



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 1/1/2014 to 6/30/2015

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

I. Mission Statement

The Resource Management Commission (RMC) mission statement (per City Code Section 2-1-168) is:

- (A) Maintain an overview of all programs, studies and proposals concerning the efficient use of energy, alternate energy technologies, renewable energy resources, including solar and wind, and the conservation of energy, excluding the use of conventional coal, nuclear, natural gas, or petroleum technologies.
- (B) Serve as a liaison with other city commissions, including the Electric Utility Commission.
- (C) Receive citizen input on alternate energy technologies, renewable energy sources, and on energy conservation.
- (D) Review and analyze:
 - (1) energy conservation technologies and renewable energy sources as to their short-term and long-term feasibility in the city;
 - (2) energy conservation policies, alternate energy technologies, and renewable energy projects in other cities and states;
 - (3) water conservation policies, alternate technologies, and water conservation projects in other cities and states; and
 - (4) City Code to identify potential amendments that encourage the use of alternate energy technologies and renewable energy sources, and the conservation of energy.
- (E) Advise the city council:
 - (1) in developing and reviewing city plans and programs in the area of alternate energy technologies, renewable energy sources, and energy conservation.
 - (2) as to available funding from private and public sources which are available to the city for alternate energy technologies and renewable energy, and for the conservation of energy;
 - (3) on energy conservation, on alternate energy technologies, and on renewable energy sources and report to city council on the status of its activities at least annually;
 - (4) in developing and reviewing city plans and programs that encourage water conservation as it relates to water consumption from the tap to customer and within structures or building; and,

- (5) regarding appropriate City Code amendments that encourage the use of alternate energy technologies and renewable energy sources, and the conservation of energy.
- (F) Encourage:
 - (1) the conservation of energy, the use of alternate energy technologies and renewable energy sources in City-owned facilities; and
 - (2) the private and public sectors to develop and to use alternate energy technologies and renewable energy sources, and to conserve energy.

II. Actions Supporting Mission Statement

The Resource Management Commission met 16 times during calendar year 2014 and in the first five months of 2015, including one joint meeting with the Electric Utility Commission.

The RMC's mission-specific actions included:

- Reviewing 75 Recommendations for Council Action (RCA) including 31 solar performance-based incentive agreements; 24 multi-family energy efficiency rebates; and 6 commercial energy efficiency rebates. Also reviewed RCAs and made recommendations relating to: contractors for the weatherization program; contract for DSM consulting services; ARRA stimulus funding for weatherization; increase of annual multi-family and commercial rebate limit to \$300,000; point-of-sale instant rebate program on select energy efficiency products; installation and maintenance agreement for load-control devices in residential properties; PPAs on wind and solar projects; new software for processing energy efficiency and solar rebates; Utility Profile and Water Conservation Plan for Municipal and Wholesale Water Use; and AWU's CIP projects in the Drinking Water Protection Zone.
- Passing the following Recommendations (attached):
 - 20150519-004 and 20140715-009 – Approval of Capital projects in the Drinking Water Protection Zone for inclusion in AWU's 5-year capital spending plan (for FY 2015 and FY 2016)
 - 20150324-005 – Resolution recommending to the City Council and the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force that their recommendations not include replacement of appliances in the weatherization program in favor of options that can assist more low and moderate income consumers save more energy.
 - 20140715-010 - Response to the Boards & Commissions Transition Task Force Report recommending creation of a Sustainability Commission, not a joint committee. As with the RMC, Council should appoint members with expertise on energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation directly to a Sustainability Commission.

- Scheduling meetings at 6:30 pm at Town Lake Center on a monthly basis, adhering to all required protocol for meetings, agendas, and duties of officers.
- Electing officers in November, with both Leo Dielmann and Sean Kelly serving as chair and vice chair, respectively.
- Receiving citizen input on alternative energy technologies, renewable energy sources, and on energy and water conservation at regular meetings.
- Providing overviews of city programs, studies and proposals concerning the efficient use of energy, alternate energy technologies, renewable energy resources, including solar and wind, and the conservation of energy.
- Reviewing and analyzing:
 - Energy conservation technologies and renewable energy sources as to their short-term and long-term feasibility in the city;
 - Energy conservation policies, alternate energy technologies and renewable energy projects in other cities and states;
 - Water conservation policies, alternate technologies, and water conservation projects in other cities and states; and
 - The City Code to identify potential amendments that encourage the use of alternate energy technologies and renewable energy sources, and the conservation of energy.
- Reviewing and making recommendations to Council on resolutions, city plans and programs, contracts for products and services, city code amendments and use of available funds from private or public sources (e.g., energy efficiency and solar rebates) to make services or programs more cost effective and/or more available to the citizens and businesses in Austin.
- Encouraging conservation of energy, the development and use of alternate energy technologies, and the development and use of renewable sources for City-owned facilities, as well as throughout the private and public sectors.
- Working with other city commissions, including the Electric Utility Commission and the Water and Wastewater Commission. On March 17, 2014, the RMC held a Joint Meeting with the Electric Utility Commission to receive information regarding Austin Energy's Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan Update. Members Carol Biedrzycki and Grace Hsieh served on the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force. Members Sean Kelly and Luke Metzger served on the Comprehensive Water Planning Task Force and on the Joint Committee on AWU's Financial Plan. The latter was composed of members of the RMC, Water & Wastewater Commission and the Impact Fee Advisory Committee. Member Carol Biedrzycki served as the RMC's appointee to the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force.

III. Compliance with Mission Statement

All actions of the RMC during calendar year 2015 were within the scope of and in compliance with its Code-mandated mission statement.

IV. Goals and Objectives for 2015

The RMC has adopted the following goals and objectives for calendar year 2015:

- Continue to provide overview of programs, studies and proposals; advice to City Council; and encouragement for the conservation of energy, the use of alternate energy technologies and renewable sources in City-owned facilities and departments, specifically highlighting the departments that have accomplished their goals toward this end.
- Continue to encourage the private and public sectors to develop and to use alternative energy technologies and renewable energy sources, and to conserve energy, specifically through the advancement of customer programs and education to enable greater adoption.
- Continue to work with the staff of Austin Energy, Austin Water, Texas Gas Service, the Climate Protection Program, the Office of Sustainability, and Austin Resource Recovery, specifically to see that they are meeting the City's goals in regard to greater adoption of conservation, the use of alternate technologies and renewable sources.
- Continue to regard citizen input on these issues as important as any other source.
- Support additional studies to evaluate energy efficiency and distributed generation, and to assist the staff in developing interim goals and new programs.
- Support AWU staff in the development of a comprehensive water conservation plan and annual reporting.
- Continue to provide opportunities for City departments to highlight their successes in energy efficiency, water conservation, and sustainable practices.
- Adopt the concepts of triple bottom-line sustainability in the RMC's decisions, recommendations, and advice to council; i.e., consider the balance between the environmental, economic, and societal equity impacts of our decisions, recommendations, and advice.

V. Advice and Recommendations to New Members

- It is important to note that the RMC should represent the interests of all of the citizens of the City of Austin and attempt to provide balanced advice, comment, and recommendations even amongst competing and contradictory input from citizen stakeholders.
- It is not the mission of the RMC to direct AE or AWU (or any department for that matter) as to how they do their business. It is the mission and responsibility of the

RMC to monitor, advise, and assist the departments in meeting council's policy and objectives.

- The RMC has had great success when we worked with AE, AWU, and other departments in a spirit of partnership and collaboration. Adversarial relationships with the departments do not accomplish the mission of the RMC nor do they benefit Council or the citizens of Austin.
- The RMC should work closely and collaboratively with other commissions, most notably the EUC, Water and Wastewater Commission, Solid Waste Advisory Commission, and the Environmental Board.
- The RMC should review budgets and expenditures to the extent necessary to:
 - maintain an overview of all programs, studies and proposals referenced in I (A);
 - review and analyze energy conservation technologies and renewable energy sources as to their short-term and long-term feasibility in the City as stated in I (D)(1); and,
 - advise the City Council under I (E) in developing and reviewing city plans and programs in the area of alternate energy technologies, renewable energy sources and energy conservation.
- The RMC should monitor and evaluate departmental programs for consistency with and ability to achieve Council established policies regarding energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, and sustainability. Because there are often multiple Council resolutions and policies, RMC should work with the departments to establish integrated goals and objectives as well as appropriate metrics for understanding progress.
- RMC members should seek to understand their Council Members positions on matters through pro-active and routine communication with them.

Approved unanimously by the following members of the Resource Management Commission at their regular meeting on May 19, 2015:

Chair Leo Dielmann
Vice Chair Sean Kelly
Carol Biedrzycki
Hari Krishna

Attachments:

Recommendations and Resolutions approved by the Commission



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Resource Management Commission

Recommendation No. 20140715-009

Drinking Water Projection Zone projects included in AWU's CIP

The Resource Management Commission recommends approval of the Drinking Water Protection Zone projects related to new water and wastewater plants, capital expansions, and growth-related projects to be included in the Austin Water Utility's 5-year Capital Improvement Program, with final approval by City Council during the annual budget approval process.

