



**JOINT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING  
April 25, 2018**

**The Joint Sustainability Committee convened in a regular meeting on April 25, 2018 at City Hall in Austin, Texas.**

**Chair Jim Walker called the Board Meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Chair Jim Walker, Vice Chair Kaiba White, Nhat Ho, Holt Lackey, Francoise Luca, Adrienne Haschke, Michael Osborne, Katie Coyne, Fisayo Fadelu

**Board Members Absent:**

Blythe Christopher de Orive, Joep Meijer, Patricia Seeger, Sabrina Santos Joplin

**City Staff in Attendance:**

Zach Baumer, Katy Zamesnik, Carla Steffen

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee Member Osborne moved approval of the March 28 minutes, Committee Member Lackey seconded. Vice Chair White offered an amendment to add a note to 3c, sustainability office will come back in May to update on calculations. Motion passed 6-0-2 with Committee Member Coyne and Committee Member Haschke abstained (Committee Member Ho arrived later).

**2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

Bobbie Tsukahara and Gil Starkey with 350.org. Two campaigns – move Austin Energy to fossil fuel free energy as soon as possible. New AE Study that should be underway, as well as institutional divestment with COAERS and others in town. Early May webinar, NYC pension divestment.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**3a. Water Forward update by Sharlene Leurig, Chair of the Austin Integrated Water Resource Planning Community Task Force (Discussion and/or possible action)**

Ms. Leurig presented about Austin beginning to see vulnerabilities to climate change in the last drought, as we dropped to 1/3 of lake storage capacity and it was their lowest point since being built. A task force determined during the drought that while we may have “paper” water due to good contracts, we could run out. This led to the idea that we need a long term water plan. The current task force has been meeting for two-and-a-half years with the charge to create an integrated water plan. This would include water quality, flooding, supply, ecosystems, etc. The goal is a 100 year plan, which is very long term and not typical. First reason to do this, is that a true signal from climate change needs at least 50 years, Hayhoe was hired to help. Second, if you think really long term you can see things completely different from how we do things today, a paradigm shift away from traditional western US water planning which typically involves big storage and pipelines.

Framework for evaluating options includes social equity, environmental impact, affordability, local self-reliance. Options start with conservation and demand management, we use less water now than before the drought even though we've grown. Then there are lots of types of supply, from large scale reuse (4% of demand is currently purple pipe), to integrated building reuse, stormwater and rainwater capture, also big centralized supply like capturing treated wastewater and saving it in Town Lake, and direct potable reuse. Anticipate by June this year we will have a final water supply portfolio and start presenting to boards and commissions. Adoption by Council could occur in October / November, then move into implementation and piloting projects. This plan will be updated every 5 years, potentially align with the revision of the climate plan.

Committee Members asked questions about dealing with rights in aquifer storage and looking at how to capture rainwater when it crosses property lines. There was discussion about how to reduce evaporation and the three concrete action items to make sure we don't run out (Massive conservation across the whole basin beyond Austin, additional forms of storage (off channel reservoirs and aquifer storage), some amount of diversification including sustainable supplies (that are not mining groundwater)). Discussion of the energy/water nexus occurred and specific conservation options (Landscape ordinance, and true building water budgeting and permits) Ms. Leurig finished by agreeing that demand management is key, and building codes and efficient new buildings are essential.

No action taken.

### **3b. Presentation and discussion regarding the draft project list included in a potential 2018 General Obligation bond (Discussion and/or possible action)**

Ms. Zamesnik and Ms. Steffen presented on the 2018 Bond Development Process. They covered the original needs assessment (\$3.2 billion), the starting point of \$640 million, and debt capacity ranges from \$325 million with no tax rate impact up to 2 cent increase to \$825 million. Council would likely finalize the package and call the election on or before August 9<sup>th</sup>. November 6<sup>th</sup> would be the bond election.

Committee Members discussed the lack of overlap with the climate plan, and specifically about recycling in parks. There was discussion about how the community engagement was done and staff replied with it being successful and a surprise that most people spent all the money and electively raised taxes to get the larger package of items. Committee Member Haschke asked about the connection to food with the bond package and staff said the committee could recommend to Council to consider these ideas in their deliberations. Shared facilities are a major part of the conversation and increasing collaboration. Committee Member Ho asked about stormwater projects and staff specified there are 15 projects included. Discussion concluded with the balancing of political realities as well as ever increasing construction costs.

No action taken.

### **3c. Committee priorities related to the Austin Community Climate Plan for the Fiscal Year 2019 City of Austin budget (Discussion and/or possible action)**

No discussion and no action taken.

### **3d. Update on the Austin Community Climate Plan from the Climate Program Manager (Discussion and/or possible action)**

WUCA forum, Climate Resilience plan presentation coming next month, May 16 Health and Human Services Food and Climate presentation.

No action taken.

**4a. Working group updates and potential creation of new working groups: three standing working groups on the Phase 1 Actions of the Austin Community Climate Plan (Electricity and Natural Gas, Transportation and Land Use, Materials and Waste Management), brownfield redevelopment, budget, carbon impact statement, and tourism (Discussion and/or possible action)**

No discussion.

**4b. Commission members report back on any relevant discussions from their respective boards and commissions (Discussion and/or possible action)**

- Committee Member Coyne – Environmental board passed a resolution about alignment of issues and CodeNEXT – may bring it to the May meeting. Atlanta urban ecology framework, could we do this here?
- Committee Member Ho – water and wastewater briefing on CodeNEXT

## **5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Natural gas
- Resilience plan
- Crosswalk planning recommendation
- Bond memo
- Can we get an update from PARD on their recycling in parks?
- Reach out to AE staff to see if they are able to present on the state of the solar budget in May?

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m. without objection.