



# Environmental Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting | Monday, May 16, 2022

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### [Agenda](#)

#### Call to Order 5:35 p.m.

Announcements from Chair Bazan:

Special thanks to the Planning & Urban Design Department, specifically Lori Levy, Julia Ryan, and Andreea Udrea, for bringing forth concrete and batch plant code amendments that support our Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan (CECAP).

[Public meetings](#) for input on concrete batch plant code amendment (phase II):

May 17<sup>th</sup> 6p.m. – 7p.m.

May 21<sup>st</sup> 9:30a.m. – 10:30a.m.

May 23<sup>rd</sup> 6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, Council voted to allocate \$2 million toward remediation of former Blue Star site.

#### Public Comment / Open Microphone

No speakers

#### Approval of [Minutes](#)

Vice Chair Villarreal moved to adopt the minutes as presented.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Wootton and unanimously adopted.

#### Briefing Items

1. **Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update – *Kevin Overton, Senior Environmental Coordinator, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability; Michael Young, Technical Project Manager, National Renewable Energy Laboratory***

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

- a. The speakers briefed the Commission on the City's greenhouse gas inventory data from 2019.
- b. Questions
  - i. Commissioner Lachman
    1. What have we done to look at health effects from these emissions, specifically on childhood asthma?
      - a. This isn't a part of the GHG inventory, but we have air monitoring projects that address this.
  - ii. Commissioner Derrough
    1. Is the City landfill considered in the inventory data?
      - a. Yes – it is part of the government and community scale measure.
  - iii. Commissioner Hiromoto
    1. In Scope 1, there is a 43% reduction in emissions from buildings and facilities. What accounts for the 4% increase in Scope 2?

- a. This could be due to a transition from on-site combustion to electric heating/cooling (which would be a shift from Scope 1 to Scope 2).
  - b. The City sources electricity supplied to government electricity accounts from wind generation. This is reported separately. Net emissions from Scope 2 were reduced by 70% from 2015.
- iv. Commissioner Day
  - 1. Regarding the community scale category of transportation and mobile sources - are we really driving that much less, given our population growth?
    - a. As older cars are taken off the road, they're replaced with newer cars that emit less. We will investigate this further with NCTCOG.
- v. Michael Martin
  - 1. Regarding the C40 Comparison (totals by city) – per capita, there has been a reduction. Is the per capita number what we should care about?
    - a. Overall, looking at it on a per capita basis is something we should dig into in more detail.
  - 2. Now that we've done this inventory 4 times, with what frequency will we continue?
    - a. Probably every 3 years going forward.
- vi. Dr. Boccalandro
  - 1. Regarding purchasing credits – has this been done with air travel? Is there a policy for employee travel by air?
    - a. As far as the government side, air travel is a small percentage of overall emissions. We aren't aware of action to purchase credits for air travel for city employees.
  - 2. What percentage of City vehicles are electric?
    - a. Right now, our reporting to the CDP indicates that 4.2 percent of our fleet is comprised of plug-in Hybrid, and battery electric vehicles, a small number of the total. Fleet electrification measures are included in the CECAP. NREL is doing a fleet study to find the most practical ways to convert our existing light duty vehicles to electric.
- vii. Alan Hoffmann
  - 1. Is there a voltage drop associated with moving electricity from fossil and nuclear through the grid?
    - a. We didn't look at the technical aspects of that in this inventory.
    - b. There is a piece of Scope 3 emissions related to efficiency losses due to transfer. This will be in the final report.
- viii. Rita Beving
  - 1. Do you know when the City's next energy contract is up?
    - a. We went into that contract in 2020 with TXU. We have 8 years left.
  - 2. Hope the City will move toward purchasing green energy directly, rather than energy credits. This would create more demand in that market.
    - a. The current contract allows for a switch to green energy/on-site-generated energy.
- ix. Commissioner Roberson
  - 1. Is there a benefit to what we're doing with TXU vs. buying credits?
    - a. Yes – the current way allows us to generate our own energy through solar. Building Services signed contracts to double solar energy produced in City facilities.
    - b. Regarding loss due to transmission, self-generated is more efficient.
    - c. If you're able to self-generate, you don't pay a transmission fee.
- x. Michael Martin
  - 1. Direct solar on our buildings will be more valuable than energy credits since it's a direct application, correct?

- a. We have 12 solar buildings right now. Yes, that is correct.
  - b. The reduction wouldn't necessarily be enhanced, it would show up on a different place on the balance sheet.
- xi. Chair Bazan
  - 1. Does the City purchase carbon credits? Do we have a policy to regulate this?
    - a. We do not currently and do not yet have a policy to this effect.

**2. FY22 CECAP Progress Update - *Susan Alvarez, Assistant Director, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability***

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

- a. The speaker briefed the commission on progress toward meeting the CECAP targets in the FY 21-22 work plan, as well as future opportunities moving forward.
- b. Questions
  - i. Commissioner Derrough
    - 1. How are we decreasing/diverting landfill waste?
      - a. Encouraging reduction of volume, diverting yard waste (i.e. brush and bulk separation, which is part of the Local Solid Waste Management Plan from the Sanitation Services Department).
  - ii. Vice Chair Villarreal
    - 1. Is there an increase in composting programs?
      - a. This is on the list for future opportunities. We have a grant with USDA for an ongoing pilot to pick up food waste from restaurants for composting.
    - 2. We are at 19% landfill diversion with a goal to get to 30% by 2030. Can we do this just by composting programs and bulk/brush separation?
      - a. Sanitation Services is in a good place to do this. It is possible.
  - iii. Commissioner Hiromoto
    - 1. You mentioned 39,000 is the target for number of EVs. What is the total percentage of vehicles on the road in Dallas?
      - a. The D-FW region leads the way across the state with the highest total number of registered EVs, with 43,836 as of April 2022. D-FW residents account for more than one-third of Texas EV owners, according to Texas Department of Motor Vehicles data; that figure includes Dallas, Collin, Tarrant, Rockwall, Ellis, Parker, Johnson and Kaufman Counties. Overall, this number is less than 1 percent of the total vehicles on the road.
    - 2. Is the current EV charging target ambitious enough? Should we set a higher goal?
      - a. Initially, we didn't anticipate such a quick public adoption of EV use.
      - b. The plan can be changed as necessary/goals can be reevaluated.
  - iv. Commissioner Hiatt Haigh
    - 1. The Parkdale Lake donation is the last largest parkland donation in Dallas's history. There isn't a larger piece of land the City can acquire.
      - a. There may be other property based off aerial photos.
    - 2. Does it make more sense to look at what available green space is left in the city vs. how we can acquire it?
      - a. It may be a combination. We may be looking at parcels for potential parks, looking at greening retrofits, and recapping urbanized area.
    - 3. Do you think it would help to define green space with more nuance so we can take on these challenges more creatively? It would be good to include this in our metrics.

- a. The other opportunity lies with PUD's ForwardDallas Comprehensive Land Use Plan related to optimal placement of green infrastructure. They are also looking at redlining and zoning issues.
  - 4. Is this something that should be added to the CECAP?
    - a. There are actions related blue/green/gray, actions to increase green space, and support PUD with development of ForwardDallas.
- v. Commissioner Roberson
  - 1. Infrastructure is key in energy equity implications associated with EV charging station placement.
  - 2. It's difficult to recycle in certain areas of the city. Consider setting up recycling stations. Is there is a committee that can look at metrics/disparities in electricity prices (they are high in South Dallas)?
    - a. Looking at community solar (which would provide energy at a reduced cost) and weatherization (which leads to greater energy efficiency).
    - b. Note about [choosetexaspower.org](http://choosetexaspower.org). People may unknowingly pay more than they need to.
- vi. Vice Chair Villarreal
  - 1. Obstacles in the way of people getting access to weatherization grants include that the house must be in your name.
    - a. This is a challenge because 58% of residents are in multifamily homes.
- vii. Michael Martin
  - 1. Emphasis on weatherization. The money is there, but there aren't enough contractors.
  - 2. What are we currently doing to combat food deserts in South Dallas?
    - a. There are efforts in both public and private sectors. The City has a Food Innovation Working Group. We're hoping to use the Restorative Farms model for centralized chilled storage. Working with Agritecture on community agriculture programs (coming forward for approval this fall).
  - 3. What is the City trying to do to get more grocery stores to come to town?
- viii. Alan Hoffmann \*technical difficulties – will send questions/comments to staff\*
- ix. Chair Bazan
  - 1. It's great news that we have a reduction in 303(d) impaired waters. What are we doing to improve water quality?
    - a. Since 2012, we've had a bacteria reduction implementation plan.
      - i. Use of street cleaning to disrupts biofilm in gutters
      - ii. Outreach programs on picking up pet waste
      - iii. Measures related to septic replacement and sewer overflow
      - iv. The goal is to get bacteria to safe levels
  - 2. How are we reducing water consumption and how do we compare?
    - a. We use more water per capita, per day than most cities.
    - b. We have an irrigation audit program with rebates and conservation measures.
    - c. Most water use is on turf/grasses. Move to using native plants and prairie restoration
    - d. OEQS does significant water conservation outreach.
  - 3. We have specific tasks to improve neighborhood air quality. How will we measure and implement these improvements?
    - a. With data! We're hoping to get better information at the neighborhood level to inform public health interventions.
  - 4. Does it make sense to request that TCEQ install additional monitors?

