



**Sustainability Commission
Online Meeting via Zoom**

Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:30 PM

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Members Present: Chair Paul Lemmon; Vice Chair Daniel Schuh; Commissioners Litzzy Hernandez, Thomas Albrigo, Billy Vaughan, Bernadette Barba, and Shaun Grimm

Members Absent: Commissioner Alejandro Arreguin

Municipal Staff Present: Danae Presler, Sustainability Officer; Nancy Wallace, Administrative Assistant

3. Introduction of New Members

Commissioner Shaun Grimm was introduced to the Commission. Commissioner Grimm is serving in the Alternate Member position.

4. Unscheduled Public Appearances

None.

5. Approval of March 23, 2022 Minutes (For Action)

Motion was made by Commissioner Vaughan, seconded by Commissioner Hernandez, to approve the March 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Discuss strategy for “Plastic Free July” campaign for 2022.

Chair Lemmon invited discussion on the “Plastic Free July” campaign. The goal of the campaign is to educate and raise awareness for the importance of reducing unnecessary plastic use.

Ms. Presler shared a video about the global campaign from the Plastic Free Foundation that stressed reducing plastic use and single-use plastic and limiting contamination in the landfill. Ms. Presler highlighted several examples of campaign

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events, including that New York did a PINGO night (a plastic-free Bingo), hosting an event to make homemade Eco-friendly cleaning products, converting plastic banners into reusable bags, an art contest that involves kids in the campaign, and a website promoting a clean-up event.

Ms. Presler spoke with Avondale's Solid Waste professionals prior to the meeting and shared that they support this campaign. They have observed excess waste that comes from single-use plastics and its contribution to recycling contamination. Any reduction helps with those issues.

Chair Lemmon suggested having something more visible to make citizens aware of plastic use. Commissioner Barba suggested residents can identify the top ten household plastic items in their daily lives and make a commitment to reduce or go without them.

Chair Lemmon questioned what percent of residents know what the recycling numbers on plastic items means. Commissioner Albrigo questioned if residents know which plastics are biodegradable.

The Commission discussed marketing efforts and ways of engaging businesses and residents in the July campaign. Suggestions included a newsletter, a proclamation by the Council, and outreach to the certified green businesses to get them involved.

Chair Lemmon asked if something can be worked into the 4th of July event, something competitive and fun, perhaps a 'Plastic Free 4th'.

Ms. Presler supported including green businesses in the campaign. Commissioner Barba suggested reaching out to green businesses to see what they are doing to reduce plastic for the month of July and do a group video to highlight their efforts. Commissioner Vaughan suggested giving out real bottles instead of plastic cups and giving out stickers that promote the campaign.

Chair Lemmon suggested purchasing posters and displaying them at City Hall. Ms. Presler suggested the library, too. Commissioner Vaughan suggested pledge cards, local events, etc. Commissioner Vaughan asked about branding and suggested using scorpions.

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Ms. Presler indicated she has a small budget for the campaign, which could be used to purchase reusable water bottles and other alternatives to single-use plastics.

Commissioner Albrigo said Pepsi and Coke are doing a commercial together for biodegradable bottles.

The Commission discussed other ideas, including promoting a plastic-free breakfast or lunch at some of the green restaurants, possibly bring your own cup or bowl and get a discount. The campaign should educate residents on the top single-use plastic items and promote the City's green businesses. Ms. Presler suggested focusing on the top six single-use plastic items to make the campaign consistent with the global campaign.

Commissioner Vaughan suggested on July 4th celebrating our independence from plastic, too. Chair Lemmon stressed that even after July, we need to continue to reduce plastic. Maybe next year, challenge other cities.

Ms. Presler said she will consolidate these ideas, come up with a plan and update the Commission via email. Ms. Presler is going to reach out to the green businesses. Several commissioners offered to assist with outreach.

7. Update from Sustainability Officer

Ms. Presler reminded the Commission that City Council will discuss the Draft Community Sustainability Plan at the Work Session of June 13, 2022 at 5:30pm on Zoom. The revised Draft Community Sustainability Plan will be emailed to the Commission.

Ms. Presler shared that the Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Update data shows a 28% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from municipal operations between 2012 and 2020.

Ms. Presler provided follow-up information on inquires the Commission posed at the previous Regular Meeting of March 23, 2022. Regarding a question about trash and recycling containers being put out only when needed, Solid Waste does not recommend waiting for trash pickup. Keeping garbage an extra week could cause smell and mold. Recycling is clean and could likely wait a week between servicing. Commissioner Lemmon asked what happens to the old trash cans and Ms. Presler shared that they get recycled.

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Regarding current water consumption levels, Ms. Presler shared that the average daily per capita water use in Avondale in 2021 was 140 gallons per day and that more than half of water use in the City is used outdoor for landscaping. The City's annual calendar will feature ideas for low water landscaping

Lastly, regarding waste diversion rates, in 2020, City of Avondale had 34,000 tons of waste sent to the landfill, with a 15% diversion rate; in 2018 the diversion rate was 18%. Our diversion rate may suffer due to a local vendor for organic waste ceasing operation, so all yard waste now goes to landfill. The City is wanting to see a reduction in the total tonnage of waste sent to the landfill. The goal is to have 90% reduction in total annual tonnage landfilled by 2050 and the goal for 2025 is to reduce it by 25%.

8. Adjournment

The next Sustainability Commission Regular Meeting is scheduled for July 27, 2022 at 6:30 PM.

Motion by Commissioner Vaughan, seconded by Commissioner Albrigo, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Paul Lemmon, Chair

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 25th day of May 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison