the Carbon Disclosure Project, now known as CDP. The bonds most recently issued are part of the City of Phoenix's plan for 100-year supply of clean water. The bond sale was delayed due to market conditions caused by COVID-19. When the sale went through, the results showed that the sustainability bonds were 4.4x oversubscribed, while the series 2020A bonds were only oversubscribed 4.1x.

Chair Tetreault informed the commission that the efforts by Chief Financial Officer Olson and her staff was highlighted in a recent call with C40 Cities, with other cities highly interested in the process to obtain this type of funding. He also discussed the importance of seeking lower rates for debt issuance as this makes a significant savings. Commissioner Darren Chapman asked if there was a scenario where an accelerator business or a small nonprofit could partner with investment or Opportunity Zone investor that would meet the criteria for a green or sustainability bond. Chief Financial Officer Olson indicated that they will investigate that topic

further with the Community and Economic Development Department and that currently most of the work is focused on City of Phoenix infrastructure.

**5. Planning and Development Text Amendment Update**

Roll call was taken again to maintain quorum. 8 Commissioners present.

Chair Tetreault delineated the Tree and Shade Subcommittee’s recommendations that included a full-time tree administrator, full funding for tree planting and maintenance, citizen committee, and the text amendment being updated by City of Phoenix Planning and Development Deputy Director Joshua Bednarek. Deputy Director Bednarek had hoped to have the amendment to the City Council, but due to COVID-19, the process has been delayed. The amendment would consider trees as infrastructure and would require that they are kept in place in a healthy and living condition. New standards for removal and replacement, and tree maintenance would be addressed, as well. The schedule would have the language of the amendment finalized by July, with a review of the draft language with the community in August, have feedback addressed in September, and Council action in December. A request for action from EQSC would occur in October.

Commissioner Kelly Barr was interested in the stakeholders that have been involved. Deputy Director Bednarek indicated that they have reached out to Vitalyst, technical leads, AIA, ASLA, the development community along with presenting this amendment at the Village Planning Committees with the focus being on the technical aspects of the amendment. He welcomed the inclusion of other groups. Vice Chair Ginger Torres asked for a comparison between what was in the amendment and the language from EQSC. Deputy Director Bednarek indicated he would provide slides that would show the “synergy” between the two. Commissioner Lobo addressed the impending city budget cuts of 15-25% and expressed the hope that the tree administrator was not one of those positions. Deputy Director Bednarek was not privy to this information. City of Phoenix Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman announced the recent hire of an AmeriCorps VISTA would be performing outreach work in the areas of heat, trees and shade that is funded by grants for the next one to two years that would not be the tree administrator, but would assist in these areas. Chair Tetreault indicated that there are conversations occurring with NGOs that would bridge the gap for a tree administrator. Chair Tetreault then asked Deputy Director Bednarek about enforcement of the text amendment, with Deputy Director Bednarek indicating that the best enforcement is prevention and education. Enforcement would also follow the process already established for other ordinance violations.

Deputy Director Bednarek addressed the inventory and salvage requirements that are a part of the Infill Development District plans and that the concerns provided earlier during the Public Comment would be addressed by Staff.

**6. Climate Action Plan**

Chair Tetreault discussed the need for a C40-compliant climate action plan by the end of the year. Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Air Quality and Climate Specialist for the City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs, presented the recent greenhouse gas emissions inventories for the City of Phoenix and the requirements that need to met to produce a C40-compliant climate action plan. The results of the inventories indicate the need to ramp up reductions in greenhouse emissions to meet the 40% reduction in local government operations by 2025 and 30% for community-scale emissions.

For the full results of the greenhouse gas emissions inventories, visit <https://www.phoenix.gov/oep/2018GHG>

Dr. Potzler requested that the commissioners review the emissions inventories along with provide examples of mitigation or adaptation actions that the commissioners' organizations may be conducting. Examples like these are part of the requirements of the C40-compliant climate action plan. The full requirements of the a C40-compliant climate action plan can be found in the C40 Climate Action Plan Framework by following this link:

<https://resourcecentre.c40.org/climate-action-planning-framework-home>

Besides presenting to the commission as part of the community engagement necessary for an equitable plan, Dr. Potzler indicated an online survey being produced by Katrina Gerster, Environmental Air Quality Specialist in the Office of Environmental Programs. The survey will be available online by the end of the month. In addition to this meeting and survey, the greenhouse gas emissions inventories and announcement of the creation of the climate action plan will be presented to the Village Planning Committees during summer. Dr. Potzler indicated the goal was to have a draft out for public comment by September 1, with the plan going to Council by December.

Vice Chair Torres inquired if the public would have an opportunity to review the plan, with Dr. Potzler reiterating that the plan would be made available in September for a public comment period. Vice Chair Torres also requested what items the City would include in the plan and to provide those for the commission. Dr. Potzler indicated that City Staff was currently compiling that information. Commissioner Chapman indicated that TigerMountain Foundation began to compost various materials at their 20-acre farm instead of sending it to the landfill. Dr. Potzler indicated that the City would like to include these kinds of projects to demonstrate the activities that are in progress to reduce emissions in the private sector. Commissioner Chapman also raised a concern if these goals were realistic, with Dr. Potzler indicating that the majority of reductions would come from a less greenhouse gas intensive electricity grid and a need to decrease transportation emissions, which can come from utilizing mass transit, locating to communities that are close by, complete streets, and the creation of walkable neighborhoods. Commissioners raised concerns about the accessibility of the survey and City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen indicated that the survey would be in English and Spanish. Commissioner Lobo was interested in receiving more information concerning the greenhouse gas emissions inventories along with the information being included in the City's climate action plan and wanted more clarification about what "community-scale" emissions included. Dr. Potzler responded that these are emissions that occur within city-limits that include waste, fuels, like gasoline, diesel, electricity used by commercial, industrial and residential sectors and is a broad measure. The interest in obtaining information from the commission and community is to identify more specific sources and the reductions occurring at those sources. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman indicated that the City's plan would aim to be much broader than simply addressing greenhouse gas emissions, with Chair Tetreault indicating that including a more diverse population would create a better future for Phoenix.

**7. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items**

Future possible agenda items include:

Status of AZ Recycling Industry  
Permitting for Rooftop Solar: City and State  
Batteries / Storage & Fire Codes  
Mayor Kate Gallego  
Rio Reimagined  
EQSC Branding  
Heat and Trees/Shade  
Tree Text Amendment 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  
Climate Action Plan  
Urban Heat Island Committee Formation

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dr. Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist