



Minutes City of Tempe Sustainability Commission April 19, 2021

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Monday, April 19, 2021, 4:30 p.m. at a virtual meeting on MS Teams, through City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Kendon Jung (Chair)
Barbie Burke
Sukki Jahnke
Steven Russell

Katja Brundiers
Gretchen Reinhardt
Anna Melis
John Kane

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Stephanie Milam-Edwards
Ryan Mores (Vice Chair)

City Staff Present:

Braden Kay
Grace DelMonte Kelly
Ausette Anderies
Terry Piekarz
Steve White
Braenda Clark
Cassandra Mac

Guests Present:

Councilmember Lauren Kuby
David Sokolowski
Shawn Swisher
Charles Rolsky
Siobhan Lyons

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearance

Chair Jung asked the guests to introduce themselves.

Charles Rolsky introduced himself and said:

- Pandemic Plastics as a Valuable Resources for Upcycling: Plastic Waste for Advanced Manufacturing
- Medical Plastic is usually disposed of through incineration
- Single-use plastics have helped reduce spread of COVID-19

- Increase understanding of COVID-19
- COVID-19 tests have produced a lot of waste
- Looking for a way to reuse some of the plastic materials
- Create a closed-loop recycling process within the system of these medical plastics
- Proceeds from sales go back to testing efforts

Questions:

- What can the city do to help?
 - Looking for other medical facilities and organizations
 - Help to look for funding and grants to help this project

Answer:

- With commission approval, letters of recommendation can be written to help support the applications
- Contacting Waste Management

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Jung introduced the minutes of the March 15, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Burke made a motion to approve the minutes with Commissioner Reinhardt's edits. Commissioner Jahnke seconded.

Motion: Commissioner Burke

Second: Commissioner Jahnke

Decision: Approved 8-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung (Chair)
John Kane
Barbie Burke
Sukki Jahnke
Gretchen Reinhardt
Katja Brundiers
Anna Melis
Steve Russell

Motion Passed 8-0.

Agenda Item 3 – Solid Waste Rate Study

Municipal Utilities Director Terry Piekarz provided an update of the solid waste rate study.

- Solid Waste Rate Study
 - Seeking feedback
- Strategic priorities and performances
- Provides the community with a safe and sustainable environment
- Rate study
 - Cost to provide solid waste services to the Tempe community
- Collecting, processing, residential, commercial front load, commercial roll-off
- Compost, alley maintenance, household products
- The city provides 1 per week collection
- 1000 tons of garbage collected
- Volume-based pricing offers the opportunity to downsize and decrease cost
- Green organics additional change
- Additional services

- Unconstrained garbage and green organic
- Zero waste day - donation day
- Self-haul to transfer station
- Commercial service
 - Garbage and recycling
 - Roll-off
 - Special events - garbage and recycling
 - Below cost recovery
 - Supporting zero waste or low waste events
 - Green organics
 - Returns compost to land
 - Removes green organic from landfills
 - Rates need to be identified to determine the possibility of continuing this service
 - Alley-way maintenance
 - Preventative and reactive maintenance
 - Manage illegal dumping of waste
 - The goal is to maintain alleyways throughout the city
 - Capital improvement program
 - Tempe.gov/UtilityRateStudy
- Revenue requirements
 - The total amount that must be collected to cover operating costs, financial politics, and level of service, capital cost
 - Cost allocation - evaluate data and review billing units
 - Rate design - evaluate objectives, structures, and customer impact
 - Seeking feedback from the council, community, etc.
 - Success of planning is in good communication and understanding the rate study purpose and goals
 - Transparency and input
 - Customer engagement
 - Public involvement in equity and inclusion
 - Community engagement
 - The public meeting, comment surveys, marketing campaign, social media to neighborhood organizations
 - Staff will provide a public input summary
 - Timeline - complete the process by Jan 2022
 - Input is important - comments and feedback
 - Public comment survey is open until May 8th
 - Two public meetings April 20th (tempe.gov/untilyratestudy)

Commissioner Questions:

- What happens in multi-family areas? Concerned about the equity in terms of reducing the cost.
 - Multi-unit complex - considered commercial customers
 - They are either serviced by us or a contractor
 - In terms of equity or cost, it is a lower cost per unit for multi-family units
- Smaller complexes? Are they treated as businesses?
 - We are compiling a list of complexes that do not have recycling services.
 - We want to determine how can the city help solve this issue?
- What criteria outside of monetary issues will be addressed?
 - Cost is evaluated in cost of service, financial viability
 - Some programs will not recover the full cost
 - Some programs are mission-based and council priorities

- In the context of the cost of business, the city's values are taken into account through the City Council
- The main goal is to offer cost goals
- Trying to create a whole picture of the system
- Terry Piekarz said the status of composting is:
 - The composting program over the past 18 months is a pilot program
 - We will present information to Council on cost recovery
 - We are looking at ending the pilot and having it as part of operations
- It would be interesting to see all paths of diversion and how much goes to landfill. What is the true cost to landfill?
- Commissioners said kudos to staff for keeping recycling operations during pandemic. We are grateful.

Agenda Item 4 – Green Infrastructure

Sustainability Director Braden Kay said highlight actions are:

- International Green Construction Code (IGCC)
- Resilient energy hub work
- Envision Hub
- Transportation demand management postponed to June
- Green Infrastructure - the City of Tucson has been leading the way
- Interview from City of Tucson:
 - Using stormwater
 - Having a stormwater fee that pays for greener infrastructure
 - Sustainable & Livable Community Council group discussed
 - Council commission will be getting green infrastructure update from Tucson
 - Staff meeting to debrief
 - Grant Urban forestry - Fire Station #7
 - Green infrastructure pilot project Burchett park Mill Avenue
 - The kickoff event for cool kids program
 - Youth council and Sustainable & Livable Communities group and neighbors, will be putting in green infrastructure project
 - Third demonstration
 - Working towards addition funding for green infrastructure pilots
 - Green infrastructure masterplan
 - Need an engineering firm for outreach
 - Advancing green infrastructure standards

Agenda Item 5 – Highlight Actions Overview

Chair Jung asked for Commissioners to work on tracking and coordinating individual Highlight Actions. The following commissioners will work on the following highlight actions:

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- Resilient Energy Hubs - Commissioners Reinhardt and Burke
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) – Commissioner Russell
- IGCC/Green building code – Commissioners Kane and Burke
- Business Community – Commissioner Jahnke
- Climate Justice Group – Commissioner Brundiers
- Youth – Commissioners Melis and Milam-Edwards
- Council representatives – Chair Jung and Commissioner Melis
- Vice Chair Mores- Keep schedules on track

- Livable and Sustainable Communities council group – Commissioner Burke

Agenda Item 6 – Arizona Thrives

Arizona Thrives is a nonprofit that works with businesses, nonprofits and universities, spearheaded by the Nature Conservancy:

- Statewide vision for clean energy and transposition
- Tucson, Flagstaff, Phoenix
- Opportunity for Tempe to join
- Presented to the sustainable and livable committee
- Interest in bringing to council for approval

Chair Jung made a motion to submit a letter of support for AZ Thrives.

Motion: Chair Jung

Second: Commissioner Burke

Decision: Approved 8-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

John Kane

Barbie Burke

Sukki Jahnke

Gretchen Reinhardt

Katja Brundiers

Anna Melis

Steve Russell

Motion Passed 8-0.

Agenda Item 7 – Housekeeping

Chair Jung discussed State of the Neighborhood awards. Based on earth day, there are policy areas we need to make progress on.

Chair Jung recommended grouping highlight actions in a memo to council. Chair Jung will draft a memo and it can be discussed at the next meeting.

The sustainability office was making different arguments regarding how much money would save how much carbon for budget purposes. The calculations for municipal carbon is more accessible than community estimates. Council will be holding the next budget meeting on April 22nd.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

Keep Tempe Beautiful

20- minute City

Commissioner Burke made a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Commissioner Burke

Second: Commissioner Russell

Decision: Approved 8-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

John Kane

Barbie Burke

Sukki Jahnke

Gretchen Reinhardt

Katja Brundiers

Anna Melis

Steve Russell

Motion Passed 8-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 pm.

Prepared by: Ausette Anderies

Reviewed by: Grace DelMonte Kelly