



Environmental Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting

Friday, February 11, 2022

Agenda

Call to Order 1:33 p.m.

Public Comment / Open Microphone

Speaker: Jim Schermbeck, 1808 South Good Latimer Expy #202
Topic(s): Air Quality Updates; Environmental Equity Checklist

Written Comment: James Orenstein, Executive Director, TRCSS 1802 Rocky Creek Drive, Duncanville, TX 75137; Michael J. Fladmark, President, TRCSS 600 Winding Shore Drive, Tool, TX 75143

Topic: Facility Updates [Memorandum](#)

Approval of [Minutes](#)

Vice Chair Villarreal moved to adopt the minutes as presented.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Wallace and unanimously adopted.

Briefing Items

1. Local Solid Waste Management Plan – *Cliff Gillespie, Assistant Director, Sanitation Services & Scott Pasternak, Burns & McDonnell*

The speakers briefed the commission on identifying current and future solid waste management needs and evaluating the program to bring it in line with CECAP with emphasis on public engagement.

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

The meeting recessed at 2:09 p.m. and reconvened at 2:22 p.m.

Questions

1. Michael Martin: What item/goal will have the largest impact? What is priority?
 - a. Sanitation Services will produce a graphic on best opportunities to increase diversion
 - b. Brush material: If you can separate brush from bulk, you can divert an additional 60 70,000 tons/year (60,000 tons a year are already diverted through residential recycling, so this could double that impact)
2. Commissioner Day: Are there educational/outreach materials on the full recycling process so people understand the value of making the effort to recycle? How do we build greater public trust in recycling?
 - a. The new plan will communicate these examples. They're working to make sure recyclables are properly recycled. Facilities are audited.
 - b. Sanitation doesn't currently publish this information, but they're working towards that
3. Commissioner Wallace: Plans to generate energy via biomass? Are there tours of wastewater treatment plants (i.e. for students)?
 - a. South Side Wastewater Treatment Plant has the ability to convert food scraps to energy

- b. Looking into a pilot program where food waste from hotels would be converted to energy. Infrastructure issues need to be addressed before this happens
 - c. Dallas's recycling facility is set up for educational tours, though wastewater treatment facilities may not be
- 4. David Marquis: Noting the possibility of separating brush from bulk and using the brush to mulch trees. This would lead to decreased costs of gasoline for mowing grass, thus an improvement in air quality. Can work with the Park & Rec Department on this
- 5. Commissioner Dankert: Urging Sanitation to use the Commission as a resource in terms of community outreach and education. Keep the Commission updated on feedback related to the bulk and brush pilot. Update on outcomes of participation/compliance rate for multifamily ordinance as well as the impact of the plan on rates
 - a. Many of these details will be addressed as a part of the plan
- 6. Rita Beving: Potential for electric garbage truck pilot programs? Many other cities have done this. How close are we?
 - a. Electric trucks have not been proven practical to use on a widespread, daily basis
 - b. Some obstacles include cost (electric trucks could cost double that of gasoline-powered trucks), but this is a part of the planning process that will spell out methods for the City to evaluate a pilot program like this
 - c. Rita: Have we investigated grant programs to lower these costs?
 - i. Right now, the issue is making sure this technology is commercially viable
 - ii. Need to make sure infrastructure is in place to fuel these vehicles
- 7. Alan Hoffmann: Is methane capture still occurring (i.e., at McCommas landfill)?
 - a. We are still doing this. The energy captured is being cleaned out and put into the pipeline
- 8. Commissioner Wallace: Regarding electrifying fleets; the initial cost is higher, but maintenance and cost to operate is much lower. We need to look at costs holistically, not just up-front
- 9. Commissioner Derrough: Is there a list of stakeholders they've reached out to? Have they reached out to groups near McCommas Landfill?
 - a. They have done outreach to neighborhood groups and conducted surveys. Happy to welcome additional participation/feedback
 - b. Is the survey still open? It has been closed, but the intent is to have another, more brief survey on the proposed recommendations
 - c. Make sure Commission is informed about this
- 10. Commissioner Roberson: There are barriers to recycling improvements in communities. It can be difficult to get recycling bins. As far as education, there needs to be massive public outreach that includes more than just flyers in water bills
 - a. They've developed a regional recycling outreach program with OEQS and NCTCOG

2. Air Quality Updates

- a. **Breathe Easy Dallas – Kevin Overton, Senior Environmental Coordinator, Environmental Quality & Sustainability**
The speaker briefed the commission on the non-regulatory air quality program.
Attachment: [Presentation](#)
- b. **Regulatory Air Quality Program – Paul White II, Superintendent – Air, Soil, & Groundwater Division, Environmental Quality & Sustainability**
The speaker briefed the commission on the regulatory air quality program.
Attachment: [Presentation](#)
- c. **NCTCOG Air Quality Program – Jenny Narvaez, Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments**
The speaker briefed the commission on regional air quality initiatives.
Attachment: [Presentation](#)

Questions (for all air quality briefings)

