



MINUTES

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

Thursday, October 24th, 2019
4:30 – 6:30 pm

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona

A quorum of the Flagstaff City Council may be in attendance of the Sustainability Commission meeting.



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact 928-213-2100. Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Brian Petersen, Chair	Breanna Guzman
David McCain, Vice Chair	Dara Marks Marino
Eli Chamberlain	Kevin White

STAFF LIAISON:

Nicole Antonopoulos

MINUTES:

Lisa Clark

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 4:35pm.

2. **Roll Call**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair Petersen	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Guzman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair McCain	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Marks Marino
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Chamberlain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner White

3. **Public Participation**

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. The Arizona Open Meeting Law prohibits the Commission from discussing or taking action on an item which is not listed on the prepared agenda. Commission members may, however, respond to criticism made by those addressing the Commission, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.

No public participation.

4. Approval of Minutes
A. October 3rd, 2019

Vice Chair McCain motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chamberlain. All voted in favor.

5. Business

A. Sustainability Organizational Discussion – Greg Clifton, Shannon Anderson, Andy Bertelsen (30 minutes)

Requested Action: Information and discussion

Greg Clifton, the new City Manager, discussed the two current proposals for the reorganization of the Sustainability Section with the Sustainability Commission. The reorganization of Sustainability would further advance City Council's goals outlined in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). There have been many internal conversations and meetings over the past few months, including a meeting with Chair Petersen. In addition to and independent of those internal conversations, a citizen petition was brought to City Council last week to elevate the Sustainability Section to a Division. As City Council had difficulty fitting these two items into a future agenda, they will be combined into one item to be discussed in a City Council work session on January 28th. In the meantime, Mr. Clifton will be meeting with those individuals who led the petition effort to share ideas and increase understanding between the two groups.

The citizen petition proposal is to create a new Sustainability Division. The City currently has about 10 divisions with distinct functions, including public works and water services. Those Divisions are comprised of one or several Sections, which also serve specific functions. While Sustainability is currently a Sections and functions that way, there is no Section Head, so the structure looks different than other City Sections. Elevating Sustainability to Division status would be a substantial change and would require in-depth analyses of organizational and budget changes and would involve an ordinance from City Council.

The internal proposal is a simpler option to relocate the Sustainability Program from Public Works to the City Manager's office with the idea that it would eventually become a Section of that office. This move would place Sustainability physically closer to the City Manager's office, and Sustainability staff would be present at weekly leadership meetings with Division heads and Program Managers. This change would provide a more consistent sustainability lens for much of the work at the City and further integrate sustainability. The budget impact would not necessarily be immediate, and the move could be considered a first step for Sustainability becoming a Division. This option would not require a vote from City Council and changes could begin internally immediately after direction is given from City Council.

The Commissioners discussed these two options with Mr. Clifton. Ms. Anderson explained that the internal proposal will be fleshed out further with help from Legal before it is presented to City Council. Commissioner Chamberlain asked if the Sustainability Section would be guaranteed more money and resources if it was

elevated to a Division, but that allocation of resources would be up to City Council and may or may not be more than previously budgeted. Chair Petersen asked what else would change for Sustainability if it is moved to the City Manager's office. Besides their presence at the weekly leadership meetings, Sustainability staff would be involved in private readings and would be able to meet regularly with the City Manager. While it would be a symbolic change in some respects, the relocation would also lead to an integration of sustainability into decision-making.

Mr. Clifton asked the Commissioners to be present at the January meeting to provide their comments to City Council.

B. FY19 Neighborhood Sustainability Grants Presentations – Lisa Clark (45 minutes)

Requested Action: Information

Neighborhood Sustainability Grant recipients from FY19 presented on their projects to the Commission.

Maria Campbell with Azulita Project presented on their “Straw Free Flagstaff” campaign (formerly known as “Flagstaff Doesn’t Suck”). The campaign was focused on reducing single-use plastics and stopping the use of straws in Flagstaff by reaching businesses first, due to the threats oceans and ocean life face from plastics. This was the first campaign of its kind in the high desert and in Arizona. They worked with 14 businesses around town to encourage long-term thinking and start changing behavior, and that number is still increasing. Azulita Project developed graphics that were posted on social media and provided to those businesses for free. They also provided training for business managers and put together a questionnaire for their partnering businesses to gather information on how to further the campaign. Mountain Sports played a key role in educating the community and providing additional funding. Moving forward, they will be partnering with the Flagstaff Convention & Visitors Bureau to reach tourists directly, developing curriculum, and curating festivals to change Flagstaff's relationship with plastics. Azulita Project just got a \$15,000 grant to move the campaign forward, and they have hired someone to lead it. Chair Petersen asked what the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant funds were used for. Ms. Campbell explained that the grant funded printing and materials and provided the foundation for this campaign.

Carol “Fritz” Fritzinger, volunteer and manager of the Colton Community Garden, presented on the ADA Accessible Pathway and Garden Expansion project for the Museum of Northern Arizona. The Colton Community Garden has a focus on education, and the grant helped to create a demonstration garden with repurposed materials and make a wheelchair path to the garden. They also provided six public programs in the new demonstration area in coordination with Museum of Northern Arizona cultural events, including a Zuni gardener demonstrating how to build a Zuni waffle garden, a gourd art festival with a Hopi artist, and a Navajo dye workshop. The Colton Community Garden also began a 3-year internship program with students from the Kinlani Dormitories. They are hoping that the wheelchair path will bring in more of the local residents from the Peaks Senior Living Community and increase the diversity of visitors. The project was completed this week for the most part. Chair Petersen asked about the next steps for the garden. There will be a greater focus on water sustainability, they will create a ramada

structure with an outdoor kitchen for workshops, and focus more on scheduling programs with the Museum to keep improving visibility with the community.

Tyler Linner presented on his graduate research project on “Precious Plastics”. He requested money for a Precious Plastics extruder. He faced many challenges including unexpected low-volume outputs from the extruder. While that was enough to make sheets for his thesis, he pursued more funding by applying for the Innovate Waste Challenge and ultimately won the \$8000 prize. That money will be used to buy larger shredders and other equipment to recycle the plastic on a larger scale to be more cost-effective. This would be the first business in Arizona to recycle plastics in-house with the output of quality projects to sell. They have also been working at big Flagstaff events since July to reduce waste by diverting at least 50% of the waste from the landfill. This summer, the total diversion rate was 68.33% as compared to the City’s average diversion rate of 30%, including 127 lbs. of plastics that will be recycled in-house. The first extruder was the first step and instigator for the business as it is now. Moving forward, they will continue to pursue manufacturing with recycled plastic materials, put together a proposal for a Rural Community Assistance Corporation loan to improve green events, pilot a program to give restaurant food waste to pigs. Chair Petersen asked what is done with the diverted materials. Aluminum cans and PET bottles are sold, what can be recycled with the City is recycled, food waste goes to pigs, edible food was redistributed to people, and the liquids were used where appropriate.

John Tyler presented the City Hall landscape pilot project with TerraBIRDS. The project was focused on 2,000 square feet on the south side of City Hall and was intended to represent the values of Flagstaff while showing homeowners how to use less water and add habitat value to their landscaping. Students from Ponderosa High School were hired through their June Jobs program to do the landscaping work, some of which stayed on through early August. In an effort to use all materials on the site, compost piles were used, and whatever was not used on the site was moved to Ponderosa High School when the project was completed. They created small terraces with pine logs to slow the water and planted native plants including blue grama grass plugs and milkweed and banana yucca supplied by the Arboretum at Flagstaff and Warners Nursery and Landscaping. Last week, Mr. Taylor met with City Maintenance staff to discuss care moving forward, and that specific water zone of the City Hall lawn will remain off next year unless it gets especially dry in the summer. He will also be proposing the next section of the lawn conversion to City Council for next year, likely the next contour line out from the current section. This next step in the conversion process will hopefully also include rainwater catchment on the east side of City Hall. Commissioner Chamberlain inquired about the amount of water that will be saved by the section that has been completed; it has the potential to save 120,000 gallons of water for the City.

Ms. Clark presented in the stead of Brook Kahl for the Killip Elementary School Garden. The grant money was used to get Ms. Kahl to the Green Schools Conference in Minnesota and to purchase a flow monitor and local native plants for the garden. She attended a variety of sessions at the conference and gave a presentation on the school garden (“Strengthening Community-Based Partnerships in School Gardens”) where partnerships with FoodCorps, Northern Arizona University Sustainable Communities, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, City of Flagstaff, and local businesses were highlighted. Many lessons were learned there including using water conservation as a design tool and a district attitude as

well as having plant-based cafeteria meals. At Killip Elementary School, the water flow monitors were installed to track water usage starting in mid-May, and permaculture principles will be followed including having a native plant rain garden. Moving forward, the school garden will look into irrigation and water catchment to increase water conservation, incorporate more native plant education, and continue community collaborations around water conservation. Chair Petersen added that they are also planning on growing food in the garden and in classrooms for students to take on Fridays for the weekend.

Chair Petersen expressed appreciation to the grant recipients for presenting, to the staff for coordinating, and to the City Council for allocating the funds. This grant process was refined significantly in the past year, but has been valuable in communicating the impact and value of grassroots efforts. There will be time scheduled at a future meeting to check in with Commissioners on the impact of these report-outs, and further updates on these projects will be embedded in the annual update and report to City Council. The Commissioners will also be receiving the complete written final reports from each of the FY19 recipients when they have all been submitted.

C. RentLab Update – Nicole Antonopoulos (15 minutes)

Requested Action: Information

Ms. Antonopoulos updated the Commission on work that the City of Flagstaff has been involved in to create RentLab (rentlab.org), which is a platform for renters to make smarter living choices. The process started 8 years ago, and was initially funded by a grant from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network. The project was spearheaded in Bloomington, Indiana, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. RentLab is now a distinct entity and has been officially launched in Columbia, Missouri; Flagstaff, with a 51% rental community, will be the second city to utilize it. RentLab in Flagstaff will be launched in six to nine months, so the framework is still being discussed.

Ms. Antonopoulos demonstrated the RentLab platform on the Columbia homepage. Each rental unit is given a “smart living score”, which takes into account all of the characteristics that are considered to be important such as walking and biking accessibility, electricity cost, affordability, and renewable energy. Renters could also include the age of appliances, as a way to incentivize landlords to increase the efficiency of rentals. Vice Chair McCain suggested including rent as well. Other data could be included that would help the Commission directly. Jacqui Bauer (President of RentLab) has been directly involved in meetings to determine the smart living criteria for Flagstaff. The Coconino County Assessors Office will be providing a list of rentals in Flagstaff, but one particular challenge is to collect the electric utility data; the only way to do it is to ask for renters to share their electricity bills on the website.

Chair Petersen expressed concern for how this program might affect the availability and price of rentals in a rental market that is already tight. There have been discussions about whether this effort will lead to gentrification, and they are making an effort to be cognizant of this potentially happening.

Chair Petersen also asked about the partnership with RentLab. Ms. Antonopoulos explained that RentLab has been hired to launch their program in Flagstaff. An intern with the City has been working with them, and Sustainability staff will

promote and guide their work. Arizona Public Service could also be a partner in this effort to help distribute information to landlords. Chair Petersen also inquired about how this effort relates to the objectives of the CAAP. Beyond improving efficiency, the goal is to support equity by keeping people informed and providing transparency. RentLab will also make it possible to identify target areas for CAAP-related work at the neighborhood level.

Commissioner White expressed concern that renters may not be willing to input data if it takes too much time or if they do not have incentives, suggested having some sort of quality control of that incoming data, and requested that procedural limits for the City be put on the data. He also mentioned that he was skeptical of market pressure influencing landlords to act as the market is so tight.

The program will have a soft launch when it is ready. Commissioner Chamberlain asked whether there was any feedback yet from the program in Columbia. Since it was just launched, there is no feedback, but Ms. Antonopoulos will reach out to Ms. Bauer for future information.

D. Sustainability Section Update – Nicole Antonopoulos (5 minutes)

Requested Action: Information

Ms. Antonopoulos gave an update on the Sustainability Section. The first cohort of fourteen Climate Leaders just graduated, including Commissioner Chamberlain. The Master Recyclers program is similar, with an 8-week course, and it will eventually be combined with the Climate Leader and potentially the Open Spaces Community Stewards programs to integrate those conversations and make a new “Sustainability Leaders” program. As curriculum changes will take a while, the Master Recyclers program will likely still continue in February.

Last Saturday was Make a Difference Day. 75 people came and contributed over 200 combined volunteer hours picking up trash and installing educational storm drain signs in Southside. In Open Spaces, the partnership with Killip Elementary School is continuing with the Indigenous Youth STEM Academy (IYSA). Since the beginning of the program, over 75 students have been introduced to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs, and there is now permanent funding for the program with \$2,000 each year.

Coming up is a work session with City Council on October 29th on Private Hauler Regulations and the first read of the Animal Keeping code. On November 26th, the one-year update on the CAAP will be given to City Council. The preliminary framework for the CAAP reporting dashboard is in place, but the new data coordinator position is not open yet and the timeline is unknown. Ms. Niemann will give an update on the working groups.

The first home energy efficiency workshop was hosted last night, and the next one will be on November 13th. Other upcoming events include the Drop-Off Day, Dump-the-Drugs, and Shred-a-Thon on October 26th at Flagstaff Police Department and a Stream Team litter cleanup on November 2nd at Willow Bend. Sustainability is also hosting an Open House at the new office on November 1st from 3-5:30pm with events including pumpkin composting, extra candy donation collection for the troops, and a tour of Francis Short Pond. Ms. Antonopoulos requested that the Commissioners distribute flyers that were emailed out.

6. To and From (5 Minutes) – All

Commissioner White briefly introduced a draft water conservation plan that will be presented to City Council on December 3. While the next meeting will come after that City Council meeting, Tamara Lawless (Water Conservation Program Manager) is scheduled to come to the next Sustainability Commission meeting and can give an update.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 5 from 4:30-6:30 pm.

7. Adjournment

Chair Petersen adjourned the meeting at 6:23pm.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on _____, at _____ a.m./p.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Disability Awareness Commission with the City Clerk.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2019.
