

-Environmental Commission Regular Meeting Minutes-

April 10, 2024

AGENDA

LOCATION: City Hall 6ES & Webex

WEBEX LINK, [469-210-7159](https://cityhall6es.webex.com/join?url=469-210-7159) / 2489 568 2839

CHAIR KATHRYN BAZAN PRESIDING

PRESENT: [10]

Mark Wootton, District 2	Andrew Siegel, District 10
Michael Cook, District 3	Colleen Murray, District 11
Esther Villarreal, District 6	Barry Lachman, District 12
Temeckia Derrough, District 7	Paula Day, District 14
Kathryn Bazan, District 9	Julie Hiromoto, District 15

ABSENT: [3]

Teresita Delgado, District 1	
Tracy Wallace, District 5	
Renee Roberson, District 8	

**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 5:43 p.m. with a quorum of the Environmental Commission present.

The meeting agenda, posted in accordance with Chapter 551, "OPEN MEETINGS," OF THE Texas Government Code, was presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Bazan provided opening announcements.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

None

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Bazan moved to defer the March 6, 2024 Environmental Commission meeting minutes to the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hiromoto and unanimously approved.

BRIEFING ITEMS

I) Landscape Equipment Transition Plan

[Paul White II, Assistant Director, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability; Freddie Ortiz, Environmental Coordinator III, Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability]

Attachment: Presentation

The Commission was briefed on the LET Program plan by the Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability.

a) Questions/Comments

i) Commissioner Derrough

(1) What does the voucher / rebate program consist of and how does it work?

(2) How does a resident find out about the program and apply?

(a) Those details are still being worked out. The department is considering an application process for coupons or vouchers, or a combination of both.

ii) Vice Chair Villarreal

(1) Have you considered starting with one or two pieces of equipment?

(a) The department is evaluating all equipment and has not narrowed it down to just one or two pieces to cast the broadest net for cost benefit.

(b) The City Council wants to transition as soon as possible and the longer it takes to expand our net the longer it will take to transition out the equipment throughout the city.

iii) Commissioner Lachman

(1) What other cities have had success with this program or is the City Of Dallas the frontrunner?

(a) San Antonio Water System and Austin has just started their program.

(2) Should part of the EVC's plan be to seek other revenue sources to help the city accelerate the transition to battery operated equipment and offset budget constraints?

(3) If we are looking for public support, leaf blowers are the #1 thing that the community is making comments about.

(4) Consider the idea of allowing the companies that have transitioned to battery equipment to receive a green stamp of approval.

iv) Commissioner Villareal

(1) The preference is that gas-powered equipment be surrendered. Have we looked at what proper disposal will look like?

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- (a) Conversation has been started with Sanitation to see if that is a possibility. Also looking at using Transportation as a drop off location.
 - (2) Would these machines be broken down and recycled, would they be melted or would they be shipped off?
 - (a) We could model it after the Lawnmower exchange in 2009 where that equipment was recycled.
- v) Commissioner Beving
 - (1) Why aren't we starting with the landscape companies since they are the ones that need this the most to protect their people?
 - (a) When we put out a survey, the residents were more active than the business community, so we decided to serve the residents first, but the 2nd phase of the project is getting the business community involved.
 - (b) The original intent was to launch this to cover incentives for both residential and business communities, but the business community voiced a number of concerns, i.e., performance requirements, equity concerns. Not everyone in the business community supported the plan and that resulted in SB1017 which prohibits us from mandating battery-powered equipment. We have to be more cautious in how we approach the business community and resolve their concerns before including them in the plan.
 - (2) Have we had discussions with COG as they develop their regional plan?
 - (a) We are in discussions with COG now to see if their plan can support the Landscape Transition Plan and will keep you posted on those conversations.
 - (b) There have been information sessions and suggestions that maybe they lead the program for the commercial side since not all businesses work in just Dallas, but also in surrounding cities.
 - (c) A region wide Landscape Transition Plan would probably be best, then all cities could potentially contribute funding.
- vi) Commissioner Hoffman
 - (1) Have we considered doing a limited analysis of a project like the Arboretum to determine how to transition?
 - (a) As we collaborate with Parks, we can see what their approach is and if they could be a pilot project. We will bring it up in our next discussion.
- vii) Commissioner Martin
 - (1) Is the City the biggest landscaper? We need to figure out a way to move faster with the city's Parks department and facilities.
 - (2) Is there a retailer that we know of anywhere in the country that has implemented this type of program?
 - (a) Yes, we have already spoken to several of the largest retailers, and they have done this before and have given us several strategies on how to do this.

