

MINUTES

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**

THURSDAY

December 9, 2021

**ONLINE MEETING
MICROSOFT TEAMS**

4:30 – 6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Chair McCain called the meeting of the Sustainability Commission held December 9th, 2021, to order at 4:30 pm.

2. Roll Call

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair McCain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Konkel
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair White	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Dailey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Steiger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner McCormick

Others present: Marissa Molloy (Minutes, Staff Liaison), Jenny Niemann (Staff), Nicole Antonopoulos (Staff), Kaeli Wells (Presenter), Daniel Logan (Presenter), Barney Helmick (Presenter)

3. Public Comment

Public Participation enables the public to address the Commission on any subject within their jurisdiction that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. Due to Open Meeting Laws, the Commission cannot discuss or act on items presented during this portion of the agenda. To address an item that is on the agenda, please use the Teams Chat function: simply type in 'public comment' to indicate to the Chair that you would like to comment. The Chair will then recognize you when it is time for public comment, and staff will unmute your microphone if needed.

No Public Comment

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Vice Chair White, seconded by Commissioner Konkel to approve the November 18th, 2021 minutes.

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

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5. Business

A. Cinder Lake Landfill and ReThink Waste Plan Update

Kaeli Wells, Sustainability Specialist, and Daniel Logan, Collections Manager, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Informational

Kaeli Wells and Daniel Logan presented an update on the Cinder Lake Landfill, the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), the Pay-As-You-Throw Pilot, and the Residential Food Scraps Drop-Off Pilot. Based on the industry standard of 3% growth per year, the Cinder Lake Landfill has a current closure date of 2063. Based on actual numbers from Flagstaff tonnage, which is closer to 1% growth per year, the landfill has a closure date of 2072. There may be new technologies by the time a new cell is needed that allow Staff to dig deeper, which may extend the life of the landfill further. To save on airspace in the landfill, Staff have started using a geosynthetic cover system for daily cover instead of using dirt. This system uses no airspace and extends the life of the landfill by a minimum of five years. The current MRF contract is up in 2023. Staff are looking at different programs that will meet Flagstaff's needs better. The site is aging, and the equipment is outdated and inefficient, which results in poor quality material and high contamination. Due to the low volume of materials generated in Flagstaff, Staff is considering turning the MRF into a transfer station. The Pay-As-You-Throw Pilot Program launched in August of 2021 in the Ponderosa Trails neighborhood. Residents could receive a full rebate of \$4.19 on their City services bill by using a 48 gallon bin or a partial rebate of \$2.21 for a 64 gallon bin in comparison to the original 96 gallon bin. This program coincided with an educational social media campaign on recycling. Staff hoped this program would help people produce less trash but were concerned that excess trash would end up in recycling bins or bulky pickup. To evaluate this, Staff completed recycling bin checks, recycling contamination audits, and measured the amount of bulky trash. Staff's next steps are to evaluate the program's impacts, make necessary service changes, develop a plan for community wide implementation, and develop educational materials based on recycling bin check data collected.

Commissioner McCormick asked when Staff would know the results of the pilot. Ms. Wells answered that the pilot runs through February. After that, Sustainability Staff will work with Solid Waste to determine the source of funding for the bins.

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Ms. Wells continued to present on the Residential Food Scraps Drop-off Pilot. The program started as two staffed booths during the market season and moved to two self-service booths at Hal Jensen Recreation Center and Flagstaff CSA when the market season ended. Materials are taken by local contractors, Corbin Compost and Compost Crowd, to local farms, Forestdale Farm and Refugia Gardens, to be processed. This program assists with the Carbon Neutrality Plan's (CNP) goals surrounding waste diversion from the landfill. During the market season, 273 participants dropped off 1,770 lbs. of materials at the staffed booths. Staffed booths will return in May 2022. In the past three weeks, 70 people have filled out a survey for the self-service drop-off stations. Out of those participants, 70% answered that they would be interested in a City-wide pick-up service. Staff is currently running an educational social media campaign on compost to coincide with the drop-off program.

Commissioner McCormick asked if the amount of garbage diverted was a large savings. Mr. Logan answered that anything diverted from the landfill equates to money, space, and longevity. Commissioner McCormick asked if the City had considered a compost training course for people to compost in their backyards. Mr. Logan confirmed, saying that Sustainability Staff are working on education through the programs already in place, and distributing small compost buckets. Ms. Wells added that Staff hosts a Flagstaff Sustainability Leaders Course a few times a year that discusses composting in one of their lessons. She went on to say that Staff is looking to focus on composting focused classes this upcoming summer in addition to the Garden Workshop Series.

B. Airport Paid Parking Program and Ordinance (20 minutes)

Barney Helmick, Airport Director, City of Flagstaff
Requested Action: Informational

Barney Helmick presented on the Flagstaff Airport's Paid Parking Program and Ordinance. Due to an increase in patronage, Staff realized their current parking lot would not be sufficient. The new lot will offer 413 spaces, internal walkways, a headlight wall, an eight-foot-wide sidewalk to the terminal, two entrance and exit locations, and paid parking throughout that will be managed by ParkFlag. Their first Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations are in construction, which include six parking spots, and more

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spots can be added in the new lot in the future. Mr. Helmick said any rate changes would be to balance available parking and discourage use as opposed to increasing revenue. A 60-day notice was given to the public in October, Staff attended a City Council work session in November, the first read at City Council took place on December 7th, and the second read will likely take place at the end of December. The ordinance will take effect on January 28th, and marketing and outreach will occur beforehand.

Chair McCain asked how long Staff is projecting the new lot to serve. Mr. Helmick answered that Staff is considering other options, including a bus service to the airport. If the lot is overflowing, Staff may look at increasing the rate to discourage people from parking at the airport. He said staff are projecting the lot to serve for five to seven years if no changes are made. Funds collected will be put aside for other things, such as a roof. He said they don't want to do a second story unless it is necessary. Chair McCain and Commissioner Konkel expressed support for the bus line.

Commissioner Konkel said that using paid parking as a deterrent does not necessarily fit with Sustainability goals, as the alternative is to receive a ride to the airport from someone else, which doubles emissions. She said she thinks ultimately that more parking space is needed and that it is not bad to charge for it. She added that it was a good idea to look into a shuttle service as a part of the recommendations from the Commission. Mr. Helmick said Staff are working with Mountain Line to try and create a bus line. The line could also go to the new hospital location at Ft. Tuthill.

Chair McCain mentioned that there were tensions with the CNP and City Council's goal to increase passengers coming in and out of the airport. He asked if Mr. Helmick had preliminary thoughts on how to resolve that tension. Mr. Helmick said that there were about 400,000 people within the Flagstaff and surrounding areas. If those people do not fly out of Flagstaff, they will be driving a much further distance. He also made comment about the airline industry's advances in technology. He said United Airlines successfully tested biofuel and added that while he thought the estimates of the carbon footprint reduction were high, they were a reduction. He also noted United Airlines was buying electric aircraft for shorter routes and that the airport is looking at options to generate enough electric to support electric planes, including solar and wind power. Chair McCain said he thought there were a lot of things to be ironed out around the use of sustainable airline fuel, especially around the crops necessary for that fuel

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in competition with food. He added that technology is a major factor in the creation of the climate crisis and was not confident that it could be a solution. He said we need to ask some hard questions about the propensity to fly and other options as alternatives, adding that the movement into the virtual world might help. Mr. Helmick said aviation was not going to go away immediately, and that compromises must be found. He added that train and truck travel are larger polluters than the aviation industry. He said there is a big problem to solve across the transportation industry and virtual technologies can only go so far. Chair McCain said he appreciated Mr. Helmick's awareness of the tensions.

C. Threaded Together Letter (5 minutes)

Marissa Molloy, Administrative Assistant, City of Flagstaff

Requested Action: Vote

Ms. Molloy presented a letter from Threaded Together requesting approval for alterations to their Neighborhood Sustainability Grant timeline and budget.

Moved by Vice Chair White, seconded by Commissioner Konkel to approve Threaded Together's new grant timeline and budget.

Commissioner McCormick asked if extensions were requested often and if the City had any difficulty extending the funds. Ms. Molloy recognized she has only been with the City for a year, but that there have been several extensions due to the pandemic. She added that the City had no difficulty in providing extensions. Commissioner McCormick appreciated the clear request. Commissioner Konkel appreciated the great outreach on social media and expressed support for the motion.

Vote: 5-0 Unanimously passed

D. Reallocating Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Funds (15 minutes)

Marissa Molloy, Administrative Assistant

Requested Action: Discussion and Vote

Chair McCain noted a mistake was made at the last meeting. He said the Commission was not as attentive to the process of funding as they should have been, acknowledging that the meeting was a little packed and

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rushed. He said there were three applicants with the same score that were listed alphabetically, and that funding ran out before the third could be funded fully. He expressed regret for this. He said fortunately, Staff were able to find funds to fully fund the project. He said it was important to own up to mistakes as a Commission, made a commitment to be more effective, and invited the Commission to redouble efforts to be fair and attentive.

