

# MINUTES

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY**

**May 27, 2021**

**ONLINE MEETING  
MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**4:30 – 6:30 PM**

## **1. Call to Order**

Chair McCain called the meeting of the Sustainability Commission held May 27th, 2021, to order at 4:30 pm.

## **2. Roll Call**

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

Others present: Marissa Molloy (Minutes, Staff Liaison), Dylan Lenzen (Staff Liaison), Jenny Niemann (Presenter), Deborah Harris (Presenter), Khara House (Presenter), Councilmember Austin Aslan

## **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**

Chair McCain suggested several edits related to spelling.

**Moved by Chair McCain, seconded by Commissioner Kauffman to approve the April 22nd, 2021 minutes with suggested revisions.**

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

## Minutes

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#### 5. **Business**

##### **A. Lived Black Strategic Plan**

Deborah Harris and Khara House

Requested Action: Informational

Ms. Harris and Ms. House started their presentation with introductions and a land acknowledgement. They presented on Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience program and strategic plan. A group of Black community members got together to increase education and awareness. They assembled a group of community partners that are Black historically founded, including four churches, a sorority and a fraternity, the Ethnic Studies Department at NAU, the NAACP, and the Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council. They did focus groups, town halls over zoom, small group sessions with churches, email, and other educational outreach to have a wide understanding of opinions. Their goals were to make visible the invisible, have increased cultural representation and celebration, and subject area specific change involving the Black community. In developing strategies, they utilized notes they took in the meetings and broke those down into focus areas for the strategic plan and made goals from feedback they received. These goals were broken down into policy statements. The four goals of the plan are focused on Community Development, Community Engagement, Community Infrastructure, and Community Outreach. They created biweekly education seminars which have since expanded into an ongoing series. One of the strategies of this plan is to continue the series. There is much more work that can be done to advance, including the possibility of a RARE assessment and ongoing opportunities to engage the Black community of Flagstaff. They ask that people continue to consider the ongoing impact of the Black community of Flagstaff to city development and economic growth. Ms. House emphasized that this is a living work, in progress and for progress, not only to advance the Black community but to help Flagstaff become a more holistic community that serves all its members.

Commissioner Kauffman asked how the Commission can help support and further efforts. Ms. Harris said that the Commission can look at their mission to see if the strategic plan can fit into it and if they are doing all they can to engage the Black community. Additionally, they are looking for grants to help continue and complete lasting work. Ms. House added that they are working to remind as many people as they can that the Black community wants to be involved and invested, that they have been contributing to growth, and they want to continue to be present in these conversations.

Vice Chair White asked if they would be willing to share some examples of relic laws, holdovers from previous eras that still have racist effects, or more recent laws that the Commission can try to work against. Ms. Harris said that when they wrote that into the strategic plan, they weren't thinking specifically about Flagstaff. She added that there are some things in terms of ordinances that are outdated and racist and that they will be

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working to look through those ordinances. Ms. House added that in the strategic plan, "relic laws" were specifically referenced considering criminal and social justice items, but also talked about housing laws, written or unwritten. She also said that the process of going through these laws is big and difficult. Ms. Harris asked the Commission to review their policies, guidelines, and mission. Chair McCain mentioned bill 1485 as a present example on a state level. He asked Ms. House to speak on if that bill is something they are working to address. Ms. House said that a lot of these state- and nation-wide issues with broader impacts are being wrapped into conversations they have, and mentioned other examples. Chair McCain suggested in a future agenda looking at the Commission's policies and the policies in the grant system to see if they include people of color in the community as much as possible.

Chair McCain asked where to find information about upcoming events. Ms. House responded that they can be found on the Murdoch Center Facebook Page and on the Murdoch Center Page on YouTube.

**B. Minor Revision to Commission Vision Statement**

Chair McCain

Requested Action: Vote

Chair McCain presented a minor revision to the vision statement.

Commissioner Kauffman said she thought it was an appropriate change.

**Moved by Chair McCain, Seconded by Commissioner Kauffman to change the Commission's vision statement to "The Vision of Flagstaff's Sustainability Commission: The City of Flagstaff has a culture and community that thrives in response to the climate crisis."**

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

**C. Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Update**

Marissa Molloy, Administrative Assistant, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Discussion and Vote.

Ms. Molloy gave a presentation on suggested changes to the Neighborhood Sustainability Grants from Sustainability Staff. These included an updated timeline, new categories, an update to Water Conservation projects, weighted scores for certain categories, an added innovation score, an increase to the grant award amounts, and allowing grant funds to be used to pay for people's time. She also brought up the prospect of forming a working group to finalize edits and working through these

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changes. They would like to have a working group come together and finalize edits in June and have a scoring activity in the June meeting.