- a. Unsure. We would need to look at City vs. TCEQ efforts. CM Blackmon has looked at if we've done a gap analysis. We received an additional monitor near a treatment plant. Until we get this preliminary data, we don't know where we may need more of the regulatory monitors.

### 3. Characterization and Remediation of the Former Blue Star Site to Residential Standards – *Carlos Evans, Director, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability*

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

- a. The speaker briefed the Commission on the history of the former Blue Star site, the City's process related to acquiring the property, the current status, next steps, expected timeline, and communication and outreach efforts.
- b. Commissioner Hironoto recused herself from the briefing and vote.
- c. Questions

#### i. Commissioner Roberson

1. Regarding communication/outreach/education to the community – how do you plan to do this?
  - a. We're developing our outreach strategy. We want to engage the Floral Farms community and the Environmental Commission as much as possible. We will look at further appropriate venues (i.e. Lane Plating CAG).
2. Would like to see contamination protocols that people can use to know who to call.
  - a. Noted. We have the 311 system, but should there be an additional process?
3. People have issues with 311 related to timeliness. We need something more user-friendly. If it's an issue like Shingle Mountain or Lane Plating, that is beyond 311. Would like to see another venue/established protocol to prevent issues from escalating this far.
  - a. We're trying to find ways to regularly engage neighborhoods. This may be a venue to provide updates, as well as hear further concerns.
4. Weekend townhalls have been effective (once a month or every quarter).

#### ii. Commissioner Derrough

1. Once TCEQ takes over remediation, will the City still be involved?
  - a. We will continue to manage it with our consultant – we will still be in the driver's seat and we'll work together on solutions.
2. What can the community do to protect their health in the meantime? How can the City inform the community on what to do?
  - a. The contaminated fill shouldn't be impacting anyone off-site. It isn't being emitted into the atmosphere. We're implementing stormwater management controls (i.e. erosion controls).
3. Could we put up a high buffer wall around the site?
  - a. We are going to contract a consultant for additional evaluation to see if we need to augment stormwater controls. There will be measures taken during the removal as well (i.e. dust control).

#### iii. Commissioner Roberson

1. Who is going to physically monitor that site regularly?
  - a. OEQS, the City, and contractors will be inspecting regularly.
  - b. We'll have air monitors on the site as well.

- c. Our consultant has started preparing a robust environmental assessment that will evaluate potential exposure pathways. This will determine next steps.
  - 2. Can we get a schedule of times people will be out there?
    - a. Yes – will work on this. Will have to figure out access logistics.
- iv. Vice Chair Villarreal
  - 1. Lead fill was historically accepted and used across the City. Are there grants/funding for City-wide soil testing?
    - a. There have been discussions of annual programs for OEQS-lead remediation efforts with City/EPA/other funds. Regarding properties not owned by the City, this becomes more difficult. We're having conversations on feasibility of a program moving forward.
    - b. The EPA Brownfields program has assessment and remediation grants (non-profits can apply for this too).
  - 2. Please send information on this.
  - 3. Regarding lead-contaminated fill, is there a retroactive fine mechanism to implement?
    - a. This would go back to something legal. For the City's ongoing purchases, we conduct appropriate due diligence.
  - 4. Residential standards are down to 12 in?
    - a. It is 0-15ft. Our fill goes down to 8 ft. The screening is showing that contamination of lead exceeding residential standards extends down to 3ft maximum.
  - 5. Removal will be of the first 3ft of soil?
    - a. It will be based on the investigation and focused on where it exceeds. Confirmation testing will be done before clean fill is brought in.
- v. Michael Martin
  - 1. Would like to find ways to hold whoever created the problem accountable, rather than making it the City's (and therefore the citizens') problem.
    - a. For this property, under federal and state law, if we find a viable and liable party, we can bring action against owners who owned the property at the time of contamination. We're having these conversations with the City Attorney's Office. Moving forward, we can discuss a program to focus on communities with environmental justice concerns. We have federal and state legal opportunities in these circumstances as well.
- vi. Chair Bazan
  - 1. Since lead contamination exceeds TCLP, is it considered hazardous waste? Will this preclude it from going to the City's landfill? If so, where will it go?
    - a. We do a TCLP analysis to see if it will leech. We did this analysis during shingle removal. None was hazardous. We're expecting to find the same conditions when we do this response action. We'll continue to evaluate further.
    - b. Primary way to identify hazardous waste is to use EPA method 1311. We used this during removal of shingles with soil. We'll use this method as soon as we identify full scope of soil contamination.
  - 2. Do we expect it to go to the City's landfill if it's not hazardous?
    - a. The expectation is that it will go to the landfill if it meets Class II requirements.
  - 3. When disturbed, can lead become airborne? If so, can this be detected with non-regulatory monitors?
    - a. We don't believe lead-contaminated fill will become airborne.

