



## Minutes

### City of Tempe Sustainability Commission December 18, 2023

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Monday, December 18, 2023, 4:30 p.m. at a virtual meeting on MS Teams, through City Hall, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona.

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Kendon Jung (Chair)  
Barbie Burke (Vice Chair)  
Natalie Mendoza  
Katja Brundiars  
Ben Paulat  
Taylor Conley

Jake Swanson  
Shawn Swisher  
Erin Boyd  
Joshua Randall

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Morgan Winburn

**City Staff Present:**

Eric Iwersen  
Brianna Fisher  
Andy Escobar  
Maddie Mercer  
Evelyn Brumfield  
Carissa Fowler  
Dawn Ratcliffe

**Guests Present:**

Paul Coseo

### **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome New Members and SRC Mission**

Commission Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Commission Chair Jung reminded everyone to learn the Tempe Sustainability Commission mission inside and out and will send the mission to anyone if needed.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances**

No public comments were shared

### **Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Commission Chair Jung called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 20, 2023. Commissioner Mendoza wanted attendance corrected to reflect that she was not there for the November 20, 2023 meeting.

**Motion:** Vice Chair Burke

**Second:** Commissioner Swisher

**Decision:** Approved 10-0

### **Agenda Item 4 – Cool Kids, Cool Places, Cool Futures Grant Findings**

Presented by Commissioner Katja Brundiers, Associate Clinical Professor, College of Global Futures and Paul Coseo, Ph.D., PLA, ASU Design School

The grant report update presented by Commissioner Brundiers and Paul Coseo via a PowerPoint video, focused on moving from individual responsibility to collective responsibility for heat resilience. They noted it is especially important and urgent since the summer of 2020 was the hottest on record, later being eclipsed by the summer of 2023. Their grant work was supported through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2020 – 2023, with another cost extension through May 2024).

They found that a key aspect is organizing youth on intergenerational change and the importance of integrating youth ideas into policy making as well as focusing on what is needed in the present to better adapt to the future. Paul Coseo discussed the “Project Theory of Change” and included moving from individual resilience (ex.: water bottle) to community resilience (ex.: public cooling authority). The Community Youth Council was developed as part of this project and merged with the Sustainability Club at McClintock High. This work with youth has expanded out to Tempe High School.

One of the goals is to integrate indigenous voices into decision making as well as artists and creatives, with an emphasis on community resilience bringing equity/community change into the conversations about heat resilience.

He also noted the importance of working on cousin projects like the National Endowment of the Arts Our Town grant to integrate more indigenous ways of knowing and collaborations. Hekiu was specifically mentioned since this group is comprised of indigenous creatives and artists who have worked with the City. Nurturing the ASU/City of Tempe partnership was also seen as needed for the larger community resilience projects.

As part of the grant, there were several projects at the following levels, with a focus on equity and justice at the core:

- school and neighborhood level
- city level
- regional level
- the larger encompassing partnership represented at each of these levels

They were challenged to think about the work and realignment of the figure. As noted in the slide show, the arrows shouldn't be separate but should be more aligned and coming together in the city and university partnership and supported by all these different ponds and streams of work.

They had six initial goals going into this project, ultimately pulling out and elevating the top two goals:

Goal one: Community building and place keeping/making

Goal two: City and regional collaboration

### **Investment in time for the project**

Another aspect is how to account for all the people and time invested in the work:

80 participants

Hosted 329 recurring planning meetings

64 events

26 hires and staff changes

57 students mentored

One person spent 1,300 hours documenting time.

### **Investment in money for the project**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation seed funds \$580,000.

The City of Tempe funds \$400,000 for four permanent staff and GSI.

Various one-time investments total \$650,000.

External funders total \$965,000.

### **Roadmap for how the project is to be set up** (a draft will come in within a month or two)

Evaluating goal achievement

Developmental evaluation: inputs, activities, outputs (everything we can measure and count, ex.: heat vulnerability map), outcomes (Did this heat vulnerability inspire people to think differently?) and assumptions.

They inventoried all outcomes and outputs at the neighborhood, city and regional levels, measuring outputs and outcomes and rated levels of attainment as much more than expected, more than expected, as expected, less than expected and much less than expected. The three voices were Youth Voiced (Prong A), City and University Voices (Prong B) and Indigenous and Territorial Voices (Prong C).

The overarching insights gained are accountability, lessons learned and general recommendations (allocation efforts to build community resilience in collaboration with youth - maintain momentum (more than expected), actively support (as expected) and thoughtfully invest (less than expected)).

#### Neighborhood level

- Options for youth and City to work together (outputs) – ex.: diverse collaborative projects
- Awareness for need of cooling projects in CIP budget and planning (outcome)

#### City level

- Neighborhood emergency management hub and resilience hub master plan (outputs)
- Commitment to action for equity and decolonization in emergency management and planning (outcomes)

Regional level – did not achieve as much as we intended to

The City of Tempe in partnership with City of Phoenix can lead the conversations in including heat mitigation in the hazards mitigation plan since Tempe alone has 40 heat mitigation actions in both structural and non-structural areas. This will hopefully show other cities that it is not difficult to include heat mitigation in the hazards mitigation plan.

- Heat in hazards mitigation plan (outputs)
- Elevate indigenous perspectives to support youth learning about heat/cooling (outcome)

The other evaluation tool they used was the Seven Directions Framework:

*Eastern:* reminds us to be good relatives and live in good relations with all things human and non-human.

*Southern:* reminds us to have a good mind and good thinking.

*Western:* provides a way for us to do good work with good understandings of how our decisions, behaviors and actions impact human/non-human beings and the environment.

*Northern*: helps us synthesize and make deeper sense of our work together so that there is wisdom, innovation, interconnectedness and a vision for the next seven generations.

*Earthward*: is Mother Earth and what she represents (land).

*Skyward*: relatives seen and unseen in the sky and cosmos; asks us to consider the present state as part of the sacred circular kinships among the seen and unseen (air).

*Inward*: wisdom that each of us carries within us based on lineage, traditional/oral knowledge and responsibilities, family or other settler histories and lived experiences (transformation).

- Refocus from “doing things” to relating to people and how to build relationships to “do things” – collaborating with youth
- Community resilience is people-centered and based on the resilience of natural systems (sky, land) – designing for air and land quality and measuring project impacts
- Inner transformations – sharing vulnerability and supporting personal growth to channel outer change

Insight: need to establish necessary conditions for building community resilience

- People – four permanent staff members
- Relations – new relations, “cousin” projects – nurturing a broader coalition
- Funding – additional funds required, inspired others to acquire funds (include time to build institutional relations and for the projects themselves)
- Institutional support structures – policy proposals, guidance by Hekiu (scaling to regional level)

Commission Chair Jung commented that youth voices are very important and that it started back in 2018 with the Youth Agenda as part of the Climate Action Plan and is valued by all councilmembers, especially Councilmember Berdetta Hodge.

Commission Chair Jung asked Paul and Commissioner Brundiers for something they learned about the process and the City and how the Commission can help. Paul commented that it takes a long time to establish official relationships with ASU, City of Tempe and school districts. It created a lot of headaches for youth, so he mentioned establishing those relationships in advance of working with the youth. Evelyn Brumfield was mentioned by Paul and Commissioner Brundiers in relationship to her work with schools and Carrisa Fowler was mentioned by Commissioner Brundiers in reference to people appointed to strengthen relationships.

Commissioner Brundiers commented on the connections with sustainability, resilience and emergency management. In writing the grant, we tend to be ambitious with what we promise, but we want people who continue the project when funding ends.

Commissioner Randall asked how the kids felt about the process of dealing with politics. Paul Coseo responded that one of the original youth council members (Shalae Clemens) wrote a reflection piece about what went right and what went wrong and included suggestions about how we can do this better.

Commissioner Brundiers commented that it was very valuable for her and Paul to go through what changes happened when they started and where they are now. We didn't have the proper before and after assessment point. Her recommendation for the commission is to take stock at the beginning and end of the year and look back on progress.

Commissioner Boyd liked the video and the inputs and outputs but wanted to know who the audience is for this Cool Kids report.

Commissioner Brundiers said that eventually this will be a presentation for City Council. They are trying to decide what parts to present to Council and asked for Brianne's feedback.

When going to Council, Brianne recommends pulling out a piece of this larger report for the Sustainability and Resilience Office to advance this further. In her opinion, it should be youth work and showing the investment we have made by demonstrating how we have used this grant to move the needle with the challenges we might have working at the school board or school district level. Since our City operates under performance measures, we do not have a performance measure that speaks to community resilience or urban cooling. This report can help build a heat vulnerability/community resilience performance measure.

Commission Chair Jung agreed with Brianne and said the storytelling around this grant was monumental and thanked Commissioner Brundiers and Paul for presenting. He commented that we can make future unrelated grants smoother thanks to this one.

### **Agenda Item 5 – 2024 Neighborhood Awards – Call for Nominations**

Tempe Sustainability Award Application: Achievement of the Year 2024 Recognizes residents, organizations, youth and businesses that help to strengthen and creatively build the Tempe community in terms of sustainability. February 15 at 5:00 p.m. due date.

Commission Chair Jung talked about the Sustainability Award Application and how the nominations are the biggest challenges. He recommended "bring a buddy program" – nominate someone and have them nominate someone else. The next steps are to review the application to make sure that everything still looks great and then put it out for nominations.

Commissioner Swisher commented on the tight deadline. Commission Chair Jung said it isn't a deadline we put in place and that all neighborhood award categories have to adhere to this deadline. Brianne explains that the Neighborhood Services Office helps the Mayor put on this

event on April 6 and they establish the deadlines. She can ask for flexibility, but it allows our commission to meet in March and decide who the winners are and get the script ready for the Mayor. Brianne will ask but doesn't think there is a lot of flexibility (maybe a week).

Commissioner Swisher recommended the idea of promoting the deadline knowing that there would be a deadline extension by one week or at least a few more days beyond the deadline.

Commission Chair Jung encouraged people to nominate someone as most nominations come from this commission. Examples of award winners include Culdesac and residents with their own xeriscaping work. One of the comments last year from Commissioner Brundiers was on how we are evaluating the nominations that come forward in the spirit of collaboration and collective action. They are looking to incorporate that into the evaluation process. Commission Chair Jung asked Brianne to send a copy of past projects that have received a nomination.

Commissioner Conley asked if the commission has tried better ways of getting the word out. Chair Jung mentioned the Tempe Chamber committee and a thriving coalition of youth. If you aren't part of the sustainability echo chamber, it may be easy to miss but the City has a marketing plan for all awards. But Chair Jung recognizes the need to elevate the sustainability award to get the word out.

### **Agenda Item 6 – Chair and Vice Chair Elections**

Commission Chair Jung  
Brianne Fisher, Climate Action Manager

Commission Chair Jung asked Brianne how she wanted to collect the nominations. Brianne encouraged commissioners to nominate people by raising their hand and saying their nomination aloud or by putting it in the chat. Commission Chair Jung emphasized that if you are going to nominate someone, they do not have to accept the nomination and asked Brianne how to go about this.

Brianne suggested starting with Vice Chair. Commission Chair Jung nominated himself for Vice Chair to be a transition from his role as Chair. Commissioner Swanson nominated Chair Jung. There was no formal roll call. All in favor vote yielded unanimous "yes" votes with no one opposed.

Commissioner Swisher nominated himself for Chair and Commission Chair Jung nominated Commissioner Swisher as well. Commissioner Brundiers asked when the transition would happen for Vice Chair. Chair Jung would fill one term as Vice Chair and then it would be a normal election process.

