



Environmental Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2022

AGENDA ID # [220740](#)

LOCATION: City Hall 6ES

CHAIR KATHRYN BAZAN PRESIDING

PRESENT: [12]

Philip Hiatt Haigh, District 1	Barry Lachman, District 12
*Mark Wootton, District 2	Charlie Dankert, District 13
**Candace Thompson, District 4	Paula Day, District 14
Tracy Wallace, District 5	*Julie Hiromoto, District 15
Temeckia Derrough, District 7	
Renee Roberson, District 8	
Kathryn Bazan, District 9	
Colleen Murray, District 11	

ABSENT: [2]

Vacant, District 3
Esther Villarreal, District 6
Andrew Siegel, District 10

**Note: Members of the Environmental Commission participated in this meeting by video conference.*

***Note: Indicates arrival time after meeting called to order/reconvened*

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. with a quorum of the Environmental Commission present.

Chair Bazan provided opening announcements.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

There were no speakers registered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Dankert moved to adopt the June 8, 2022 Environmental Commission meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously adopted (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent).

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

Commissioner Wallace moved to adopt the July 9, 2022 Environmental Commission meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dankert and unanimously adopted (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent).

BRIEFING ITEMS

I) Comprehensive Urban Agriculture Plan (CUAP) Recommendations

[Rabekha Siebert, Urban Agriculture Coordinator, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability; Christian Kanlian, Agritecture; Jeffrey Landau, Agritecture; Mikel Wilkins, TBG Partners; Jordan Clark, TBG Partners; Scott Snodgrass, The Edible Group, LLC]

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

- a) The speakers briefed the commission on development of recommendations for the Urban Agriculture Plan in support of the Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan (CECAP) goal that all Dallas's communities have access to healthy, local food.
- b) Questions/Comments
 - i) Cristian Camacho
 - (1) Bridge the gap with organizations doing the work on the ground.
 - (2) Urban agriculture is connected to all CECAP goals.
 - (3) Key: focus on education.
 - ii) Commissioner Lachman
 - (1) Food insecurity mitigation efforts align with two of the commission's strategic priorities around equity and public health.
 - (2) Seconding the need for education.
 - (3) Problems: yield per acre, distribution, food waste, and barriers related to permits.
 - (4) Coordinate with housing, developers, and faith-based organizations.
 - (5) Key: workforce development
 - iii) Commissioner Derrough
 - (1) Issue: obstacles related to receiving permits
 - (a) This is a work in progress – city departments that have jurisdiction over these processes are working with OEQS.
 - (b) In the meantime, OEQS is working with the people on the ground to help push their permits through.
 - iv) Commissioner Day
 - (1) Is there room to explore rooftop gardening, hydroponics, warehouses, etc.?
 - (a) Yes, the plan includes aquaponics, hydroponics, rooftop, vertical, etc.
 - (b) We're also discussing controlled-environment agriculture due to climate instability.
 - v) Commissioner Roberson
 - (1) Seconding importance of education.
 - (2) Accessibility of information and communication to the public is key.
 - vi) Michael Martin
 - (1) Where can we learn about similar programs we can replicate in Dallas?

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

- (a) Only a handful of cities have implemented Urban Agriculture plans.
- (b) City of Austin has a community garden program.

vii) Dr. Afolabi

- (1) What are we doing for people who don't already get food aid assistance/those in food deserts?
 - (a) Rabekha Siebert listed multiple initiatives and programs the City is implementing and involved in.
 - (b) Regarding opportunity zones, one of the recommendations is to direct funding for starting gardens in these areas first.
 - (c) Production isn't the same as food access – there are economic and social legacies that feed into this – we're targeting production in areas that need it.

viii) Commissioner Hironoto

- (1) Elaborate on timeline?
 - (a) Having active meetings with partner departments and gathering as much feedback as possible.
 - (b) The plan presented in September will be in draft form, but we have a good foundation for the recommendations.
- (2) What incentives are you coordinating with Planning & Urban Development (PUD)?
 - (a) Collaborating with PUD to align the CUAP with language in their plan.
 - (b) Working with the Economic Development department on incentives.
- (3) Are you considering incentives for farmers? How profitable are farmers' markets?
 - (a) It is an expense for farmers to go to markets. The plan includes solutions related to wholesale distribution options for farmers.
 - (b) Development incentives include floor area ratio bonuses. Working with PUD on incorporating edible landscaping in new parking regulations.
- (4) How are you planning to address food waste?
 - (a) Sanitation Services is doing a composting pilot. Other organizations are looking at a large-scale commercial composting plan.
 - (b) The City is working on composting pilots with non-profits as well.
 - (c) Working with distribution houses on establishing a food hierarchy and making them aware of tax incentives associated with donating food.

