

MINUTES

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

THURSDAY

September 24, 2020

ONLINE MEETING
MICROSOFT TEAMS

4:30 – 6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Chair McCain called the meeting of the Sustainability Commission held September 24th, 2020, to order at 4:32pm.

2. Roll Call

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair McCain	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Haferkamp
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Kauffman
<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Chamberlain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Konkel
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Coffey	

Others present: Councilmember Austin Aslan, Dylan Lenzen (Staff Liaison), Lisa Clark (Minutes)

3. Public Comment

Public Participation enables the public to address the Commission on any subject within their jurisdiction that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. Due to Open Meeting Laws, the Commission cannot discuss or act on items presented during this portion of the 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 comment

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Kauffman, seconded by Commissioner Coffey to approve the August 27th, 2020, minutes.

Discussion: None

Vote: 4 – 0 Unanimously passed

Minutes

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

5. Business

A. FY19-20 Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Final Presentations (30 minutes)

Lisa Clark, Community Stewards Assistant, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Informational

"Mountain School Community Garden", Crystal Routhe – Mountain Charter School

Mountain Charter School received a grant to build a garden with the goal of creating a space where the surrounding community and the school could work together to build resiliency by sharing knowledge and growing food. This is the first community garden in the Ponderosa Trails Neighborhood, and the garden was created in partnership with Refugia Gardens. While students were unable to help with building the garden due to COVID-19, there are seven community members who regularly work with the garden. Three of those individuals helped to build raised beds and maintain the garden, while the other four have been planning for community workshops that have been postponed until next year. The initial start to the project was slowed down because the original site selected for the garden on Mountain School's property did not have access to a water source, so it needed to be moved and re-worked.

Commissioner Konkel asked what the plan will be for engagement and workshops next year if the pandemic is still happening. Ms. Routhe explained that this year there was not enough time or capacity to shift programming online, but the volunteers who have been helping prepare for next year have put together backup plans to ensure that the workshops can still be delivered.

Chair McCain asked for more information about why there was no engagement with the students. The school struggled to move to an online platform when it had to close for in-person classes, which made it difficult to add an extra component to their curriculum. However, moving forward, Ms. Routhe has sent curriculum to teachers that can be incorporated next year. As it has been so challenging to get students engaged, the focus will be shifted to primarily online education related to the garden if they are unable to physically interact with the garden for a while.

"Information and Action to Slow Climate Change – Faith Communities and High Schools", Mark Alexander – Northern Arizona Climate Change Alliance (NAZCCA)
NAZCCA's goal is to create a grassroots movement by educating the public and raise awareness about climate threats and possible solutions. They held over 60 presentations in northern Arizona before March in a variety of places in partnership with many different groups including local churches, NAU, and Citizen's Climate Lobby with a strong focus on science rather than politics. There are over a dozen

Minutes
City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

NAZCCA volunteers in the Flagstaff area that helped provide this programming. After COVID-19, the presentations shifted to a more remote format including continuing a radio program, hosting shoe strikes in front of City Hall once a month, producing newsletters, and hosting about 70 virtual meetings with a total of about 800 participants.

"Murdoch Community Center Faucets & Toilet Upgrades", Deborah Harris – Southside Community Association

The fixtures in the bathrooms of the Murdoch Center have been replaced. The original person secured to do the work was unable to do it, but another individual (Warren Brown) offered to do the work in addition to donating his time and the materials to renovate the bathrooms. There is no data for comparison to determine the water savings, but it is clear that the new fixtures are saving water.

Chair McCain asked how Mr. Brown was found. Ms. Harris explained that they had a connection through Mr. Brown's fraternity and Ms. Harris's sorority, both of which are part of the "Divine 9" historically founded black fraternities and sororities. Mr. Brown happened to already be helping Southside Community Association with a different project and offered to take on the work. Chair McCain expressed excitement that they were able to do more than originally planned in the grant proposal as that does not typically happen.

Councilmember Aslan mentioned the Lived Black Experience seminar series hosted by Ms. Harris and Southside Community Association, and asked Ms. Harris to talk about the series for a moment. The seminars are a series of about 6 virtual town halls that will be followed by small focus groups to gather information about the Lived Black Experience in Flagstaff and ultimately provide a report with findings to the City of Flagstaff. Registration for these events can be found by searching for the Murdoch Center and registering through Event Brite.

B. Priority Based Budgeting Update (15 minutes)

Sarah Langley, Management Analyst, City of Flagstaff
Requested Action: Information & Discussion

Ms. Langley gave an overview of the new priority based budgeting (PBB) model that the City has adopted as of last year. PBB creates data to help the City and City Council make more informed decisions when putting together the budget. The steps are as follows:

1. Inventory programs at the City.
2. Assess cost of each program.

Minutes

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

3. Assign a score to each program based on alignment with key community priorities. These include having a livable community, environmental stewardship, etc. Each priority is weighted equally.
4. Present the results to visualize relative costs of programs and alignment with priorities.
5. Analyze the results by asking questions such as whether City fees cover the costs of services or if there is an opportunity for partnership.

This year, the goal is to engage the public in the process. A series of public education videos will be published in the next week to help build understanding followed by a community input survey on the priorities and how well specific programs support them. After the survey is complete, a small group will be involved in peer review of the results. This process should be completed in December. All the data is intended to be completed by early January so that it can be used for the upcoming budgeting process.

Vice Chair White asked for more information on the revenue models being used in the analysis. Ms. Langley explained that the calculations only consider primary revenue and savings in the past fiscal year, but staff will be able to add additional data in a new comments process. Vice Chair White also asked what kind of criteria are being used to determine priority alignment. There is a 5-point scale for evaluation, where a 5 indicates that the program is essential to the achievement of the priority.

Chair McCain asked for clarification on the difference between the analysis and the draft budget. This is still being determined as it will be up to Council how they want to use the data. However, it does allow Council to ask critical questions and be able to answer them. Chair McCain asked if there are other cities using this model. Ms. Langley assured him that there are many cities using this model across the country, including Riverside, California.

The survey will be released on Monday, September 28, and Ms. Langley will be sharing the link with all staff liaisons to send to Commissions.

C. FY20-21 Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Available Funds (5 minutes)

Lisa Clark, Community Stewards Assistant, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Discussion & Vote

Additional funding of \$8,000 has become available for the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant program. At a request for clarification from Commissioner Kauffman, these funds had been added to the base budget for the program in the budget for this fiscal year but have not become available until now due to additional approval processes related to the recession. The Commission reviewed the ranked list of grant applicants created at the July Commission meeting. As any excess funds

Minutes

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

cannot be rolled over to the next fiscal year, the Commission decided to use a natural break in scores to delineate which projects will get funded and ensure that enough funds will remain to make reopening the grant for applications worthwhile (\$3,370.78).

Commissioner Konkel motioned and Commissioner Kauffman seconded to award NAZCCA an additional \$498.22 and fully fund Townsite Urban Farm (\$2,000), The Meteor (\$1,631), and Congregation Lev Shalom (\$500) leaving a remainder of \$3,370.78 for new applications later in this fiscal year from the Sustainability fund.

Discussion: Chair McCain reiterated his support for ensuring there are more funds for the reopening of the grants.

Vote: 4-0 Unanimously passed (53 min)

D. Working Group Updates (10 minutes)

Dave McCain, Chair

Requested Action: Discussion

- Develop scope and purpose
- Update on meeting timeline

Chair McCain requested a discussion to get clarity on the scope of the two new working groups that were formed in August.

The grant revision working group, chaired by Commissioner Konkel and with participation from Commissioner Haferkamp and Chair McCain, will focus on processing the suggestions discussed at the last meeting and bring recommendations to the Commission at the next meeting.

The community adaptation working group, chaired by Commissioner Coffey and with participation from Commissioner Haferkamp and Vice Chair White, has less direction and more options of potential work. After discussion, the Commission decided that the first meeting of this working group will be focused on identifying areas that the working group can complement rather than overlap with the CAAP revision process. This working group will be ongoing and continue to assist as needed. Mr. Lenzen will help organize the first meeting and invite the Climate Team from the Sustainability Section.

E. Materials Recovery Facility Update (30 minutes)

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, and Todd Hanson, Solid Waste Section Director, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Information & Discussion

Minutes

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

Mr. Lenzen and Mr. Hanson gave an update on the current status of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and the potential options moving forward. The MRF has been operated and maintained by Norton Environmental since the late 1990s, but the contract will be expiring soon. The technology at the facility has not been updated in 22 years, and the City has never met the minimum tonnage guarantee of 80 tons per day that was written into the agreement. All of Flagstaff's recyclables are processed at the MRF, and in order to reach the City's goal of diverting 90% of waste from the landfill by 2050, there needs to be better equipment to ensure quality sorting.

The following are the options currently being considered for when the contract expires in 2023:

1. Develop a regional hub-and-spoke model, which would turn Flagstaff into a centralized processing hub with materials brought in from surrounding communities. While this would limit capital demands and investment and help to focus on efficiencies, many surrounding communities are already tied to a contract and there is not enough incoming volume expected.
2. Convert into a transfer operation to a Phoenix area MRF. This would provide multiple options for another MRF to working with and would allow Flagstaff to expand beyond the current recyclable materials. However, we would have limited control over acceptable materials and there would not be a way to continue the educational opportunity of facility tours.
3. Operate MRF internally after upgrading all existing equipment and building as the City owns the building. This would allow the City to control what materials are accepted and make decisions, but it would be expensive.
4. Sign a new contract for MRF operation with a different private MRF operator. This option means that there would be a separate entity responsible for operation, and the structure would look similar to the current situation. However, most companies are requesting long term contracts which can become expensive, and there would likely be no revenue share in marketed material.
5. Suspending all recycling collection and processing. This would mean the City would not be able to meet Rethink Waste and CAAP goals.

