

**PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
URBAN HEAT ISLAND/TREE AND SHADE SUBCOMMITTEE (UHITS) MINUTES**

**December 8, 2020  
Phoenix City Hall  
Online Utilizing WebEx**

<b>Commission Members Present</b>	<b>City Staff Present</b>
Allen, Dwayne, Vice Chair via phone	Nancy Allen, Office of Environmental Programs (OEP)
Berisha, Vjollca via phone	Mark Hartman, Office of Sustainability (OOS)
Bettis, Anna via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Campbell, Marc, via phone	Matthew Potzler, OEP
Chandler, Hazel via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Esposito, Aimee via phone	Willa Altman-Kaough, Mayor's Office
Hager, CJ via phone	
Hondula, David via phone	
Myers, Tabitha via phone	
Rodriguez, Nicole via phone	
Spartan-Platt, Vanessa via phone	
Syke Torres, Ginger, Chair via phone	
<b>Commission Members Not Present</b>	<b>Community Members Present</b>
Dalla Costa, Wanda	Andie Abkarian
Doebbeling, Bronwyn	Jesse Westad
Forte, Nika	Jessica Bueno
Galindo-Elvira, Carlos	Kasey Billingsley
Halperin, Tiffany	Ryan Boyd
	Rodney Boden

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

The following subcommittee members arrived at the times stated below:

- Hazel Chandler at 5:10 p.m.
- Dwayne Allen at 5:11 p.m.
- Anna Bettis at 5:15 p.m.

**2. Review and approval of November 17, 2020 Minutes**

**ACTION:**

Subcommittee member CJ Hager made a motion to approve the November 17, 2020 minutes. Subcommittee member David Hondula seconded the motion, and it carried 10:0.

**3. Public Comments**

There were no comments from the public.

**4. Update: Planning and Development Text Amendment**

Josh Bednarek from the Planning and Development Department (PDD) sent Chair Torres an update to share with the subcommittee. The update focused on the timeline including PDD presenting to the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) later in the week and PDD presenting to the Village Planning Committees (VPC) in January. PDD is continuing to engage with internal and external stakeholders, for example conversations with SRP and other utilities are ongoing. Changes to the text are minor at this time as PDD prepares the text amendment version for public review. Chair Torres asked that subcommittee members provide comments to city staff via email or at future public meetings.

Subcommittee member Esposito asked if UHITS can go to the VPC meetings to provide comments. Chair Torres said that there will be an opportunity to comment if there is interest from the subcommittee to do so and asked members to wait to see what PDD will present at VPCs and then decide next meeting how to proceed. Subcommittee member Rodriguez supported this idea and suggested that the subcommittee summarize their collective thoughts and highlight mutual support for specific items. Subcommittee member Esposito agreed with this plan and would prefer comments to come from the subcommittee rather than one person. Chair Torres plans to add this task to a future agenda.

Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Hartman mentioned that the recommendation will have to come from EQSC itself to support or not support the text amendment. UHITS can highlight their comments and send their recommendations to EQSC who will need to finalize comments from both bodies. When the amendment is brought forward by staff to council they would like to see support from both UHITS and EQSC. Chair Torres mentioned having PDD come to the January meeting to discuss the text amendment and discuss what action to take as a body.

**5. Tree and Shade Administrator Business Case Working Session - Comments on the draft business case, revisions, action to send to EQSC**

Chair Torres asked for a report from the workgroup that was working on developing the business case for the Tree Administrator position. Subcommittee member Myers sent out

a draft memo via email for members to review and provide comments on. The memo provides a description of the position and costs and benefits to the city.

Chair Torres asked if the workgroup felt that data was not available that they wanted to include or if there is a want to include more data if there was more time. Subcommittee member Rodriguez mentioned that the workgroup had to put together the memo at the last minute as much time since the last UHITS meeting was consumed by the Thanksgiving holiday and navigating the public meeting requirements for their meeting. As such, thinks that the memo would benefit from more time and data and provided the suggestion of using charts and maps to put together a more visual package. Subcommittee member Myers agreed that more time would be helpful and mentioned discussing suggestions with city staff.

Chair Torres is supportive of providing more time for the memo development and asked if other members had time to review the document. Subcommittee member Hager thought that the document was awesome and suggested adding a prevention section and to format the document from a strategy standpoint. The prevention data would provide evidence for cost savings created by the position. Subcommittee member Esposito agreed and trusts Hager's perspective and suggested seeking input from other cities or individuals with a similar position and highlighting similar programs with either a map or list.

Chair Torres asked subcommittee member Hager if prevention data was available. Subcommittee member Hager was unsure and would lean on subcommittee member Hondula as he works with the data daily.