- b. Modern Geosciences used air monitors that detected particulates. These will also be used during response action.
  - 4. What about during remediation?
    - a. We'll take measures to control dust (use of controlled water to suppress dust, remediation wouldn't occur on windy days, and will use air monitors).
  - 5. Supporting Commissioner Derrough's idea of using a large screen. Can send more information on this. Would like to see something that will unquestionably protect residents.
  - 6. How will we minimize impact to the neighborhood (truck traffic, hours of operation)?
    - a. We plan to remediate on weekdays during the day. We'll use mitigation measures when it comes to truck traffic.
  - 7. Residents have raised concerns about water pooling on site. Is this a function of stormwater mitigation efforts?
    - a. Site will be regraded. There will be positive drainage and the pond will not be there.
  - 8. Will we also see a reduction in arsenic levels even though they aren't above residential standards?
    - a. Yes, we'll see a reduction.
  - 9. Would like to create a chain of staff contacts that people can reach out to throughout the project.
- vii. Commissioner Roberson
  - 1. How will the community know what date remediation will start? During remediation, will there be someone on the property to ensure accountability?
    - a. We're still developing outreach strategy. We'll notify residents when remediation will start.
  - 2. Suggest a notice in the water bill?
    - a. Can look into it, within the bounds of budget.
    - b. During shingle removal, residents around the boundary received a letter. The question is how far out from the boundary do you make a notification?

## Action Items

1. **Vote to Recommend that the City Immediately Begin Characterization and Remediation of Former Blue Star Site to Residential Standards**

Chair Bazan recognized Commissioner Roberson for a motion.

Commissioner Roberson motioned a vote to recommend that the City immediately begin characterization and remediation of former Blue Star site to residential standards.

Vice Chair Villarreal seconded the motion.

Chair Bazan and Commissioner Roberson provided remarks of recognition.

Item passed unanimously (Commissioner Hiromoto recused for vote; Commissioners Thompson, Wallace, and Lachman absent when vote taken).

## Discussion Items

1. **Monthly District Updates from Commissioners**

Commissioner Hiatt Haigh (D1), Commissioner Wootton (D2), Vice Chair Villarreal (D6), Commissioner Derrough (D7), Commissioner Roberson (D8), and Chair Bazan (D9) highlighted recent events and updates from their districts.

Commissioner Siegel (D10) provided an introduction.

Commissioner Murray (D11) highlighted recent events and updates from her district.

Commissioner Hiromoto (D15/Mayor) provided an introduction.

## 2. Monthly Subcommittee Updates

- a. Environmental Health
  - i. Vice Chair Roberson provided an update to the Commission. The Environmental Health Committee will meet on June 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss gas-powered landscape equipment policy recommendations.
- b. Outreach & Engagement
  - i. Chair Bazan provided an update to the Commission.

## 3. Upcoming Meetings

Environment & Sustainability Committee: Monday, June 6, 2022, 9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.

Environmental Commission: Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 5:30p.m. – 7:30p.m.

## Adjournment

Commissioner Roberson motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Hiatt Haigh seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. (Commissioners Thompson, Wallace, and Lachman absent when vote taken).

**The Commission adjourned at 8:51 p.m.**

## Approval for transmission:



[Kathryn Bazan \(Jun 7, 2022 16:36 CDT\)](#)

Kathryn Bazan, Chair

Jun 7, 2022

Date



Erin Diehl, Board Coordinator

6/7/2022

Date