Chair McCain asked if the irrigation controller was something for a house and not industrial. Ms. Molloy said she believed that was correct. He then asked about Pearl's Premium. Ms. Molloy responded that she believed it was a type of landscaping that Water Services wanted to test for Flagstaff. She also noted that Water Services volunteered to help explain these projects during the workshops. Chair McCain expressed concern over specific products being listed in prescriptive projects. Ms. Molloy said she could ask for more general terms. Chair McCain also expressed concern on if it would fit with the rest of the application. Ms. Molloy said Staff had discussed how to separate that out. She does think the current scoring sheet could be used with some changes to the category objectives and added that Water Conservation projects should be graded in a separate meeting to help avoid confusion. Chair McCain said if they were to add a significant amount to the agenda for a fifth of the money given out, he was not entirely comfortable with the prescriptive project idea. He asked for more information about what the thought process was and what their dissatisfaction was. Ms. Molloy said Water Services appreciated getting the reporting in previous projects but that they are really hoping to use the money to research these specific projects to further their strategic plan. Chair McCain expressed being uncomfortable with this, noting that they just redid the grants to emphasize the neighborhood benefit of projects. He said the idea of using the grant to do research does not really fit with what the working group came up with. He wondered if it would be feasible to separate Water Conservation with a different application that indicates a different purpose. Ms. Molloy noted that in her correspondence with Water Services, they would like to prioritize in the grading of these applications projects that would benefit things like community centers. Vice Chair White agreed with Chair McCain. Ms. Niemann noted that Water Conservation wanted to put these specific project calls out there to help get more applications as they've struggled in the past. Ms. Molloy agreed. Commissioner Kauffman said she understands the issues in getting applicants and said that maybe they needed to learn more. She said it would have been nice to talk about this while the working group and the Commission were discussing changes in the applications, and that it feels a little bit surprising. Chair McCain asked if Water Services had access to the revised application. Ms. Molloy said she was not aware if they had access to the revised application before they sent the prescriptive projects. Mr. Lenzen added that it could be something a working group could work on and see if these prescriptive projects could still serve the goals or if a separate application is necessary. He also noted that they could bring Water Services staff into that conversation to come up with the best process. McCain said he liked that proposal.

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Commissioner Chamberlain said he liked the proposed changes, that they would speed up the process, and having the higher dollar amount would be nice. Chair McCain said he really liked the new timeline, noting that it would line up with the school year. He also liked the new categories saying it would be great to support the Carbon Neutrality Plan and supported the other changes as well. Vice Chair White thought a score for innovation was a great idea but wanted to make sure there was a score for community benefit and that it was weighted higher. Mr. Lenzen noted that there was a criteria called "Project Rational" that addresses community benefits and could be revised to be more clear. Ms. Molloy agreed with Mr. Lenzen, stating that the Project Rational evaluation criteria asks, "is it clear that the project benefits the neighborhood?" Vice Chair White said that was fine but would potentially change it to read "to what degree does the project benefit the neighborhood."

Chair McCain asked for a motion on these changes. Mr. Lenzen clarified that there still needs to be some refinement. Staff is looking for the establishment of a working group to work on changes to vote on in the next meeting.

**Moved by Chair McCain, Seconded by Commissioner Kauffman to create a working group to discuss the recommended changes to the Grants.**

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

Chair McCain and Vice Chair White volunteered to be a part of this working group. This working group will take place over two hour-long meetings. Ms. Molloy will reach out to Commissioner Konkell.

**D. Materials Management Update**

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff  
Requested Action: Informational and Discussion

Mr. Lenzen gave an update on the Materials Management initiatives that are moving forward in the next month. He started by talking about the Materials Recovery Facility. Staff met with key stakeholders on April 28<sup>th</sup> to respond to concerns from the community in moving forward. Staff heard the need for flexibility, exploration of new business opportunities and partnerships, and research on the feasibility of the separation of materials in Flagstaff. Next, Staff will be moving forward in reaching out to consultants. He moved on to present on the Pay-As-You-Throw pilot, a program that creates smaller trash cart options for residential customers at a lower price, incentivizing residents to reduce waste or recycle more. The pilot should start this July or August and take place over 6

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months. The new cart size option will be paired with education on recycling and cart inspections through HOAs and door to door outreach.

