

MINUTES OF THE MISSION SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Monday, July 10, 2023 - 6:30 P.M.

City Hall

In attendance: John Arnett, Ramsey Attaria, Lynn Bain, Jenn Doppelt, Andy Hyland, Ellen Parker, Mike Patterson, Lauren Reiter-Schmid

Council Liaison present: Councilmember Debbie Kring, Councilmember Hillary Parker-Thomas
Staff present: Emily Randel, Deputy City Administrator

I. Welcome and introductions

Ellen Parker welcomed everyone to the meeting and facilitated an icebreaker question.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Approval of the June 5, 2023 Meeting Minutes

John Arnett moved to approve the meeting minutes. Andy Hyland seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion.

IV. Council liaison updates

Councilmember Hillary Parker Thomas shared that the Council is currently considering an updated tax abatement policy. Sustainability is a consideration included in the draft policy the council will vote on at their July 19 meeting.

Chair Ellen Parker mentioned that this policy counts as a sustainability moment. Councilmember Hillary Parker Thomas also shared as a Sustainability Moment how much she appreciated participating in a roundtable as part of her work with Climate Action KC with Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland on uncapped and abandoned oil wells at the Overland Park Arboretum on Monday.

Councilmember Debbie Kring added her thoughts about the tax abatement policy and development incentives in general.

** Councilmember Hillary Parker Thomas left the meeting **

** John Arnett guided a battery sorting exercise **

Councilmember Kring will begin to send the agendas for her Johnson County Solid Waste District meetings. The next meeting is Wednesday, July 12 at the new Household Hazardous Waste Facility

V. Sustainability Moment – See Item IV above

VI. Climate Action Update

- Energy Audit and Weatherization Grant Program Update

Emily has shared a draft of the interest form with Lauren Reiter-Schmid and circulated it internally. She plans to begin soliciting interest this month, with the hopes of selecting the participating homes at the beginning of August.

- Heat Mapping in Johnson County and Wyandotte County

Community volunteers are needed to collect heat map data three times in August for a data collection campaign being conducted by Johnson County and Wyandotte County. Volunteer opportunities include drivers, navigators to help guide drivers, and “Heat Hub” volunteers who will assist at one of our volunteer check-in locations in Johnson or Wyandotte County. Team members from JCDHE and WYCO PHD will help set up heat sensors for each vehicle, and volunteers will drive designated routes to capture temperatures around Johnson and Wyandotte County.

Volunteers can receive a gift card valued at \$30 per route (or per shift at the Heat Hubs) for their work on the campaign. Drivers will also be reimbursed for the mileage driven on their campaign route.

Campaign Day is tentatively planned for August 12, though this may need to change if weather forecasts closer to the day of event aren’t suitable for data collection. If the date needs to be rescheduled due to uncooperative weather, volunteers will be notified as soon as possible with a new campaign date. Tentative backup dates may be August 11, 18, or 19.

- Climate Action Plan Task Force Meeting and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Emily Randel shared that she posted the final report and story from Lotus on the website and will share to the City Council, Sustainability Commission and Climate Action Plan Task Force. She hopes to schedule a meeting by the end of the month with ICLEI and the Climate Action Plan Task Force.

VII. Business Sustainability and Support

Emily Randel and Jenn Doppelt shared perspectives from the November 2022 Business Forum the City hosted, honoring both the positive feedback that was shared in the small group discussions and the negative feedback that was shared. They acknowledged the difficulty of owning a small business and the lingering hardships and feelings following the pandemic period. Emily and Jenn both expressed enthusiasm around sustainability initiatives as a more neutral opportunity for business/City collaboration. Jenn stressed the importance for businesses to grow and evolve in order to survive and that sustainability initiatives are a ripe opportunity for that growth. Creating volunteering opportunities for businesses was suggested. The “Make It Your Mission” slogan is perfect for this effort – you get out of it what you put into it, and it’s your community. The group discussed the generational shifts that we are seeing in Mission. Longterm business owners who are choosing to retire after working very hard for decades. It’s a jarring shift, but is being seen more than just in Mission. Also, the group talked about the difficult odds facing any new small business.

The group agreed to discuss with Terri ways to connect businesses to the Environmental Fair. Both an invitation for fair attendees to leave comments about sustainable practices they see businesses doing in the community that could be showcased later, and for business attendees who are interested in connecting on sustainability topics to leave their business card for follow-up.

Emily shared her idea of a “positive ripples” meeting where businesses are invited to come and simply share one thing that is going well for them, and one thing they admire about another local business. The thought being that there are a lot of benefits of locating in Mission, and connecting, networking and stretching in a positive space could be helpful, both in recruiting new businesses and retaining existing businesses.

VIII. Sub-Committee Reports

- Communities for All Ages

(Cathy Boyer-Shesol, John Arnett, Ellen Parker)

John Arnett shared that the sub-committee reviewed and updated the spreadsheet of goals. Emily Randel and Cathy Boyer-Shesol have a meeting set later in July to review methods to engage the department directors.

- Recycling

(Terri Baugh, Josh Thede, Mike Patterson, Lynn Bain)

Lauren Reiter-Schmid shared a review of the activity at the Sustainability Commission tent at the Mission Market and promoted the Environmental Fair. There were lots of interest in the alternative recycling opportunities at the tent.

Downtown recycling dumpster update. GFL is making signage for the dumpsters to indicate that the dumpsters are intended for business use and that recycling should not be bagged. Emily Randel asked for help in educating the businesses and monitoring the dumpsters to minimize contamination.

MARC has developed an updated recycling flyer that should be distributed soon.

- Communications

(Andy Hyland, Lauren Reiter-Schmid, Mike Patterson)

The latest issue of the Mission Magazine was themed around sustainability. There will likely be some action items coming from the Communities for All Ages for additional communication efforts.

- Sustainability Scorecard

(Josh Thede, Ramsey Attaria, Mike Patterson, Lauren Reiter-Schmid, Andy Hyland, Terri Baugh)
Lauren Reiter-Schmid shared the Swig development scorecard and letter. The committee ranked them as Gold.

Mike Patterson moved to approve of the letter, Ramsey Attaria seconded the motion.

Councilmember Kring reminded the group about the importance of deconstruction and recycling construction materials.

IX. Standing Updates

- Parks, Recreation and Tree Commission Update - there was no update. Andy Hyland suggested that the group spend the money allocated in the 2023 budget. Ellen Parker will speak to Penn Almoney about trees before the August meeting. The group discussed sending a representative to the PRT meetings slightly less often than monthly, to avoid meeting fatigue.
- Staff Updates – The budget development process is underway with a work session on July 19.

X. Reminders and Announcements

John Arnett thanked everyone for the support sorting the battery sorting during the meeting. The group agreed that the process was rewarding and worthwhile and should happen again when a backlog develops.

The Sustainability Commission is due for a retreat in 2023. The group will discuss dates at the next meeting, likely early October.

Emily Randel reminded that Johnson County Transit is opening the 487 line that will connect between the Mission Transit Center and the Lenexa Civic Center, via Downtown Overland Park. KCATA is targeting a rolling ribbon cutting in August.

Councilmember Kring recommended bringing back the Home of the Month program

XI. Review of Action Items

XII. Adjourn

Lauren Reiter-Schmid moved to adjourn the meeting. Ramsey Attaria seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Sustainability Commission will be in person at Mission City Hall on Monday, August 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.