Date of Approval: July 15, 2014

Record of the vote: Unanimously approved by the Resource Management Commission on a vote of 6-0, with Chair Dielmann, Vice Chair Kelly, and Commissioners Amato, Biedrzycki, Hsieh and Krishna voting in favor.

Attest:


Toye Goodson, Staff Liaison



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Resource Management Commission

Recommendation No. 20140715-010

Response to the Boards & Commissions Transition Task Force Report

Council Resolution No. 20140515-027 directed staff to solicit written feedback from current boards and commissions regarding the Boards and Commissions Transition Task Force report. The following comments from the Resource Management Commission were submitted via Survey Monkey, as directed by the Office of the City Clerk.

1. The Resource Management Commission (RMC) strongly recommends creation of a Sustainability Commission, not a joint committee. As with the RMC, Council should appoint members with expertise on energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation directly to a Sustainability Commission.
2. As a body, a joint Sustainability Committee would have no standing with City Council meaning Council members would have no advisory board or commission to advise them on issues of sustainability.
3. Replacing the RMC with a joint committee would not decrease staff time and support because reports and briefings would have to be made to one or more of the 7 commissions and the committee.
4. There would be no single body acting as the City's stewards of water and energy conservation, clean air and climate protection.
5. At a minimum there is a perceived conflict of interest for a utility commission with advisory responsibility for fiduciary and operational advice that is also supposed to advise on environmental, social and conservation measures that could negatively impact the finances of the utility.
6. In summary, the RMC feels there should be a separate Sustainability Commission, not a joint committee, because sustainability is too important an issue and goal of the City not to have a separate commission appointed by City Council.

Date of Approval: July 15, 2014

Record of the vote: Although the Commission did not vote on the item, members present agreed on the comments and requested they be submitted by the Staff Liaison. Members present were Chair Leo Dielmann, Vice Chair Sean Kelly, and Commissioners Richard Amato, Carol Biedrzycki, Grace Hsieh and Hari Krishna.

Attest:

Toye Goodson, Staff Liaison



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Recommendation No. 20150324-005: Free Appliances in Weatherization Program

WHEREAS, Austin Energy has the goal of saving electric demand and volume at less than the cost of new power purchases and generation; and

WHEREAS, Austinites have institutionalized these goals for decades because they recognize that the effort makes economic sense, helps individual consumers, and prevents air, water, and carbon pollution; and

WHEREAS, past programs that have given away free appliances to low and moderate income customers have been found to lack cost effectiveness, with some having paybacks on investment as long as 60 years, even though equipment has an average life of over 15 years; and

WHEREAS, continued investment in these options will discourage public confidence that their money in clean energy is being spent well; and

WHEREAS, the program to assist low and moderate income people save energy by giving away free appliances was largely funded by federal grants that no longer exist; and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force is in active discussion about reviving this appliance giveaway program despite its economics; and

WHEREAS, low-income consumers as well as average consumers will pay for this effort, while receiving little in return if they do not participate; and

WHEREAS, there are more targeted and strategic ways that low-income customers can be assisted than giveaways of free appliances;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Resource Management Commission recommends to the City Council and the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force that giveaways of free appliances be abandoned as an active strategy in favor of options that can assist more low and moderate income consumers save more energy.

Date of Approval: March 24, 2015

Record of the vote: Approved on a vote of 4-1 with Chair Leo Dielmann, Vice Chair Sean Kelly and Commissioners Richard Amato and Grace Hsieh voting for; Commissioner Carol Biedrzycki voting no; and Commissioners Hari Krishna and Luke Metzger absent.

Attest: 

Toye Goodson, Staff Liaison



**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION 20150519-004**

Date: May 19, 2015

Subject: Presentation of Austin Water (AW) Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) located in the Drinking Water Protection Zone (DWPZ) to boards and commissions for review and recommendation for approval to include in AWs 5-year capital spending plan as required by AW financial policy #8.

Motioned By: Chair Leo Dielmann

Seconded By: Hari Krishna

Recommendation:

Recommend approval of the Drinking Water Protection Zone projects related to new water and wastewater plants, capital expansions, and growth-related projects to be included in the Austin Water's 5-year Capital Improvement Program with final approval by City Council during the annual budget approval process.

Vote 4-0

For: Chair Leo Dielmann, Vice Chair Sean Kelly and Commissioners Carol Biedrzycki and Hari Krishna.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Commissioners Richard Amato, Grace Hsieh and Luke Metzger.

Attest: *Toye Goodson, Staff Liaison*