



**Sustainability Commission
Online Meeting via Zoom**

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:30 PM

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Members Present: Chair Billy Vaughan; Vice Chair Paul Lemmon; Commissioners Litzy Hernandez, Bernadette Barba, Daniel Schuh, Alejandro Arreguin

Members Absent: Commissioners Kim Avila (excused), Rebecca Forstner (unexcused), Thomas Albrigo (unexcused)

Municipal Staff Present: Danae Presler, Sustainability Officer, Janet Dayer, Management Associate

3. Unscheduled Public Appearances

None.

4. Approval of September 22, 2021 Minutes (For Action)

Motion was made by Vice Chair Paul Lemmon, seconded by Commissioner Daniel Schuh, to approve the September 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of December 15, 2021 Work Session Minutes (For Action)

Motion was made by Vice Chair Lemmon, seconded by Commissioner Schuh, to approve the December 15, 2021 Work Session Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair (For Action)

Chair Billy Vaughan nominated Vice Chair Lemmon to serve as Chair. No other nominations for Chair were received.

Vice Chair Lemmon nominated Commissioner Schuh to serve as Vice Chair. No other nominations for Vice Chair were received.

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Chair Vaughan moved to appoint Vice Chair Lemmon as Chair and Commissioner Schuh as Vice Chair. Commissioner Hernandez seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Review and Approval of 2022 Annual Goals (For Action)

The Commission reviewed the goals that were drafted at the Work Session on December 15, 2021, which are listed below.

- Engage high school students in Community Sustainability Plan development
- Consider Ad Hoc Committee on Local Food Systems to explore opportunities for community garden or other local food project
- Review results from community sustainability survey and input from public outreach efforts
- Support Green Business Blitz by recommending Avondale businesses that would be good candidates for the program for staff to reach out to
- Volunteer at Tres Rios Cleanup on February 19th and table at Tres Rios Nature Festival on February 26-27
- Review Draft Community Sustainability Plan
- Volunteer at KidFest
- Review community feedback on Draft Community Sustainability Plan
- Vote on recommendation for City Council to approve final Community Sustainability Plan
- Launch “Plastic Free July” Campaign
- Receive presentation on South Avondale Plan and discuss ways for Commission to provide input and recommendations to City Council

In lieu of an Ad Hoc Committee on Local Food Systems, the Commission requested a tour of the vertical farming operation, OnePointOne, after it opens which could potentially be combined with other local farm and garden sites.

Motion was made by Commissioner Schuh, seconded by Commissioner Hernandez, to approve the 2022 Annual Goals as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Updates from Sustainability Officer

Staff presented an overview of the results from the community engagement efforts. Over several months, City staff and members of the Sustainability Commission gathered feedback from Avondale residents, businesses, and visitors through a series of 10 neighborhood meetings, public events, school visits, an online workshop, and

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online survey. Activities were conducted in English and Spanish to create a more inclusive process.

The community was very concerned about climate change, loss of natural habitat and wildlife, air pollution, hotter summer and heatwaves, affordability and reliability of electricity, drought and long-term water security, and the impact of these issues on vulnerable populations. The topic areas that were seen as most important to address were water, energy, and public health, including heat and air quality. There was broad support for a diversity of approaches to address these concerns and leverage opportunities to create a sustainable and resilient city. Strategies that had the most public support included: planting more trees to provide shade and clean the air; increasing the use of renewable energy for city buildings; identifying and implementing infrastructure projects to ensure water security and water quality; and adding more parks and recreation spaces and increasing recycling rates. Community members also stressed the need to preserve natural resources and protect the environment for current and future generations, urged prioritizing public health (asthma, allergies, etc.), and preparing the city for heatwaves, drought, floods and wildfires.

The Commission discussed the impact of agriculture and landscape irrigation on water supply and voiced support for sustainable farming practices and using reclaimed water for irrigation.

Commissioner Bernadette Barba encouraged the City to explore ways to incentivize builders to implement sustainable construction practices, such as using recycled products and building efficient, environmentally-friendly homes suited for the desert climate.

Vice Chair Lemmon inquired if the City facilities are built to LEED or other green building standards. Ms. Presler responded that the City does not currently have a policy in place to build City facilities to specific green standards, but that the City has been evaluating certifications such as LEED and Green Globes for each of its recent new buildings, however, the certification has not been seen as worth the cost to date. The City is hoping to pursue Energy Star Certification for the new Avondale Visitor and Conference Center, which is based on building's energy performance.

Chair Vaughan noted that Energy Star has rating system and that Salt River Projects awards points for higher rankings.

Commissioner Barba urged that the City adopt LEED certification that uphold higher standards.

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Commissioner Alejandro Arreguin voiced the importance of members of the public sharing their input and getting involved in City decision-making, such as attending City Council. Commissioner Arreguin asked the staff liaison to provide information on how the public can best reach out to City Council Members. Ms. Presler will provide the information in a follow-up email.

Vice Chair Lemmon agreed with importance of civic engagement, noting that he rarely sees member of the public at City Council Meetings.

Commissioner Barba suggested engaging with School Boards to promote food education in the curriculum and encouraging students to grow food on school campuses.

Commissioner Litzy Hernandez added that is important for kids to learn how to grow food sustainably, and that kids are crucial to the change we want to see in the future. Hydroponic systems can be setup and used in homes and take less space.

Commissioner Arreguin shared that Pendergast School District has multiple garden beds that appear underutilized.

Commissioner Schuh supported students participating in growing healthy food.

Commissioner Barba voiced interest in kicking off the effort.

The Commission will discuss local food systems at a future work session.

9. Adjournment

The next Sustainability Commission Regular Meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2022 at 6:30 PM.

Motion by Vice Chair Lemmon, seconded by Commissioner Arreguin, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

paul lemmon

Paul Lemmon, Chair

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Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th day of January 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison