

Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission

October 24, 2018

6:30 p.m.

Mesquite Conference Room, Avondale City Hall

11465 W Civic Center Dr.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call.** 6:30 PM
- 2. Unscheduled Public Appearances.** None.
- 3. Approval of the September 26, 2018 Minutes.** Approved with additions.
- 4. Recycling and Green Waste Presentation.** Discussion only.
- 5. 2019 Commission Goals.** Deferred.
- 6. Green Team Update.** Discussion only.
- 7. Adjournment.** 8:02 PM.

The next meeting is November 28, 2018 at 6:30 PM in the Sonoran Conference Room at City Hall.

Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission

October 24, 2018

6:30 p.m.

Mesquite Conference Room, Avondale City Hall
11465 W Civic Center Dr.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Roll Call. And introductions.

Members Present: AJ Irakoze, Curtis Nielson, Dan Rauscher, Troy Timmons, Zachary Kovach, Tom Albrigo, Paul Lemmon.

Members Excused: Jo Schrepfer, Karl Darden.

Also Present: Tiffany Copp, Development and Engineering Services and three youth observers; two of whom are Youth Commissioners: Raymond Soto and Litzy Hernandez. The third did not sign in.

2. Unscheduled Public Appearances.

None.

3. Approval of the September 26, 2018 Minutes

Chairman Albrigo inquired if we had confirmed the booth at Tres Rios with Public Works and a standalone booth at Kid Fest. Staff said both had been confirmed and Chairman Albrigo requested that the dates of both the Tres Rios and Kid Fest events be noted in the minutes for clarity and Staff acknowledged the change would be made.

Member Rauscher moved to approve the minutes with the noted correction clarifying the event dates. Member Irakoze seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Recycling and Green Waste Presentation (Cindy Blackmore and Les Miller, Public Works)

Ms. Blackmore, Public Works Director, presented on the City's Green Waste and Recycling Programs with Les Miller.

The Green Waste program was piloted in 2014 along with bulk trash service. As part of the program, residents are asked to separate green waste materials and they are taken to Duncan Family Farms to be used as mulch for their farming operations. The pilot program collected over 300 tons of material in the first 6 months. 5500 tons/ 11 million pounds of materials have been collected to date. Through this partnership, the City saves about \$5/ton by recycling than dumping the green waste at the landfill.

Commissioner Lemmon asked how to avoid green waste in the trash. Ms. Blackmore responded that ongoing education is key and to encourage citizens to find a way to store yard waste for the monthly pickup. Chairman Albrigo inquired if this program included commercial green waste and it does not. Commissioner Nielson mentioned that Utah utilizes green trash cans to separate green waste materials.

In 2003, the City started a weekly residential curbside recycling process using blue bins. 75,000 tons of recycling have been collected to date, saving \$1.8M in landfill costs. The recycling program started as non-revenue generating but it was the right thing to do for the environment. The program became fiscally prudent when recyclables could be sold to the highest bidder, and then the revenue started to dry up as the companies buying the goods could no longer profit from the recyclable materials.

Until very recently, China was the largest buyer of the US' recyclables, but due to the trash (contaminated recyclables) they were inheriting with it, it became unprofitable for the country. As of March 2018, China

has banned any materials with a contamination rate of 0.5% or more, which is nearly impossible for the US to meet with our current co-mingled recycling habits. This is forcing recycling facilities to work on developing new technologies and habits to meet that rate.

The City is working on an education strategy to encourage residents to reduce contamination by placing only clean, dry materials in the blue bins and not waste including food and diapers. Wishful recycling (items not currently accepted by the City) needs to go to another type of recycler such as a metal recycling facility. People don't realize that not everything with the potential to be recycled can go in the blue bins; a retraining process needs to occur.

Ms. Blackmore stated that in 2016, the City of Avondale partnered with the City of Phoenix to establish an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to process our recyclables. The agreement is valid through 2019 with renewal options through 2021. Avondale is fortunate to have this IGA because, as a result of Phoenix not breaking even on the cost of recycling and sales, they are no longer accepting new IGA's for these services with other cities. Because of the financial burden on the City of Phoenix, however, an amendment to the original IGA will go before City Council in November to address modified compensation and the reject rate. "Reject rate" is a new term to address the changing market and the inability to recycle certain goods.

Chairman Albrigo inquired if Phoenix does the sorting and determines the contamination rate? Ms. Blackmore confirmed that the City of Phoenix processes, bails and finds a market for selling the City's recyclables. The rejected items go to the landfill.

Commissioner Rauscher inquired if there are any other identified recycling markets aside from China. Mr. Miller responded that the market is state-based right now because China is rejecting so much.

Because the City of Phoenix cannot support the cost of City of Avondale's recycling program the City will most likely pay for the services under the IGA. The lower the reject rate, the more "credit" the City receives toward payment which encourages the City to improve its recycling program and education. Ms. Blackmore provided several examples of the possible rate structure. Commissioner Lemmon inquired about the monthly cost. Mr. Miller stated that the cost varies but on average the cost is \$350-\$400/ton. Commissioner Rauscher asked if the City is required to show progress of the improvements to our recycling program. Ms. Blackmore stated no we are not required. Chairman Albrigo asked what the top two contamination items in the blue bins are. Ms. Blackmore stated that the two most common items are plastic bags and the bagging of recyclables.

Ms. Blackmore stated that the City will continue to do outreach and education. The City is reviewing an enforcement effort to remove the privilege of those who cannot comply after multiple notices of non-compliance. If removed from the recycling program it will be for 6 months, then the resident will be charged a \$20 setup fee and then an additional \$10/month for two trash cans in lieu of one recycling can.

Local business interested in recycling will need to find private haulers, but the City will continue to recycle at two ISM Raceway events/year.

Commissioner Kovach asked about school recycling programs. Ms. Blackmore stated that the City does have recycling containers at most schools and the City provides a lot of education. Schools are not currently paying into the recycling program, so it will be up to the City Council to determine if that will still be the case going forward.

Youth Visitor Raymond mentioned that his school (West View) has advisory classes in which they prepare videos to target different problems. The next video will be about cell phone usage on campus, but he can recommend a recycling video be produced at West View.

Commissioner Lemmon asked about outreach to HOAs. Ms. Blackmore asked for space in their newsletter or for dates of any special events where the City can provide information.

5. 2019 Commission Goals (For Action).

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Lemmon moved to have each commissioner vote to select their top three goals for next year for staff to tally and bring to the November meeting for discussion and final selection. Commissioner Nielson seconded. Final determination of those goals was deferred to the next meeting.

6. Green Team Update (Hether Krause & Tiffany Copp, Development & Engineering Services).

Ms. Krause updated the commission on the first meeting of the City's "Green Team" which is comprised of the City's department directors. She stated that the Team reviewed the target list of goals outlined in the Municipal Sustainability Program (MSP), talked through their division updates, and that those directors new to the City were introduced to the MSP and will receive individual meetings with Ms. Krause to determine how to report sustainable successes. The directors were provided a sample status report as prepared by Maricopa County, so they could become familiar with the future reports which staff hopes to publish on the web, telling of Avondale's sustainable successes. Those same trifolds were distributed to the Commission for review.

While no report has been published to the website for public consumption about the progress on the MSP goals, previous Environmental and Sustainability staff did comply with the reporting requirement by presenting an annual update to Council. Staff anticipates doing both each year, going forward.

Chairman Albrigo inquired if there are things departments are already doing or capturing that can be incorporated into the report going forward and Ms. Krause confirmed they are, we just haven't been successfully capturing that in a singular report. Staff's plan going forward is to have one comprehensive report that captures all those things. Commissioner Irakoze asked when the Green Team will convene again, and Ms. Krause stated she is scheduling meetings with individual departments presently, but the Team will reconvene in January 2019.

Chairman Albrigo asked Ms. Krause to explain the MSP for the youth observers, which she did.

Chairman Albrigo asked the youth to share what would do in the realm of sustainability if they could be king or queen for a day. The youth observers stated they would: 1.) start sustainability education early and make sure people understand the cost and consequences of not being sustainable 2.) bring awareness to climate change and do away with plastic grocery bags 3.) educate younger students but continue to reinforce and build upon that education in high school.

7. Adjournment.

Prior to adjournment, staff reminded the Commissioners that the EENRC is losing two members in 2019 for certain, and possibly a third alternate member. There is also still a youth commissioner vacancy. Commissioner Lemmon will move up from alternate to a regular commissioner. Staff encouraged Commissioners to help spread the word that we need new members to fill our seats in 2019. Applications may be submitted to the City Clerk's Office.

Commissioners discussed and confirmed the November meeting will be held to allow for a vote on the 2019 goals.

Commissioner Nielson moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Rauscher seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Hether Krause,
Environmental & Sustainability Program Manager

Individuals with special accessibility needs, including sight or hearing impaired, large print, or interpreter, should contact the City Clerk at 623-333-1200 or TDD 623-333-0010 at least two business days prior to the meeting.

Personas con necesidades especiales de accesibilidad, incluyendo personas con impedimentos de vista u oído, impresión grande o interprete, deben comunicarse con la Secretaria de la Ciudad at 623-333-1200 o TDD 623-333-0010 cuando menos dos días hábiles antes de la junta.