



**JOINT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
September 25, 2024**

The Joint Sustainability Committee convened in a hybrid meeting via videoconferencing and at Austin Energy Headquarters.

Board Members in Attendance in Person: Kaiba White, Rodrigo Leal, Anna Scott, Lane Becker, Charlotte Davis

Board Members in Attendance Remotely: Alberta Phillips, Diana Wheeler, Heather Houser, Jon Salinas, Yure Suarez, Haris Qureshi, Natalie Poindexter

Board Members Absent:

City Staff in Attendance:

Rohan Lilauwala
Braden Latham-Jones
Tim Harvey
Heidi Kasper
Marc Coudert

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kaiba White called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

1. Approval of minutes from the July 8th special called meeting of the Joint Sustainability Committee.

Wheeler motion, Qureshi seconds, passes 12-0.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Scott Johnson speaks on low carbon concrete and residential landscape equipment

3. Presentation on Solar for All program and the Solar Standard Offer – Tim Harvey, Austin Energy

- Scott – do energy arbitrage benefits come into play?

- Harvey – one of the considered benefits. Utility will control battery to a certain depth of discharge (to support resilience). On edge of event, batteries not used. On blue sky days, AE will use batteries for price chasing, 4CP avoidance, peak usage, to get max value out of battery
- PPA will be used for solar purchases, performance contract for battery will allow AE to benefit from them.
- Grant will be used to buy down PPA and performance contract to AE's avoided cost of solar and make it feasible.
- Phillips – questions around how program works, if benefits flow to wealthier folks
 - Harvey – provides clarification
 - Opportunity to provide feedback in community engagement process to shape program/
- Leal – why is program designed this way
 - Harvey – difficult to find 2500 low-income homes that are viable
 - If model is successful, potential to receive unused funds later
 - Leal – would roof repairs/rebuilding be part of it?
 - Harvey – there are existing programs, this grant can't be for that as per EPA agreement. Homes will receive free weatherization if customer qualify
 - Opportunity for community engagement to help define what homes to target
- Leal – what does governance look like?
 - Harvey – plans to set this up during community engagement. Work in progress, no money yet. Need to staff up in the early years.
 - Leal – who was engaged?
 - Harvey – PODER, TEPRI, SIGN, etc. informed initial design of program. No formal project partners since there's no money yet. They and many others identified as collaborating entities.
- White – Is the door open for hosts not in DAC?
 - Harvey – yes, if income qualified
 - White – would like to see program serve fully low-income households
- Poindexter – is community engagement structured?
 - Harvey – no, application period was short, this needs to happen after money, staff come on (community engagement not his forte, need experts).
- Leal – recommendation to engage with Equity Action Team and Equity Office
- White – let JSC know once community engagement begins, they'd like to be involved.

4. Presentation on the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) 2024 Update – Heidi Kasper, Austin Energy

- Salinas – what does electric readiness mean
 - Kasper – in commercial, space in the panel (lots of details), in residential, wiring close to intended end uses
- Davis – why is attic insulation out
 - Kasper – not as impactful, other measures more than make up for it, costly

2. Presentation on heat resilience planning efforts – Marc Coudert, Office of Resilience

- Poindexter – how are CHWs being supported? Will there be additional funding
 - APH has CHWs

- UT and APH working on developing a ‘medical reserve corps’ – people experienced in healthcare, can call on them in an emergency, supported through training and resources
- Coudert – unclear about funding, need to look into grants or future budget asks. Some funding allocated using ARPA funds, but that is drying up
- Leal – what are top infrastructure priorities for heat resilience?
 - Coudert – learnings from collaboration with GAVA in Rundberg. They want trees, water fountains, shade structures. Lots of concerns about heat at home, especially if no AC.
- White – are these recommendations getting to designers? E.g. PARD
 - Coudert – yes, recommendations getting made, council resolutions passed. Astro turf is hot, but vegetation needs water to be cooling, not always available in a drought
- Salinas – what other cities are doing things?
 - Coudert – in contact with chief heat officers, other experts in peer cities. Hard to compare in different contexts
 - Salinas – does the city make any recommendations when days are too hot? I.e. soccer is cancelled
 - Coudert – no public facing protocols, but internal protocols for city staff. NWS declares heat emergencies, etc.
- White – funds coming from SECO to incentivize heat pumps etc.
- Extended discussion on vulnerable populations and heat risk

5. Updates from the Urban Transportation Commission on the Living Streets Program – Diana Wheeler

- Updates on healthy streets, play streets, living streets

6. Consider approval of a Recommendation on the Austin Energy Solar Standard Offer Program

- Discussions around equity issues, benefits to renters, and maximizing solar
- Proposed amendments to support benefits to low-income customers
- Action to approve recommendation to council: White motion, Davis second, passes 11-0, Suarez off dais

7. Consider approval of a Recommendation on the adoption of the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code

- Action to approve recommendation to council: Scott motion, Qureshi second, passes 11-0 with Suarez off dais

8. Create working groups to support Joint Sustainability Committee oversight of Comprehensive Climate Plan Implementation Process

- Encompasses policy recommendations, budget recommendations, bond recommendations leading to spring/summer of 2025
- Develop groups focusing on Buildings, Transportation, Natural Systems, Consumption
- White motion, Scott second, passes 11-0 with Suarez off dais

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Public transportation and frequency of bus routes
- Tree regulations and canopy
- Update on climate fee and EIP project prioritization
- Low carbon concrete – external speaker

White adjourns meeting with no objections at 8:38 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Meeting locations are planned with wheelchair access. If requiring Sign Language Interpreters or alternative formats, please give notice at least 2 days (48 hours) before the meeting date. Please call Zach Baumer with the Office of Sustainability at 512-974-2836, for additional information; TTY users route through Relay Texas at 711.

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