ix) Alan Hoffmann

- (1) Has there been discussion around property tax incentives for developers?
 - (a) You can get an Ag exemption within Dallas city limits.
- (2) Have we looked at programs Bonton Farms is doing?
 - (a) Working closely with Bonton and many others.

x) Commissioner Thompson

- (1) Is there a breakdown of demographics of those who participated in the survey?
 - (a) There is a map of zip codes that have been participating. There has been a higher participation in southern Dallas.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

- (2) How is the City vetting and interacting with stakeholders in opportunity zones to ensure equity?
 - (a) Partnerships have come through recommendations.
- xi) David Marquis
 - (1) We must look at one metric: how many people are we feeding (not how many pounds have we grown). We need consistency of evaluation to ensure this is increasing.
- xii) Chair Bazan
 - (1) The commission has been asked to support an amendment to the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. Have you heard of this bill and has there been/could there be any advocacy on our end?
 - (a) We are familiar and refer to this bill when discussing development of a food hierarchy. There is potential to support this.

II) Gas-Powered Landscape Equipment Policies

[Susan Alvarez, Assistant Director, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability]

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

- a) The speaker briefed the commission on updates related to considerations for policy recommendations, with a focus on equitable implementation.
- b) Questions/Comments
 - i) Commissioner Wallace
 - (1) Regarding pricing, electric will come in higher, but regarding fuel and maintenance, it would be lower than gas-powered?
 - (a) We have not explored this yet, nor have we looked at medical costs associated with using gas-powered. We focused solely on the first cost - this is a great point.
 - ii) Commissioner Lachman
 - (1) What is the cost per pound of conversion?
 - (a) Can divide emissions saved by cost.
 - iii) Commissioner Derrough
 - (1) Should implement rebates for purchasing electric equipment.
 - (2) Think about how the old equipment could be disposed of safely.
 - iv) Commissioner Day
 - (1) Regarding the pilot study, how equal is our comparison (White Rock study vs. downtown study)? From a communications standpoint, it would be beneficial to have continuity between the two studies.
 - (a) We can ask for a report from the Park & Recreation department.
 - (2) In the study, the White Rock team reported the electric equipment is heavier, but in reality, it is lighter.
 - v) Commissioner Hiatt Haigh
 - (1) Regarding the City contracts coming up on procurement of landscape equipment, how often do these types of contracts come up?
 - (a) Every five years.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

- (b) We can look at the bid tab to see if it was laid out line-by-line for electric vs. gas.
- vi) Commissioner Thompson
 - (1) Think about recycling rebates for old equipment.
 - (2) Consider impact of cost of conversion for small businesses, as well as homeowners.
- vii) Commissioner Dankert
 - (1) Has the pilot included mowers?
 - (a) Yes. Feedback was positive on tree trimming equipment as well.
 - (2) On a basic level, this would result in a 1.5-2% reduction in GHG emissions for \$30 million?
 - (a) Possibly. This is cheaper than EV conversion and solar. Cost per metric ton of CO₂ reduced is less in this scenario.
 - (3) Think about how to engage residents and commercial participants that would be affected. Prioritize education.
- viii) Michael Martin
 - (1) Hope we can get more resources to carry this through.
 - (2) Interested in a study on cost associated with health impacts to landscapers using gas-powered equipment.
 - (3) Suggest alerting the industry early on.
- ix) Commissioner Lachman
 - (1) Incentives/rebates are highly effective.
 - (2) Implement programs that allow retailers to receive tax breaks if they encourage or incentivize purchase of electric equipment.
- x) Commissioner Murray
 - (1) Many landscaping companies are already moving to electric on their own.
 - (2) Velocity of a leaf blower is destructive to the environment.
- xi) Chair Bazan
 - (1) Met with STIHL (provides the City's equipment). Feasibility of converting the City's equipment would take two years (lithium battery shortage). Have we forecasted a phased approach that takes this into account?
 - (a) This can be in the next set of calculations.
 - (2) Have we spoken with small businesses to see how much equipment they own?
 - (a) Have not done this yet – a large portion of these companies aren't registered with the Secretary of State.
 - (3) Would like to see a survey of equipment inventory in large to small scale businesses.
 - (4) Other cities have done up to a 50% rebate.
 - (5) Has the City done outreach on this?
 - (a) Not to date.
- xii) Commissioner Wallace
 - (1) Regarding health effects of gas-powered equipment, is there a number to quantify this impact?
 - (a) Limited peer-reviewed work in this area.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

