



Sustainability Commission Meeting

**Municipal Operations Service Center
399 E Lower Buckeye Road
Avondale, AZ 85323**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 6:30
P.M.**

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:31 P.M.

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Members Present: Chair Ben Ruoti, Vice Chair Diana Estrada and Commissioners Amanda Duncan-Billiman, Nunez (arrived 6:33 P.M.), Daniel Schuh, Daniel Smith-Castillo, and Alternate Commissioner Von Burns

Members Absent: Commissioners Paul Lemmon

Staff Present: Kimberly Anderson, Sustainability Officer / Staff Liaison

3. Unscheduled Public Appearances

No public present.

4. Approval of January 28, 2026, Meeting Minutes

** Commissioner Nunez joined the meeting at 6:33 P.M. **

COMMISSIONER SCHUH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2026, AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER NUNEZ SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 7-0 WITH CHAIR RUOTI, VICE CHAIR ESTRADA, AND COMMISSIONERS DUNCAN-BILLIMAN, NUNEZ, SCHUH, AND SMITH-CASTILLO, VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

5. Avondale's Green for Good Grant Program: Rubric Training

Ms. Anderson reported that the Green for Good grant application period will close on April 3, 2026, and noted strong participation, with six applications received to date. She provided an overview of the scoring rubric to be utilized during the application review process as noted below. The scoring rubric is like what is used during the City's procurement process. Each applicant will have their own scoring sheet which evaluators will enter scores and comments into the designated fields. Ms. Anderson emphasized the importance of providing

constructive comments because the public has the right to request to review the comments. Names of the evaluators will be eliminated if such request is received.

The application should include criteria for community need and impact, project goals, longevity and feasibility. Feasibility carries the highest point value. Where taxpayer funds are being utilized to fund this grant program, Commissioners must ensure the proposed project is realistic, well-planned, and achievable within the grant timeline. The project must include at least one sustainability pathway to remain eligible. It is beneficial for an applicant to provide a letter of intent with related partners to show their commitment to the project.

The full scoring framework was reviewed because each component is weighed differently and the applicant can receive a total of 51 points. The discussion included examples of low and high scoring conditions while emphasizing the importance of thoughtful and thorough evaluation of the applications. Quarterly check-ins will occur for with the awardees to assist with any unforeseen challenges during implementation.

Ms. Anderson proposed scheduling an in person ad hoc meeting to evaluate the applications, that will be held at the Municipal Operations Service Center (MOSC).

In response to Commissioner Smith-Castillo's inquiry, Ms. Anderson discussed the possibility of the Commissioners opting to offer additional support so an applicant can achieve the feasibility portion of their project, provided it is not egregious.

In response to Chair Routi's inquiry about how many awards will be presented, Ms. Anderson explained there is a maximum of \$15,000 available. Applicants could not request more than \$5,000, therefore if all applicants requested the maximum there would be a total of three awards presented. However, one of the application questions inquired whether their project could go forward with less funding than requested. Taking the responses into consideration there is a possibility additional smaller awards can be presented. This can be discussed further during the application review Ad Hoc meeting.

In response to Chair Routi's inquiry about the Ad Hoc meeting, Ms. Anderson led a discussion on when the Ad Hoc meeting should occur. The consensus was to meet on May 6, 2026, in person. Ms. Anderson will work on securing a meeting location. She further explained the process of presenting the grants to the awardees during the June 1, 2026, City Council meeting, noting Madison will be invited to this meeting as well.

6. Sustainability Updates

Ms. Anderson presented and discussed updates on current sustainability initiatives, highlighting several key projects as noted below.

- The Citizens Water Academy is becoming more interactive. Ms. Anderson presents at the first night and integrated planting trees outside of the Municipal Operations Service Center into her presentation. She noted Commissioners Duncan-Billman and Burns attended last night's class.

- A tree planting event will be held at the Mountain View Park this weekend from 7:45 – 9:00 a.m. as part of the Resilient Roots Grant. Ten volunteers have signed up to assist with planting 13 trees to expand tree canopy coverage.
- KidFest will be held on April 11, 2026, and the Sustainability booth will be interactive and kid friendly. Ms. Anderson is seeking one or two Commissioners to assist with the booth. Commissioner Duncan-Billman volunteered.
- The selection of a Tree Inventory company is down to two proposals and hope to have the final selection completed soon. As a reminder this project is part of the Sustainability Plan to expand the urban forest by 25 percent; however, a base level must be determined first. The company selected will also provide software that can be utilized by the City for future tracking purposes.
- Clipper Creeks EV charging stations at the Civic Center are being upgraded to Chart Point EV charging stations which allow tracking of usage.
- The largest project is the Green for Good Grant that will be closing application submittals on April 3, 2026.

In response to Chair Ruoti's inquiry, Ms. Anderson provided an update from Tres Rios, noting she is waiting for the final report, but approximately three sign-ups were received. Many residents signed up for the Water Use it Wisely newsletter for a chance to win the bucket system composters

In response to Chair Ruoti's inquiry related to selecting a tree counter, Ms. Anderson provided an overview of the process and the scope of the project, including developing an urban forest management plan and providing compatible software for the city to use.

7. Adjournment

A Sustainability Commission Ad Hoc Meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in person.

The next Sustainability Commission Regular meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioner Schuh announced he secured enough signatures to place his name on the ballot for a seat on City Council.

COMMISSIONER SCHUH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:18 P.M. VICE-CHAIR ESTRADA SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 7-0 WITH CHAIR RUOTI, VICE CHAIR ESTRADA, AND COMMISSIONERS DUNCAN-BILLIMAN, NUNEZ, SCHUH, AND SMITH-CASTILLO, VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

Ben Ruoti

Ben Ruoti (Jul 29, 2026 10:24:32 PDT)

Benjamin Ruoti, Chair

Kimberly Anderson

Kimberly Anderson

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 March 2026. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

Kimberly Anderson

Kimberly Anderson
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison

March 2026 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-07-29

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