1. Commissioner Roberson: What happens when we receive air quality data? Are there plans to put air monitors in District 8? What does Breathe Easy Dallas public engagement / education look like?
 - a. With regards to Breathe Easy, the initial phase ended in December 2021, and researchers are writing a report with data received from this program (reports can be sent to Commissioners). Currently working on site-selection criteria for new air monitors. There will be public meetings for input on locations. We'll work with the EVC on this effort. Phase 2 of Breath Easy is to investigate appropriate interventions (specifically around pediatric asthma). They are planting trees around areas with prevalent asthma rates. The data will be available on a dashboard
2. Vice Chair Villarreal: Many groups have been asking for this air quality information and will be eager to provide input at the public meetings
3. Michael Martin: What is the ideal number of monitors? Are we above or below that goal?
 - a. When we expand to a total of 36 monitors for the City, that will paint a good picture of where we are, but it's hard to predict if this is the exact number we'll need. We're putting out as many monitors as we can support with current staff. If it's not enough, we'll expand appropriately (which brings us to the importance of adequate funding for OEQS)
4. Commissioner Wallace: Regarding the NCTCOG presentation, please clarify the difference between off-road and non-road vehicles. What category does gas-powered landscape equipment fall under? Are there grants for small businesses who convert to electric landscape equipment?
 - a. Off-road: airplanes
 - b. Non-road: lawnmowers
 - c. Non-road = 16% contribution to NOx emissions
5. Susan Alvarez (OEQS): Highlighting the importance of distinguishing the purposes of regulatory and non-regulatory monitors. There are different types of data for each, and the data is used for different purposes. Data from non-regulatory monitors can indicate whether the regulatory system needs to be expanded
6. Commissioner Hiatt Haigh: Elaborate on non-compliance as it relates to transportation and infrastructure funding. What other infrastructure funding opportunities are there to support CECAP?
 - a. CMAQ funding can be used for congestion-mitigation and air quality. Most projects that fill an air quality benefit usually can receive CMAQ funding
 - b. It also depends on the project – there are certain projects you can't apply CMAQ funding to (i.e. repairing highways)
 - c. Funding for electric vehicles can come from the Regional Transportation Council – there should be more opportunities like this going forward
7. Commissioner Day: Are there methods of mitigating emissions from diesel truck idling near warehouse distribution centers?
 - a. NCTCOG has been working on programs related to this to get a better idea of truck traffic in the region (there has been an uptick in truck traffic)
8. Commissioner Dankert: Regarding strategies to create buffer zones around industrial zones, has NCTCOG been researching/working with other cities on defining a standard buffer? Even though we're making progress on air quality, we're backtracking in our classification. Are the 2030 goals attainable? What should we prioritize to meet this goal?
 - a. They have investigated something like this relative to transportation, and other divisions within NCTCOG may be looking at this as well
 - b. Air quality standards have gotten stricter. Exceedance days have been reducing over time

- c. The overarching goal of the CECAP is to improve public health. All CECAP categories will contribute to improvements in air quality. If we can tackle the buildings, energy, and transportation categories in the CECAP, air quality should improve
 - d. Note: During COVID, when vehicular transportation slowed, there were no changes in emissions. NCTCOG will investigate this further
9. Chair Bazan: What is our CDP score and how do we rank compared to other cities? Explain evaluation for decrease in Particulate Matter thresholds and how this will impact regional plans?
- a. Currently, we are at an “A” rating (improvement over previous years)
 - b. Decrease in Particulate Matter thresholds shouldn’t affect attainment status

3. Facility Updates Memo – *Errick Thompson, Director, Building Services & Srinivas Vemuri, Senior Program Manager, Building Services*

The speaker briefed the commission on upcoming solar and lighting retrofits on city facilities.

Attachment: [Memo](#)

Questions

1. Michael Martin: Will solar infrastructure be City-owned or third party-owned? Have we taken advantage of tax savings from solar projects?
- a. They will be City-owned assets at these specific facilities. Tax credits have been shared in the past with the private entity they’re working with.

Discussion Items

1. Environmental Health Committee Formation

Chair Bazan appointed Commissioner Thompson to serve as Chair of the Environmental Health Committee and Commissioner Roberson to serve as Vice Chair of the Committee. Chair Bazan also appointed three members of the public to serve on the committee: Dr. Folashade Afolabi, Dr. Sarah Ashitey and Haddijatou Bayo, P.E.

Attachments: [Ordinance No. 31847](#); [Memo](#)

2. Future Agenda Item Requests from the Commission

Chair Bazan discussed creating a process for the submission and vetting of agenda item requests received by or requested by Commissioners.

Action Items

1. Vote to Charge City Staff with Creating an Environmental Equity Checklist to Support the City’s Racial Equity Plan

Commissioner Derrough moved to charge city staff with creating an environmental equity checklist to support the city’s Racial Equity Plan.

Motion seconded by Vice Chair Villarreal and unanimously approved. (Murray absent when vote taken)

2. Vote to Change the Date / Time of Environmental Commission Meetings

Chair Bazan moved to change the date and time of Environmental Commission meetings to the second Thursday of each month from 5:30p.m. – 7:30p.m. Commissioner Wootton cannot attend meetings on Thursdays.

Chair Bazan amended the motion to change the date and time of Environmental Commission meetings to the second Wednesday of each month from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Vote to accept the amendment seconded by Vice Chair Villarreal and unanimously approved. (Murray absent when vote taken)

Motion to change the meeting date to the second Wednesday of each month from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. seconded by Vice Chair Villarreal and unanimously approved. (Murray absent when vote taken)

Adjournment

Commissioner Derrough motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Vice Chair Villarreal seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. (Murray absent when vote taken)

The Commission adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Approval for transmission:

Kathryn Bazan

Kathryn Bazan (Mar 2, 2022 18:04 CST)

Kathryn Bazan, Chair

3/2/2022

Date

Erin Diehl

Erin Diehl, Board Coordinator

3/2/2022

Date