xiii) Commissioner Roberson

(1) Data can be pulled, but it is incidental and can be tedious.

(2) If Council favors the tiered plan, this would be the way to go.

xiv) Commissioner Lachman

(1) Data needs to be pulled together in a more effective manner.

xv) Dr. Afolabi

(1) No one has looked at health effects extensively. We can look at health effects of traffic exposure. Look at air quality monitors when lawn services are nearby.

RECESS 7:45p.m. – 7:53p.m.

VOTING ITEM

I) Gas-Powered Landscape Equipment Policy Recommendations to the Environment & Sustainability (ENVS) Council Committee

a) Chair Bazan moved to send the following recommendation to the ENVS Committee (amendments shown as edits below):

i) Minimum of ~~six~~ **ten** weeks of community engagement in English and Spanish before Council vote to enact a policy.

ii) Tiered implementation recommended by the Environmental Health Committee

iii) That this tiered approach would be implemented after the City converts their equipment to electric.

iv) Establish an incentive fund for small businesses **and residents**; partner with manufacturers and distributors to match a rebate.

b) Commissioner Lachman seconded the original motion.

c) Commissioner Thompson proposed an amendment to extend the community engagement period from six weeks to ten weeks.

i) Commissioner Wallace seconded the amendment.

ii) Amendment passed unanimously (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent).

d) Commissioner Dankert proposed an amendment for the recommendation to allow residents to be eligible for incentives related to transitioning equipment.

i) Commissioner Wallace seconded the amendment.

ii) Amendment passed unanimously (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent).

e) Original motion, as amended (see edits above), passed unanimously (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent).

DISCUSSION ITEMS

I) Recap of Environmental Commission Strategic Planning Session

a) [Strategic Government Resources Report](#)

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

- b) Chair Bazan provided a summary of the planning session, including the five strategic priorities that were agreed on (see report above).

II) Formation of Priority-Based Subcommittees

- a) Chair Bazan announced establishment of the following additional subcommittees. Members will be appointed (can self-nominate) at the next meeting.
 - i) Environmental Justice
 - ii) Environmental Health (already formed)
 - iii) Outreach & Engagement (already formed; needs more members)
 - iv) Strategic Partnerships
 - v) Implementation

III) CECAP FY23 Implementation Work Plan Survey Responses from Commissioners

- a) Chair Bazan provided information on the survey available to commissioners to provide input on milestones to be added to next year's work plan.

IV) Monthly District Updates from Commissioners

- a) Commissioners Hiramoto (D15), Dankert (D13), Lachman (D12), Roberson (D8), Derrough (D7), Chair Bazan (substitute for D6), Commissioners Thompson (D4), Wootton (D2), and Chair Bazan (D9) provided updates from their districts.

V) Monthly Subcommittee Updates

- a) Outreach & Engagement: No updates at this time.
- b) Environmental Health: No updates at this time.

VI) Upcoming Meetings

- a) Environment & Sustainability Council Committee: Tuesday, September 6, 2022, 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.
- b) Environmental Commission: Wednesday, September 14, 2022, 5:30p.m. – 7:30p.m.
- c) David Marquis provided updates.

ADJOURNMENT

After all business of the Environmental Commission had been considered, Commissioner Dankert moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wallace and unanimously accepted (Vice Chair Villarreal and Commissioner Siegel absent). The Environmental Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:44p.m.

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
OF AUGUST 10, 2022**

Erin Diehl

Drafted by:
Erin Diehl, Board Coordinator
Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability

9/15/22

Date

Kathryn Bazan

Approved by:
Kathryn Bazan, Chair
Environmental Commission

Sep 15, 2022

Date

Attachments:

[Meeting Recording](#)