Solid Waste staff recommend pursuing option 2, with option 4 as a possibility. Mr. Lenzen and Mr. Hanson will be seeking direction on these options from Council.

Commissioner Konkel asked about the potential carbon footprint of driving materials down to Phoenix every day. Mr. Hanson explained that these trucks would likely be making the trip to Phoenix daily anyway, so it does not end up being any additional driving.

Minutes

City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

Commissioner Kauffman asked what will happen to Norton's equipment if it is not upgraded. Mr. Hanson replied that it is not yet clear what they intend to do with the equipment, but because it is so outdated most of it is only valuable as scrap metal.

The Commission expressed general agreement with the Solid Waste recommendation to pursue option 2. Staff will refine the planning-level costs based on the preferred approach outlined by Council and will continue to provide future updates throughout the process. The first presentation to Council will be at the end of October.

F. City Reopening Update (10 minutes)

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Information

Mr. Lenzen gave a brief update on the City's re-opening plan. In addition to following CDC guidelines, the City has the following phased approach to re-entry:

- Phase 1: All facilities and outdoor amenities are closed with only essential services staying open. Staff work remotely and gatherings are limited to 10 people on City property.
- Phase 2: Start opening most outdoor amenities except for park ramadas and the Visitor Center opens.
- Phase 3 (current): Facilities like City Hall and the Downtown Library start to open to the public with limited hours and access and masks are required. Currently, we will be reopening facilities soon though Sustainability staff are still working remotely.
- Phase 4: End of the pandemic and resume normal operations.

More details and resources can be found at www.flagstaff.az.gov/COVID-19. Specific resources include the Re-entry Plan, Council meetings, and Recovery Roundtable videos.

G. Sustainability Section Update (5 minutes)

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Information

Mr. Lenzen gave a comprehensive overview of what the Sustainability Section has been working on. Staff are still mostly remote, and the office is currently closed to the public, but all operations have continued. Staff are developing a plan to start re-populating the office and plan for public visits to the office.

Some in-person events (with precautions) are resuming, including the following:

- Fix-it Clinic by appointment on October 10 at CoCo Co-op Makerspace
- 15 Minute Makeover on October 15
- Drop-off Day at the Flagstaff Police Department on October 24

Minutes
City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

- Make a Difference Day at McMillan Mesa on October 31

There will be a presentation to Council on October 27 on the MRF contract options and CAAP revisions.

Mr. Lenzen also gave an update on Sustainability programs. Open Space is planning Make a Difference Day and was awarded a grant to remove invasive trees on McMillan Mesa. Community garden season is coming to a close, but the Food program is developing a new plan for composting operations to be piloted at the Izabel Community Garden. The Climate team is continuing public engagement on the Climate Emergency revision. There is currently a survey open, and they are hoping to get over 1,000 responses so need the help spreading the word. A new Sustainable Automotive Rebate Program is also being introduced for electric, hybrid, and fuel-efficient vehicles. Waste is rescheduling the Innovate Waste Challenges for late November or early December and working on improving recycling signage downtown and conducting recycling inspections. Community Stewards launched 30 Days Albert's Way using the Litterati app, and participants have collected over 9,000 pieces of trash so far.

H. November/December Commission Meeting (5 minutes)

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Discussion

The Commission typically combines the November and December meetings into one meeting due to the holidays and discussed options.

Commissioner Coffey motioned and Vice Chair White seconded to combine the November and December meetings into one meeting on December 3.

Discussion: none

Vote: 4-0 unanimously passed

6. To and From (5 Minutes) – All

Commissioner Coffey reminded everyone about the upcoming Shoe Strike on Friday, September 25th, from 8 am-3 pm outside of City Hall.

Chair McCain reiterated the Lived Black Experience seminar series mentioned previously by Councilmember Aslan and encouraged the Commission to attend future sessions.

Minutes
City of Flagstaff Sustainability Commission

7. Future Agenda Item Requests

- None

8. Adjournment

The meeting of the Sustainability Commission on September 24th, 2020, adjourned at 6:30pm.

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. This notice has been posted on the City's website and can be downloaded at www.flagstaff.az.gov.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2020.

Jenny Niemann, Sustainability Commission Staff Liaison