Vice Chair White asked if Mr. Lenzen thought this could incentivize littering or dumping in the forest. Mr. Lenzen said it was a concern and is something other communities have seen. He said it is dependent on price differentials, and that there will be around a \$4 difference between the 96-gallon bin and the 48-gallon bin. Staff will be monitoring this and looking to see if people will make up for the lack of trash cart capacity by throwing it into their bulky trash. He went on to say that after wrapping up this pilot in the winter of 2021 or 2022, Staff will evaluate program impacts to make sure they are getting the results they are hoping to achieve while minimizing negative impacts. If the decision is to move forward community wide, they will make necessary changes and develop a plan.

Next, Mr. Lenzen presented on a pilot food scraps composting drop-off service. In this past budget cycle, Staff requested one-time funds to work on a pilot. They are currently planning to be able to offer this service in July or shortly after at the farmers market and an East Flagstaff location that is yet to be determined. They are meeting with community partners that already do this type of work to get estimates. Lastly, he noted Staff is planning on doing a waste characterization study in the fall of this year. It is identified in the Rethink Waste Plan and has not been done for over 10 years. It is crucial for program planning and targeting efforts. These studies can be around the hundred thousand dollar or more range. Staff worked with a consultant to come up with a more simplified study that collects the data needed to answer the most important questions: what materials are residents not recycling that they could, and what materials should be targeted for future policy. He is interested in learning what Materials Management conversations the Commission would like to have in the future.

**E. Climate Neutrality Plan Update**

Jenny Niemann, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Informational

Ms. Niemann gave the Commission an update on what they presented to Council. They have a new draft Climate Neutrality Plan that was published last week. The draft has not changed from the March version in terms of its policies and ambition. In this version, they tried to clarify things, include additional information, provide local stories and examples, explain why the plan looks the way it does, and respond to feedback and community conversation. Staff was originally scheduled to vote to adopt the plan in April but rescheduled for more time. They were then scheduled to adopt on May 18<sup>th</sup> but received a lot of feedback from people who didn't like it and wanted to talk to Council. The conversation was moved to a work session. They heard a little bit from the community, but it was mostly a conversation with staff and Council. Staff talked through where reductions will come from, which has been modified based on

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community feedback. Ramon Alatorre talked about carbon dioxide removal on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Niemann also presented on community conversations. Staff has had five surveys which displayed a horseshoe between “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” options in 4 different target areas. They wanted to make clear to Council the general feedback staff is receiving. 80-90 people said they were not concerned about climate change. It became clear that their feedback was not on the specifics of the plan but on the goals in general.

Vice Chair White noted that in the updated version, there is a fair amount of emphasis on technological advancements and cooperation of businesses. He asked if the feasibility would change if technologies like solar don’t get cheaper or if Flagstaff businesses don’t end up taking as much responsibility as hoped. Ms. Niemann responded that this whole plan is meant to be flexible and will probably update every year.

**Motioned by Chair McCain seconded by Commissioner Chamberlain to approve the Climate Neutrality Plan as presented by the Sustainability Section.**

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

**F. Sustainability Section Update**

Dylan Lenzen, Sustainability Specialist, City of Flagstaff  
Requested Action: Informational

Mr. Lenzen shared a staff update. This will be his last commission meeting as his last day will be June 23<sup>rd</sup>. He said he enjoyed being the liaison to the commission over the last year. Staff is moving quickly in the hiring process. The position will open June 28<sup>th</sup>, and he encouraged Commissioners to share this information. He also noted a transition in the Materials Management Coordinator position, as Emily Shaffer will be leaving the position June 4<sup>th</sup>. Staff is hoping to have a successor in that role by the end of June. There shouldn’t be much of a vacancy for either of those positions.

Chair McCain expressed appreciation for working with him and wished him the best.

**6. To and From (5 Minutes) – All**

Commissioner Coffey announced that this would be her last meeting as a Commissioner. She needed to step down as she will be working more in Alaska. She said she was sad to leave, but that she would continue to be involved in climate issues and an active member of the community. She thanked the Commission. Chair McCain said they would miss her and appreciated the connections she brought from the climate action activities in the community.

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Commissioner Coffey shared that Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, at 10am there will be a bike climate strike leaving from the City Hall parking lot and looping around Thorpe. There will be speakers including Adam Shimoni, and it will be an opportunity to mingle with other climate activists.

**7. Future Agenda Item Requests**

Chair McCain requested, based on the Black Lived Experience presentation, a review of policies related to the Black Lived Experience strategic plan. He said it should fit well after the grant application has been finalized in a couple months.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting of the Sustainability Commission on May 27, 2021 adjourned at 6:33 pm.

**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](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov).

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jenny Niemann, Sustainability Commission Staff Liaison