Motion for Commissioner Swisher for Vice Chair: Commission Chair Jung

Decision: Approved 10-0

Motion carries for Commission Chair Jung as Vice Chair and Commissioner Swisher as Chair beginning in January 2024.

Commissioner Brundiers expressed sincere gratitude for Vice Chair Burke. Chair Jung thanked Vice Chair Burke for her work and the stability that she brought to the commission. She has been a voice of positive contribution.

### **Agenda Item 7 – Sustainability and Resilience Office Updates and Housekeeping**

Eric Iwersen, Sustainability and Resilience Director  
2024 SRC Meeting Schedule

Eric echoed support for all the great work Commission Chair Jung and Vice Chair Burke did and thanked them for being advocates for the expansion of the Sustainability and Resilience Office and for cultivating advocacy among the council members.

He noted that they are making changes to the commission construct and making it easier to apply.

Eric mentioned the January 20 event at the EnVision Center, which is a community update about programming at EnVision Center, energy equity, resilience hubs and the Grow Local grant work.

We are in the budget cycle for fiscal year 2025 and we have some budget constraints coming forward due to state legislative changes. While this will limit our expansion, we are bringing people over who work better with our team and we are moving several CIP programs that have been housed in Engineering to Sustainability including electric vehicle readiness, solar for facilities, etc. Eric also thanked the Sustainability and Resilience Commission for working with him.

Brianne mentioned moving next year to in-person meetings and will alternate between in-person and online every other month.

Commission Chair Jung mentioned the desire to move these to in-person meetings but having flexibility to also having online participation. Vice Chair Burke commented that before COVID, they always met in person and not online.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items**

Commission Chair Jung handed off the reins to new Chair Swisher.



New vice chair Jung let new Chair Swisher know that for the first meetings of the year, there is a full retreat or they are in addition to regular meetings in a retreat context to set the context for what we need to be doing and what we have pushed forward including the IgCC (passing the IgCC and moving from get it passed to how we get to make it mandatory), green stormwater infrastructure work and looking at some things that didn't receive as much attention such as transportation/land management work and other elements. That is what the retreat will be used for as well as future agenda items.

In the chat, Commissioner Paulat asked for updates on Tempe composting and solar shade along the canals in January. Also, Commission Chair Jung mentioned waste diversion needing attention at large.

Commission may request future agenda items.

- January Retreat
- Tempe Composting
- Solar Shade on Canals

Commission Chair Jung thanked two commissioners who are departing: Commissioner Mendoza and Commissioner Brundiers.

Commission Chair Jung motions to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 p.m.

**Motion:** Chair Jung

**Second:** Commissioner Brundiers

**Decision:** Approved 10-0

Prepared by: Dawn Ratcliffe

Reviewed by: Brianne Fisher

Addendum – MS Teams Chat:

[12/18/23 5:41 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Thank you.

heart 2

[12/18/23 5:43 PM] Barbie Burke (Guest)



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[12/18/23 5:43 PM] Katja Brundiers

Thank you very much for your very generous words of appreciation!

heart 2

[12/18/23 5:43 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

Informally, post meeting motion for a celebratory happy hour for our two departing commissioners and celebrating Barbie's tenure. Will follow up in email for anyone that'd like to meet up.

like 6

[12/18/23 5:44 PM] Jake Swanson (Guest)

Talking the thumbs up as seconds.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Thank you for the kind words Kendon.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Taylor Conley (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Barbie Burke (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I have enjoyed my time on this commission and I hope you continue to do the great work here.

heart 2

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Ben Paulat (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Erin Boyd (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Jake Swanson (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:44 PM]

Natalie Mendoza (Guest) left the chat.

[12/18/23 5:45 PM] Katja Brundiers

Well said, Natalie! I am grateful for the experience and the opportunity and for learning with all of you!

[12/18/23 5:46 PM]

12/18/23 5:46 PM Meeting ended: 1h 33m 13s