Chair Torres asked if this new timeline works with the budget schedule. Environmental Programs Administrator Nancy Allen confirmed the timeline will work as feedback is still open through February and March. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman agreed that it could wait a month and the workgroup could work with city staff to look at and share drafts. There is also the possibility someone can ask city manager to put it into the budget and to talk management about benefits of position and attracting grants.

Subcommittee member Esposito asked if the city council was the intended audience of the memo and Chair Torres confirmed. Subcommittee member Esposito offered to do research based on what council is interested in to target outreach and communication of the memo. There needs to be a strategy after finalizing the memo instead it only being sent by email where it may disappear similar to the last recommendations. Chair Torres reminded the subcommittee that any recommendation from the subcommittee will be approved and sent to EQSC as they are who instructed the subcommittee to form and develop the business case. They can approve as is or edit the recommendations before they ultimately send it to council. However, agreed that providing additional targeted information about the strategy along with the memo might be helpful and could be done in a cover letter. Subcommittee member Myers suggested that it would be good to get the information formatted and to think about how to present it once the edits are done.

Chair Torres is satisfied with the memo and suggestions provided and asked the subcommittee members to send comments and suggestions by next Tuesday so the workgroup can provide a revised version for the next meeting.

## **6. Presentation: Healthy Cities Program**

Subcommittee member Bettis presented on The Nature Conservancy Healthy Cities Program using a PowerPoint and example mapping tool from Chicago. Chair Torres thought the presentation was useful in thinking of strategies for policy for underserved communities and that the story map example was a great use of GIS tools to visualize higher risk area and those with higher vulnerability. This map is similar to the one from the Streets Department from a previous meeting. The tool also may serve as inspiration of what comes out of the Climate Action Plan, specifically the heat goals for a walkshed mapping tool.

Subcommittee member Spartan is trying to navigate and understand which departments are planning trees as there was a recent presentation that a project will not include tree planting in the right-of-way. When talking of city funding and tree planting wondered which departments are doing those actions. Chief Sustainability Officer Hartman confirmed that Streets Transportation does plant trees that are maintained by parks. They plant 1,000 per year and are beginning to use the map to identify vulnerable communities. For major upgrade projects there is tree planting as part of new development and will almost double amounts of trees. Additionally, Parks plants 1,500 trees per year, Housing plants trees for communities, Transit is in charge of adding trees at transit stops. All of these efforts leads to an average of 4,000 trees planted per year.

Chair Torres asked who keeps track of tree plantings and inventories. Hartman shared that the last complete inventory was done in 2014 and Parks updates the tree inventory map for trees added by Streets and Parks. Subcommittee member Esposito mentioned that this is a good reason to have the Tree Administrator position as there are many departments planting trees and there is a need for someone to keep tabs on the departments to create reports. There needs to be a push for accountability from the community on the inventory.

Subcommittee member Spartan clarified that the presentation was for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave Pedestrian Improvement Project where they said Streets does not plant trees in the right-of-way and they talked about no landscaping in this project. Hartman shared that when right-of-way is in front of someone's home or sidewalk the city will not plant there and could have said that for that specific project there won't be trees that would be maintained by the residents. Subcommittee member Bettis said that she had met with people on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave project and that there is interest in modeling benefits of low-impact development and an openness for green infrastructure so is hopeful vegetation will be included as a part of the project.

Chair Torres asked about ways the city should prioritize tree plantings or other discussion on the presentation. Subcommittee members Bettis and Hondula shared that The Cooling Project may be of interest, however there is an expectation that residents are involved in all presentations so additional coordination is needed for a future presentation. Subcommittee member Hager would like to see a presentation for this project and strategies for community involvement given coronavirus restrictions.

Chair Torres mentioned that it is good to have maps, but there is also a need to know what works on the ground. These types of projects should be going on and are interesting conversation to have. Torres asked if Hartman could speak to walkshed mapping tool referenced in the Heat chapter of the CAP Framework. Environmental Programs Administrator Allen noted that Hartman had left the meeting and this could be discussed as a presentation for a future meeting. The Framework will need to be modified for total climate that includes heat and ideas have been discussed of how it

should be reworked. Chair Torres asked that someone present on the Framework heat plan for a future meeting.

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

Chair Torres stated that the goal for the next meeting will be to finalize the business case memo to send to the EQSC for their January meeting. Future agenda items include the cooling project work from The Nature Conservancy and the Climate Action Plan Framework Heat items. Future meeting times may be rotated between early evening and late afternoon every other meeting to hopefully better align with all members' schedules. Chair Torres and Environmental Programs Administrator Allen recommended that UHITS members attend the EQSC meeting on Thursday to listen in.

**8. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Quality Specialist