



## Minutes City of Tempe Sustainability Commission December 14, 2015

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission held on Monday, December 14, 2015, 4:00 p.m., at the Public Works Conference Room, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Garden Level, Tempe, Arizona.

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

John F. Kane (Chair)  
Kendon Jung (Vice Chair)  
Jessica Hauer  
Arnim Wiek  
Corey Hawkey

Alix Monty  
Aaron Redman  
Gretchen Reinhardt

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Carol Hu  
Mary Ann Miller  
Colin Tetreault

**City Staff Present:**

Don Bessler, Public Works Director  
Carla Sidi, Public Works Executive Assistant  
Tony Miano, Solid Waste Manager  
Lorinda Bush, Interim PW Deputy Director- Field Operations  
Bonnie Richardson, Principal Planner  
Shelly Seyler, PW Deputy Director - Transportation

**Guests Present:**

None

Chair John Kane called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearance**

None

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Chair Kane introduced the minutes of the November 16, 2015 meeting and asked for a motion. A motion was made to approve the minutes.

**Motion:** Commissioner Corey Hawkey

**Second:** Commissioner Kendon Jung

**Decision:** Approved

---

### Agenda Item 3 – Sustainability Features- Solid Waste

Tony Miano, Public Works Solid Waste Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation giving a general overview of the city's Solid Waste Program. The following statistics characterize Tempe's program:

- Tempe's Solid Waste service collects approximately 120,000 tons of trash annually.
- Tempe has not had a Solid Waste rate adjustment for seven years and the staff has been re-inventing the business to close the deficit spending gap and gain compliance with the 15% fund balance policy. The issue of diversions and re-routing are key strategies that address the financial health of the fund, stabilize customers' monthly utility bills, promote social equity and support environment stewardship - sustainability.
- The 2020 diversion goal and the direction the city is going to increase the diversion rate.
- The Solid Waste fleet is moving to compressed natural gas.
- The current diversion rate in 2015 for a Single-Family Residential is 17%.
- The City Council recently adopted diversion goals for 2020 as follow:
  - 40% Residential
  - 25%, Commercial and industrial,
  - 9% Multi-Family
- Currently we have a 30+% diversion rate within the bulk trash program; the goal is to increase that to over 50% within the next five years.
- Other strategic priorities are education, continuing growth, and formalize programs with the school districts.
  - Build an approved curriculum as credit in the classroom
  - In 2014, Solid Waste delivered 1500 recycling containers to every classroom and office within Tempe and placed 6 yard commercial bins at every school for weekly collection.
  - Expanding recycling in public areas

Commissioners asked a range of questions about the program, such as: food waste from local grocery stores, how Tempe compares to other valley cities, is there a shared branding like "blue bins means recycling" in all cities, what is the relationship with ASU, etc, which were addressed by Tony Miano. Several suggestions by Commissioners to consider as Commission projects going forward include a study of the waste stream to include an understanding of organic and inorganic composition.

Staff referred to a project with ASU on the characteristics of our waste stream for organics. Once the study is finalized, it will be sent to the Commission.

### Agenda Item 3 – Sustainability Features- Urban Forest

Don explained that the city hasn't formally adopted an urban forest tree program. In 2009, the existing program was eliminated due to the downsizing. The current effort to re-establish a program has been resurrected through a sustainability and scientific approach. This aligns with the overall Asset Management program the city has adopted, as well as the City Council's recognition of the city's seven billion dollar assets, which also need a formal and strategic approach, to ensure reliability of service and good stewardship. Our goal is to be strategic, thoughtful, visionary and generational in our approach to help educate the City Council on our living infrastructure needs.

Bonnie Richardson, Principal Planner, gave an overview of the urban forestry masterplan and action plan.

- In 2010, the ASU team from the Walton Sustainability Services benchmarked the tree canopy of the entire city of Tempe. Tempe had 13.4% (3412 acres) overall tree canopy coverage.
- The city hired a contractor to analyze the current extent of Tempe's tree canopy in relation to a number of factors including total public canopy coverage, coverage per character area, and coverage relative to irrigation service (Phase 2). The results of this study will help facilitate staff in developing strategies, and identifying barriers and solutions to meet tree and shade goals; assist with budget estimates to implement

strategies, accounting for shade, water use and more. The new study results are expected to be released by the end of December of 2015.

- The city's range of tree initiatives is spread among multiple city departments. While communication among workgroups and engagement have been essential to advance the different programs like tree planting, neighborhood grants, community garden, character area plans and others, the city lacks a foundational approach to managing and promulgating a healthy urban forest.
- Sustainability Principles – reducing the urban heat island. The impact of expanding shade to promote the walkable city. Increase park use, walking, biking, access to bus and rail, clean water, clean air and improved mobility.
- Improving outreach throughout the community by offering workshops, get people engaged, working with ASU students to develop a master urban forest program and create leadership, increase awareness & support of Tempe's urban forest.
- State regulation to plant on the right of way. Get the right tree on the right place.

Commissioners asked a range of questions about the program, planting and pruning education, partnership with retail outlets, funding, how to integrate this to the general plan, which were addressed by Bonnie Richardson.

#### **Agenda 4 – Commission Retreat**

Deferred to next meeting

#### **Agenda 5 – Housekeeping Items**

None

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Future Agenda Items**

Chair Kane talked about future presentations. There will be two presentations for the next meeting to talk about Air and Energy.

Commission asked to add Solid Waste Pilot Program and Voice for the Urban Forest to the retreat parking lot agenda.

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2016.

Commissioner Aaron Redman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Alix Monty seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Prepared by: Carla Sidi

Reviewed by: Don Bessler