



## Minutes City of Tempe Sustainability Commission October 23, 2019

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 4:30 p.m., at the Engineering & Transportation Conference Room, City Hall, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona.

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Kendon Jung (Chair)  
Ryan Mores (Vice Chair)  
Barbie Burke

Serita Sulzman  
John Kane  
Gretchen Reinhardt

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Stephanie Milam-Edwards  
Katja Brundiers  
Steven Russell  
Sukki Jahnke

**City Staff Present:**

Braden Kay, Sustainability Director  
Grace DelMonte Kelly, Energy Management Coordinator

**Guests Present:**

Daniel Boswell  
Linsey Boswell

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 4:49 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearance**

Chair Jung asked the guests to introduce themselves.

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

Chair Jung introduced the minutes of the September 16, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Kane made a motion to approve the minutes with recommended edits. Commissioner Reinhardt seconded.

**Motion:** Commissioner Kane

**Second:** Commissioner Reinhardt

**Decision:** Approved 6-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung (Chair)  
Ryan Mores (Vice Chair)  
Barbie Burke  
Serita Sulzman  
Gretchen Reinhardt  
John Kane

### **Agenda Item 3 – Salt and Verde Alliance**

Sustainability Director Braden Kay introduced Christian Stumpf, Director of External Affairs, and Rebecca Garrett, Associate Director of Development, at the Nature Conservancy.

Christian said their main goal is to protect land and water. The Nature Conservancy started as a land conservation organization and now their agenda has expanded to protecting oceans and helping cities. The Salt Verde Alliance is looking to fund and raise funds to restore the watershed in Arizona. The Salt and Verde Rivers supply most of the water in the valley. The Nature Conservancy has convened all 14 communities and developed a plan to secure funding to support the rivers, raise awareness and develop a common conservation vision. In 2016, they developed a case to the alliance; water supply is decreasing because of drought. They are talking about things they can do to improve water quantity and quality in the future.

They want to have a collaborative impact. They took on a contract to be stewards over 20,000 acres in Coconino and Kaibab forests. Their goal is to work with the forest service to thin the forest. They can't use the wood for homebuilding, so they need to find an industry to take the wood product for biomass. After a fire, there will be flooding that will fill up the reservoir. They are trying to mitigate those concerns.

Rebecca said she works on the private funding side. She has worked with corporations that have contributed funds to Salt/Verde Alliance to sustain flows for all of us. They are working to bring businesses and cities together. She worked on infrastructure projects on the Verde river and are working to protect their way of life.

In the last 3 years, 40,000 feet of water has been saved. Landowners use water for irrigation, many ditches have antiquated systems, and they leak, so the projects focus on preventing leaks are replacing an antiquated system.

Rebecca said Page Springs was the first in the voluntary water offset program, where a buyer agrees to not use water at a certain time.

They worked with a farmer to plant barley instead of the traditional crop. Barley is planted early and uses less water, so the problem initially was there was no market. Using Salt Verde Alliance funds, they were able to assist Sinagua Malt to grow barley. It is now self-sustaining.

Commissioners commented and asked:

- Do you work with wineries? Rebecca said yes.
- Is alfalfa needed? How does that balance water use? Farmers are glad they can plant something there is a market for. Braden said alfalfa is a global market and a lot of it ends up in Saudi Arabia. Arnim is researching how resources are distributed.

The Nature Conservancy requested a contribution. Rebecca said City of Phoenix, Glendale and Peoria are participating in the program. Tempe's contribution could have a significant impact. The request is for \$25K to \$50K per year to help with drought conditions and increased water use.

Commissioners commented and asked:

- How do you arrive at that amount for cities? Christian said their goal is to raise for next 10 years and they would like to show that these are worthwhile projects.
- Have you worked on the drought contingency plan that was approved this year? Christian said yes they were involved.
- What does the reporting metrics/accountability structure look like? Christina said we are flexible, we want to pick projects you want to work on.
- How is this helping Tempe businesses? From the point of water protection, the more participation we have, the more we can help sustain water flows for Tempe businesses.
- 8% of ASU's water use is at ASU research park.

Christian said they talked with the Water Utilities Department and Council members have ideas.

Braden said the commission can recommend City Council make a funding commitment. In the next meeting, we will draft a memo you can review.

Chair Jung thanked the presenters and asked commissioners to send additional questions to staff.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Upcoming Council Meeting for Climate Action Plan**

Chair Jung said that he met with three councilmembers and the Mayor. They mayor was interested in engaging residents, Council member Navarro would like to ensure that battery storage is installed safely for the pilot project, and Councilmember Keating discussed the difference between mandates versus incentives.

- There is wide support for climate action
- November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Implementation
- Collaboration
- Continue to expand engagement

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Plans for mobilizing around highlighted actions**

Chair Kendon Jung and the commission discussed plans for mobilizing include a 6-month roadmap with pilots and stakeholders.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Housekeeping Items**

One commissioner position is open.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Future Agenda Items**

Future agenda items include the following:

- Parks Preservation Plan
- Water Utilities staff will talk about:
  - Green Infrastructure
  - Salt and Verde Alliance
  - Water Utilities staff's ideas

- GLOCULL – fits within climate action plan
- Sustainability Awards
- Option for printing next round of Climate Action Plans on recycled paper
- Update on vacation commission position – invite applicants to next meeting
- December – outreach and communication

A motion was made to adjourn.

All approved 6 – 0

**Motion:** Commissioner Burke

**Second:** Commissioner Kane

**Decision:** Approved

Kendon Jung (Chair)

Ryan Mores (Vice Chair)

Barbie Burke

Serita Sulzman

Gretchen Reinhardt

John Kane

All present approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Prepared by: Grace DelMonte Kelly

Reviewed by: Braden Kay