



**Item 1**

**JOINT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**SPECIAL MEETING  
March 12, 2021**

**The Joint Sustainability Committee convened in a special meeting on March 12, 2021 via videoconferencing.**

**Chair Kaiba White called the Board Meeting to order at 1:35 pm.**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Kaiba White Chair, Alberta Phillips, David Carroll, Karen Magid, Nhat Ho, Alexis Taylor, Rob Schneider, Fisayo Fadelu

**Board Members Absent:**

Katie Coyne Vice-Chair, Melissa Rothrock, Kelly Davis, Holt Lackey, Karen Hadden

**City Staff in Attendance:**

Zach Baumer, Phoebe Romero, Sidney Jackson

**CALL TO ORDER**

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

The speakers who registered in advance for public comment have three minutes each to address items on the agenda at this time.

- Bob Hendricks – Discussed experience with Winter Storm Uri and expressed importance of the city to follow up with its climate resilience resolution and having a resilience office and Chief Resilience Officer.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) January 28, 2021 meeting of the Joint Sustainability Committee

- Motion to approve (Commissioner Magid), second (Commissioner Schneider), 7 approved, 0 opposed, 1 abstained. Commissioner Taylor abstained.

## 2. NEW BUSINESS

- a) City's response to recent freeze event, including actions related to power outage, boil water, roadway clearing of snow and ice, and emergency messaging (Discussion and/or possible action)
- Debrief from Sidney Jackson, Deputy General Manager at Austin Energy
  - Austin Energy (AE) has committed to looking at forecasting climate conditions for planning purposes and exploring new technologies within their climate protection plan, and Winter Storm Uri has presented an opportunity to support and advance that work
  - AE will partner with Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) for an after-action review and report, and will be looking at smarter distribution as part of this
  - Commissioners discussed the Climate Resilience Action Plan, and how AE would be thinking about an additional hazard like an extreme freeze, developing a baseline for resilience and centering equity; AE Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan is meant to be iterative and will be updated over time in response to these issues
  - Presentation was made to Resource Management Commission and Electric Utilities Commission and has been shared with commissioners
  - Additional briefings from various departments will be planned for future meetings
- b) Discussion on climate resilience plan baseline in the context of Winter Storm Uri from energy production, water reserve, redundancy, emergency routes and availability of decentralized community emergency centers (Discussion and/or possible action)
- Discussion on the opportunity to engage the community on climate resilience considering this storm
  - Discussed importance of focusing on the following:
    - Neighbor-to-neighbor communication networks, and building on those trusted, culturally responsive networks in addition to social media; Economic Property Commission has discussed this topic and will be working on recommendations
    - Thinking about food access as critical infrastructure; this was not included in the Climate Resilience Action Plan; will need to take into account food distribution planning, food storage, food waste, and how local farmers are supported and able to recover from events like this; Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board will be developing recommendations on this
    - The type of equipment inventory available to respond to events from an infrastructure perspective

- How policies around renewable energy, electrification, and storage can be framed and addressed considering storm challenges
- Expanding resilience hubs
- Understanding that this issue is still ongoing, and how commissioners can continue to respond to current community needs
- There will be continued updates and discussions on this to keep climate and community resilience an area of focus with budget priorities

Motion to adjourn (Commissioner Ho).

**Meeting adjourns at 2:48 pm**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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For more information on the Joint Sustainability Committee, please contact Zach Baumer at (zach.baumer@[austintexas.gov](mailto:zach.baumer@austintexas.gov) or 512-974-2836).