



Environmental Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2023

AGENDA

LOCATION: City Hall 6ES & Webex

CHAIR KATHRYN BAZAN PRESIDING

PRESENT: [11]

Philip Hiatt Haigh, District 1	Kathryn Bazan, District 9
Mark Wootton, District 2	**Colleen Murray, District 11
Candace Thompson, District 4	Barry Lachman, District 12
Esther Villarreal, District 6	* Charlie Dankert, District 13
Temeckia Derrough, District 7	*Julie Hiromoto, District 15
Renee Roberson, District 8	

ABSENT: [2]

Paula Day, District 14
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 5:38PM with a quorum of the Environmental Commission present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Bazan provided opening announcements.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

No speakers registered.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Villarreal moved to adopt the February 8, 2023 Environmental Commission meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously adopted.

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

I) Government Affairs Update

[Lillian Mauldin, Senior Government Affairs Coordinator, Office of Government Affairs]

Attachment: [Memo](#)

- a) The speaker briefed the commission on a summary of the City's legislative priorities related to environment and sustainability, as well as a list of relevant filed bills.
- b) Questions/Comments
 - i) Rita Beving
 - (1) Calling attention to/highlighting the following bills.
 - (a) SB 149
 - (b) SB 814
 - (c) HB 2127
 - ii) Chair Bazan
 - (1) TCEQ Sunset bills: HB 1505, SB 1397
 - (2) HB 941
 - iii) Dr. Ashitey
 - (1) Aside from tracking these bills, can we write letters, etc?
 - (a) Rita Beving: It may be too soon to start writing in. I will keep everyone apprised as these bills move.
 - iv) Dr. Afolabi
 - (1) Will you make us aware if/when we can submit comments for these and is there a chance these will make it to the floor?
 - (a) Our State Legislative Director, Clifford Sparks, will flag bills to OGA and OEQS that look viable. OGA will consult with OEQS and the City Attorney's Office on comments.
 - v) Commissioner Lachman
 - (1) Will be in Austin on March 21st.
 - vi) Commissioner Dankert
 - (1) Calling attention to another bill: SB 1453

BRIEFING ITEMS

I) Texas Trees Foundation: Dallas Tree Equity Planting Map

[Norm Daley, Chief Operations & Communications Officer, Texas Trees Foundation]

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

- a) The speakers briefed the Commission on health equity as it relates to Dallas's urban forest, including an overview of the Dallas Tree Equity Planting Map and community engagement efforts.
- b) Questions/Comments
 - i) Michael Martin
 - (1) What are the main obstacles you're facing in this initiative?
 - (a) We're looking to educate communities on why these trees are important. We'd like neighborhoods to work with us to develop planting projects in the urgent areas.
 - ii) Commissioner Thompson
 - (1) When can we get started? What is the process for upkeep of these trees?
 - (a) Hoping to meet with MPT Arnold in the coming weeks to get this started. We'd love to see trees planted next fall. Irrigation will be a part of the project proposal.
 - (2) Do you have district-specific information?
 - (a) Yes.
 - iii) Commissioner Derrough
 - (1) Please provide more information on the particulate matter study.
 - (a) The study started in January 2022 with UNT Denton and was completed in December. Data will be available in April 2023.
 - (2) Would like to work with TTF on increasing canopy in District 7 near the rail lines.
 - iv) Commissioner Roberson
 - (1) Concerns over high heat in uncovered bus stops. Have you thought of these areas as a priority for planting?
 - (a) We've been in contact with DART for train stations, but we can look at bus stations as well.
 - (2) Do smaller trees/shrubs absorb more particulate matter?
 - (a) That is what the study says. It is good to have varying levels/sizes of vegetation.
 - v) Vice Chair Villarreal
 - (1) What are your engagement strategies? Can you come to neighborhood association meetings? How are you utilizing City resources to spread the word?
 - (a) We are on social media and intend to come to local meetings. We do need City resources, as we're still in the beginning stages.
 - (2) Developers and homeowners are aggressively removing trees. What advice do you have on this?
 - (a) Focus is educating people on the importance of trees.
 - (b) Texas Trees Foundation isn't anti-development, but we advocate for keeping as much of the canopy as possible.
 - (3) City doesn't have staff to maintain trees in the first year they're planted. What resources do you have to help?
 - (a) We're developing a workforce program that will focus on training urban foresters. We'll continue to have conversations with the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

vi) Dr. Afolabi

- (1) Regarding the Dallas health equity indicators, what is your timeline to document effectiveness of the program?
 - (a) We hope to move forward with this information in the summer and fall.
- (2) Once you've started to develop the programs/projects, what is the timeline to get the measurements/reports?
 - (a) Once we start the plantings (fall), we could have estimates by the summer regarding what benefits these trees could bring to the community over the next years.

vii) Commissioner Wallace

- (1) Is there a higher priority for high-level ratings in South Dallas?
 - (a) Red areas are important as well, in addition to violet. We need to determine what makes the most sense for each Council District.
- (2) Are violet areas in South Dallas / violet areas surrounded by red areas more of a priority than violet areas in north Dallas / violet areas surrounded by green areas?
 - (a) We didn't only rank violet areas within each district, but we ranked the districts themselves. District 4 has the most immediate need for planting.

viii) Dr. Ashitey

- (1) As you work through the plan, do you have anything in place to assess areas that are changing? Is there going to be ongoing assessment of need?
 - (a) The report itself is done at a point in time, but community engagement processes will serve to identify changes.
 - (b) This is also the purpose of the equity indicators for urban forestry.

ix) Dr. Lachman

- (1) Have you shared data with the Parkland Center on Clinical Innovation?
 - (a) Yes, we've met with them and are sharing our data with UT Southwestern, Children's, and Parkland. We're bringing in hospital sustainability officers too.
 - (b) We've hired staff to lead our workforce program (hasn't launched yet).

x) Vice Chair Villarreal

- (1) Are there plans to take care of rookeries?
 - (a) Yes - no one will disturb the rookeries!

xi) Commissioner Dankert

- (1) Elaborate on water meter policy recommendations.
 - (a) We're having issues in some areas for not having a water meter and are having trouble getting a licensed irrigator (on City land).
- (2) Are you getting what you need from DWU?
 - (a) No.
- (3) Elaborate on Article X
 - (a) Texas Trees Foundation believes Article X could be used to provide mitigation trees for private property plantings in urgent priority areas.
- (4) What would the approval and funding process be for this?

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

- (a) City would be funding trees for private property. We're looking to expand exemption related to trees for areas impacted by the 2019 tornado.
 - (5) Related to the tree inventory, elaborate on the work you're proposing and how it relates to the need for the inventory to be completed. How can we advocate for the inventory to be completed more quickly?
 - (a) It's hard to manage a forest if you don't know what's in it. A tree inventory needs to happen ASAP, especially in light of the Emerald Ash Borer.
 - (6) Do you know how many of the 14 million trees are on public vs. private property?
 - (a) Can get back to you on this.
- xii) Chair Bazan
- (1) Did you use the new redistricted Council Districts in this report?
 - (a) They are the old districts.
 - (2) Regarding Article X, if we use funds to put trees on private property, does that include the tree plus irrigation, maintenance, etc.
 - (a) This will need to be part of the discussion on whether or not this is viable.
 - (3) If we're going to make this investment, we need to ensure the trees will still be there in 20 years.

II) Dallas Forestry Update

[Philip Erwin, Manager, Development Services; Blake Wyne, Manager, Park & Recreation Department; Preston Willms, Environmental Coordinator, Public Works]

Attachment: [Presentation](#)

- a) The speakers briefed the commission on accomplishments of the City of Dallas's Forestry Team over the last year.
- b) Questions/Comments
 - i) Chair Bazan
 - (1) Please walk us through an update on the Urban Forest Master Plan (i.e. performance metrics on the 14 steps).
 - (a) Recommendation 1: 50% complete
 - (2) Please partner with our Implementation Subcommittee to get this information for all 14 steps, then bring this back to the full Commission.
 - ii) Commissioner Derrough
 - (1) After this last storm, we had many damaged trees. Does the City have any storm response procedures to survey tree damage?
 - (a) When we're contacted by the community, we go out. We partner with Re-Tree. We also have a tree giveaway in November.
 - (2) Is this information in water bills?
 - (a) We can do this. See forestry website as well.
 - iii) Commissioner Hiatt Haigh
 - (1) What is the process for amending the City Code / Article X?

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

- (a) Have an ordinance written to be sent to the City Council. This would likely come from Planning & Urban Design.
- (2) How long would this take?
 - (a) Several months.
- (3) When does the City plant new trees on public land?
 - (a) Mid October to March or early April. If there is a particular space where there are concerns, we hear about it. We start planning out planting in June.
- (4) Are there any amendments to Article X in terms of the use of those funds that would benefit your work?
 - (a) There has been discussion about having money set aside for maintenance. We are doing incremental adjustments as needed (i.e. related to disaster response and Emerald Ash Borer).
- iv) Commissioner Roberson
 - (1) Please elaborate on protecting historic trees.
 - (a) We have an ordinance where you can seek to declare a tree historic. More information can be found in our Landscape and Tree Manual.
- v) Commissioner Dankert
 - (1) We are here to partner with you in implementing this plan. Priority is getting the tree inventory done.
- vi) Vice Chair Villarreal
 - (1) Why is the standard for historic tree designation so high?
 - (a) The standard comes from the ordinance. Council makes the determination in each case.
- vii) Chair Bazan
 - (1) How does number of trees planted this year compare to previous years?
 - (a) It increases every year.
 - (2) Elaborate on TreeKeeper software.
 - (a) Encompasses maintenance and inventory.
 - (b) Dallastx.treekeepersoftware.com
 - (3) Who can input information into TreeKeeper?
 - (a) City Forestry staff only.
 - (4) We enjoy coming out to plantings. Please share upcoming events to erin.diehl@dallas.gov.
 - (5) In your upcoming briefing on Article X, can you include information on the possibility of narrowly opening Article X to put in the priority areas?
 - (a) Yes.
- viii) Commissioner Hiatt Haigh
 - (1) In the future, can you recommend another way to quantify/measure land the City acquires to protect. Can we develop a percentage that accurately quantifies the right amount of property the City should acquire for conservation efforts (versus number of acres)?

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 8, 2023

- (a) We can take this back to the team.

VOTING ITEM

I) **Vote to refer a review of the Urban Forest Master Plan to the Implementation Subcommittee**

- a) Moved by Commissioner Derrough.
- b) Seconded by Commissioner Lachman.
- c) Chair Bazan provided a point of clarification.
- d) Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

II) **Processes for appointment of members to the technical panel**

- a) Chair Bazan discussed processes from the Environmental Commission ordinance regarding appointments to the Technical Panel.

III) **Update on appointment of members of the public to subcommittees**

- a) Chair Bazan provided an update.

IV) **Monthly Subcommittee Updates**

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

V) **Monthly District Updates from Commissioners**

Attachment: [Outreach & Engagement Form](#)

- a) Vice Chair Villarreal (D6), Commissioners Derrough (D7), Roberson (D8), Chair Bazan (D9), Commissioners Lachman (D12), Dankert (D13), Hiromoto (D15), Rita Beving, and Dr. Afolabi provided updates.

VI) **Upcoming Meetings**

- a) Environment & Sustainability Council Committee: Monday, April 3, 2023, 9AM – 11AM
- b) Environmental Commission: Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 5:30PM – 7:30PM

ADJOURNMENT

After all business of the Environmental Commission had been considered, Commissioner Dankert moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Roberson and unanimously accepted. The Environmental Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:41PM

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
March 8, 2023

Erin Diehl

Drafted by:

Erin Diehl, Board Coordinator

Office of Environmental Quality & Sustainability

4/7/2023

Date

Kathryn Bazan

Kathryn Bazan (Apr 24, 2023 17:06 CDT)

Approved by:

Kathryn Bazan, Chair

Environmental Commission

Apr 24, 2023

Date

Attachments:

[Meeting Recording](#)