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- (3) Have we reached out to neighborhood associations and community groups so that they are also aware? They may be helpful in disseminating this information to their members vs just using the media.
- viii) Commissioner Marquis
 - (1) We need to create demand by going to the Chambers of Commerce, the neighborhood associations, the homeowner associations, the Dallas homeowners league and saying if they will take the lead on sending this information to the people that do the work for them, we will help them find the money to transition the equipment.
 - (2) There is a lot of money available right now to take on these issues of air and noise pollution, so this needs to be a coordinated effort on many different levels. We can approach this in a very holistic manner and have much greater impact.
- ix) Commissioner Beving
 - (1) Has there been any thought around targeting areas of the city that have higher incidents of air pollution or parts of the city that would benefit the most from decreasing noise pollution?
 - (a) At this time, we have been looking at the whole city and have not broken it down using those parameters.
- x) Commissioner Siegel
 - (1) Have we spoken to any manufacturers to see if they will provide subsidies?
 - (a) No, not at this time, but we have made a note of the comment and that is something we will consider.
- xi) Commissioner Wilson
 - (1) Have we considered making incentives for the batteries?
 - (a) We are considering a rebate for the batteries vs a program for replacement batteries.
 - (b) There is a lawn care company in Dallas that is completely electric and they have installed a solar panel on their vehicles to charge the batteries as they go from job to job.
- xii) Chair Bazan
 - (1) I recommend that, before you explain the cost breakdown, you add a slide that talks about the 3 proposed options that you are considering.
 - (2) Discuss some of the negatives related to those options and show the disparity between the funding we currently have and what is needed.
 - (3) Steer away from offering a rebate on the water bill because that potentially would not benefit renters.
 - (a) We have taken the renters into consideration.
 - (4) Instead of recycling, consider if any of the parts can be kept and reused.
 - (5) We should encourage the city to implement this program internally before introducing it externally.

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II) Results of Heat Island Study

[Carlos Evans, Director, Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability]

Attachment: Memo

- a) The Commission discussed the memo regarding the Urban Heat island Study.
- b) The results of the study and the link to the interactive map on Dallas Climate Action and GreenDallas.net
 - i) Commissioner Derrough
 - (1) None of the areas pinpointed are in Southern Dallas and I was with the team that did the study; so, it is surprising that those areas were not included. I think we should reevaluate those areas again.
 - (a) The top 10 are based on areas in the 100 square miles that were covered.
 - (b) North Dallas was not done yet but will be done this summer along with the rest of the city that has not been done yet.
 - ii) Commissioner Lachman
 - (1) Looking at data through the Environmental Justice lens, there is a difference in the amount of heat and the heat impact.
 - (2) We must consider both the amount of heat that is generated and the impact of that heat.
 - iii) Commissioner Marquis
 - (1) If we look at this list, we must consider the issue of creating denser development and continuing to develop vertically, we will create more heat islands.
 - (2) We must buffer that with more trees and more open spaces.
 - (a) One of our CECAP goals is to increase canopy cover and we are looking at full roof solutions, cool pavement and smart surfaces
 - iv) Commissioner Day
 - (1) With the amount of money that is being devoted to street repair, can we do cool pavement at the same time?
 - (a) The data on cool pavement is mixed right now so public works is conducting a pilot program throughout the city.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

I) Monthly Subcommittee Updates

- a) The Environmental Health, Environmental Justice, Implementation, Outreach & Engagement, and Strategic Partnerships & Innovation Subcommittees provided updates.

II) Monthly District Updates from Commissioners

- a) The Commission provided updates on events and meetings they've attended.

III) Upcoming Meetings

- a) Parks, Trails, & Environment Council Committee: Monday, May 6, 2024, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
- b) Environmental Commission: Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

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ADJOURNMENT

After all business of the Environmental Commission had been considered, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously accepted. The Environmental Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Drafted by:
Stephanie Hansberry, Board Coordinator
Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability

Date

Approved by:
Kathryn Bazan, Chair
Environmental Commission

Date