

# PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

**October 13, 2022**

Phoenix City Hall  
Online Using Webex

<b>Commission Members Present</b>	<b>City Staff Present</b>
Andrea Odegard-Begay, via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Bill Sandweg, via phone	Dave Hondula, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation (OHRM)
Caroline Lobo, via phone	Eduardo Rodriguez, Public Works
Darren Chapman, via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Ginger Torres	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Kathy Knoop, via phone	Lora Martens, OHRM
Kevin Groman, via phone	Mary Wright, OHRM
Penny Allee Taylor, via phone	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Sarah Porter, via phone	Kim Gathers, Fire
	Alexis Yapple, PW
	Kristen Brady, Office of Sustainability
<b>Commission Members Not Present</b>	<b>Community Members Present</b>
Colin Tetreault	Rachel Dunn
Kim Sax	
Kelly Barr	
Timothy Franquist	

**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 3:12 p.m. There were 8 members present at roll call. The following commissioners arrived after roll call:

- Sarah Porter at 3:23 p.m.

Chair Caroline Lobo asked for Vice Chair Ginger Torres to read the land acknowledgement that was read during the October 10, 2022 meeting of the GO Bond Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee as follows:

I would like to wish everyone a happy indigenous peoples day! I would like to honor this day with a short land acknowledgement. The City of Phoenix is located within the homeland of the O’Odham and Piipaash peoples and their ancestors, who have inhabited and been the caretakers of this landscape from time immemorial to present day. The landscape is sacred and reflects cultural values central to the O’Odham and Piipaash way of life and their self-definition. Today the Akimel O’otham are part of the Four Southern Tribes of Arizona, which is a coalition comprised of the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Ak-Chin Indian Community, and the Tohono O’odham Nation. In addition, Arizona is home to 22 tribes, each with its own rich history, culture, language, and land base. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples, from within and well beyond Arizona, currently inhabit the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area. As an indigenous woman, I honor and commit to nurturing my relationship with the Akimel O’otham and other Indigenous communities, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally--today and every day. We hold on to our diverse cultural identities because we have been taught to pass our traditions from our forefathers to the next generation. For indigenous peoples, resilience is rooted in traditional knowledge, and adapting to changes in our environment is based on understanding of the land. In this commission, we are tasked with making decisions that will impact our land, our water, our air, and, therefore we are serving as honorary caretakers of the land. Today, our city is facing a range of environmental challenges that threatens public health in our communities and these threats are exacerbated by our changing climate. The decisions we are making today will affect all people within our city, from our elders to our youngest. The projects that we have before this subcommittee involve safeguarding our precious natural resources like air and water, addressing environmental risk, and planning so that we will have more sustainable and livable communities.

**2. Review and approval of September 8, 2022, Minutes**

Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor made a motion to approve the September 8, 2022, minutes. Commissioner Kevin Groman seconded the motion and it carried 8:0.

**3. Public Comments**

No one spoke.

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

Vice Chair Torres, Chair of the Subcommittee, reported that the UHITS Subcommittee meeting was held on October 11, 2022. Unlimited Potential presented on environmental justice and heat in the community. UHITS is preparing a memo about green infrastructure and low-impact development to be finalized by a working group of the subcommittee. Vice Chair Torres reminded the commission

that UHITS is due to sunset by the end of calendar year 2022. The Office of Heat Response and Mitigation also gave an update about the outreach for the update to the Tree and Shade Master Plan.

Chair Lobo asked Vice Chair Torres to detail more about the discussion regarding environmental justice during the UHITS meeting. Vice Chair Torres told the commission about the important role that the community health workers play between organizations and the communities and that the presenters were graduates of The Nature Conservancy's Urban Heat Leadership Academy.

#### **5. Update on Composting**

Eduardo Rodriguez, Deputy Director of the Public Works Department (PW) spoke about composting within the city. Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez spoke about the city's zero waste by 2050 goal and the 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. Compost Facility that has a new food de-packaging system that is being piloted.

Commissioner Kathy Knoop asked about the coordination of this work with other organizations. Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez talked about the discussions about processing this type of waste with other haulers and how Phoenix processes the waste from the Phoenix Open Waste Management event after it is sorted and delivered to the facility. Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor asked if the largest sources of organic waste were identified to partner with and if large producers of yard waste and cuttings were also being contacted. Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez mentioned that Aviation Department is a big hub of food waste at the airports and that the contractor that does this work for the city has the ability to go out and look for companies to partner with. The contractor also investing in the region and producing feedstock for animals using organic waste. A discussion on the ordinance limiting the City of Phoenix's ability to collect waste only from single-family households included about the best way to proceed to possibly change that to include commercial and multi-family housing collection. This included discussion on what other municipalities were piloting and the City of Phoenix would look toward other municipalities for examples of what could be possible here. Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez spoke about a USDA grant that the City of Phoenix is using to pilot work on food scrap collection from multi-family housing and a school. Commissioner Groman asked about the food de-packaging system and Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez indicated it was just in place in September but had the capacity to process fifteen tons per hour and up to one thousand tons per month. Commissioner Sandweg, who shared insights as a restaurant owner and their recycling cardboard efforts, recommended for the system to be in place with results that could be shown to the business community to encourage their participation in this process. Deputy Director Eduardo Rodriguez spoke about the ability of businesses to bring waste to the facility and how the incentive for "clean green" waste that is composed of yard waste is a lower price per ton.

#### **6. Proposition 400 and Air Quality**

This agenda item was not discussed.

#### **7. 2023 GO Bond Program Update**

Vice Chair Torres, GO Bond Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee Chair, reported on the results of the subcommittee's last meeting on October 10, 2022. The prioritized list of items that will be recommended to the executive committee include energy and water efficiency projects, heat resilience, brownfields, and EVs. The subcommittee did not recommend that the fuel tank replacement item be included as part of their recommendation, but recommended this item be a part of

another subcommittee's recommendation. Also as part of the subcommittee's recommendation is to increase the amount of funding available for the recommended items as they can all be easily scaled up. Vice Chair Torres indicated that she is a part of the executive committee that has meetings starting on October 17, 2022, and will continue to advocate for these items, but encouraged commissioners to attend and participate in the public comment process individually and through their networks. After discussion between the commissioners and staff, it was recommended that this would be the best way to participate. The website <https://www.phoenix.gov/bond> was shown to commissioners on how to find more information.

Chair Lobo asked if other items overlapped with the Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee items, with Vice Chair Lobo and Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen indicating there are different projects under the Economic Development and Education Subcommittee regarding brownfields, and items under the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee. Chair Lobo indicated an interest in reviewing the results from all the subcommittees, which have not been posted yet, and draft a memo for the commission to discuss during the next meeting. Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen will ask the Law Department about the best way to proceed.

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

Chair Caroline Lobo shared a message from Mayor Gallego about celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the commission, which commissioners were interested in participating in. Chair Lobo also encouraged the commissioners to attend in person beginning in 2023. Vice Chair Torres suggested that OHRM present at a future meeting to discuss the transition of the work of the UHITS once it sunsets. Commissioner Kevin Groman was also interested in receiving an update regarding the climate action plan update.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Matthew Potzler, Environmental Quality Specialist