Commissioner McCormick asked if there was any way to have a closed session to have time to discuss amongst themselves, noting that the decision felt rushed, unfair, and trivial. Chair McCain said the working group optimizing the grant process talked about shifting things around to publicly discuss discrepancies between scores and have sufficient time to talk. He asked about the possibility of a closed session. Ms. Molloy said she could get confirmation from the City Clerk, but that the Commission cannot have a quorum and discuss business items outside of a public meeting without violating Open Meeting Law. Commissioner McCormick said it might help if reviewers did not give more than one project the same score as they would be less likely to have multiple ties at the end.

E. Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Working Group Update and Request for Feedback (15 minutes)

Chair McCain

Requested Action: Informational and Discussion

Chair McCain presented on the work of the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant Working Group. They have met twice since the last meeting and have discussed marketing, language regarding when the funds are to be spent, and how to cut back on time spent on the grants with either a subcommittee or dropping application presentations. In future meetings, they will look at scoring and grading, and a public presentation for the grant awardees at the end of the process. He requested feedback.

Commissioner McCormick said she would send a list of ideas to Ms. Molloy for the working group to consider. She said the big one was that two projects should not receive the same score from reviewers.

Chair McCain said he wanted to have a discussion on scoring

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discrepancies, noting Commissioner Dailey's scores in comparison to the other three Commissioners who scored. He said his intention was to talk about those and invite Commissioner Dailey to share more about his process. He said he would save that for a future discussion since Commissioner Dailey was not in attendance.

Commissioner Konkel asked Commissioner McCormick if her scoring recommendation would put applications in a rank order and if she knew how it would fit with their rubric. Commissioner McCormick said in the review boards she sits on, the guidance has been to rank projects and not give two projects the same score. She said they figure it out inside the points available. Commissioner Konkel asked if it would essentially be a rank for all applicants and if the Commission would not use raw scores. Commissioner McCormick answered that she could see the benefits of talking about cumulative scores, average scores, and rank scores. She asked if the Commission scored by rank. Chair McCain confirmed and added that the working group was discussing how to do it moving forward. Commissioner McCormick said she thought rank scores were a good method. She added that it was not uncommon for one of the reviewers to have scores significantly different from everyone else's if their scores are consistent, but that it could be a problem if only a subset of the applicants are reviewed. She also suggested that all reviewers have comments about likes and dislikes for each project so if there's a question about who to fund, they can be discussed. She noted that she was reading the Commissioner's notes and that the red flags didn't really come up in the discussion when it may have been warranted. Chair McCain asked her to specify. Commissioner McCormick said she was not sure and maybe they were asked and responded to in the presentations. Chair McCain said the Commission was relying on internal consistency for fairness and he had some questions about the last scoring, and that it would be talked about in the next meeting. Commissioner Konkel said if the Commission eliminates the presentations and instead dedicates time to talk about the proposals, that would help with a lot of these concerns. She said while the meetings are open, she did not think all the applicants would join the meetings if they were not told they had to be there. She said that would help with the concern of talking about the applicants in front of them. Commissioner McCormick agreed and asked if it was possible to have the applicants show up to one meeting for questions and then discuss funding at the next. Commissioner Konkel said applicants could respond to

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questions via email to save on meeting time. Commissioner McCormick said the presentations were not useful. Chair McCain said they would have abundant time to talk about changes to the grant process.

F. Land Acknowledgement (5 minutes)

Chair McCain

Requested Action: Vote

Chair McCain read the Flagstaff City Council's land acknowledgement, recommending that the Sustainability Commission read it in their future meetings.

Vice Chair White said he did not want to speak for any group that he was not a part of, but that it was hard not to feel cynical about it. He said it should be uncontroversial to acknowledge contributions Indigenous peoples made and continue to make to our culture. He went on to say that when we say that we honor Indigenous people, we live in a City that is complicit in doing things to the San Francisco Peaks that a lot of Indigenous people consider desecration, a City that arrests a disproportional number of Indigenous people, a City that functionally criminalizes poverty in a lot of different ways including ordinances that ban camping that disproportional affect Indigenous people, and an area where local law enforcement still collaborates with Immigration and Customs Enforcement to deport undocumented community members, many of whom are descendants of Indigenous people. He said he understood the value of words, but that words without actions lead to cynicism and can lead to more harm than good. He said he has not seen systematic efforts by Flagstaff as an institution to address these issues and that he could not vote for this proposal in good conscience.

Commissioner Konkel also said she did not want to speak for a group she was not a part of. She said she was in support of the land acknowledgment movement, and that it has a lot of support from Indigenous communities. She said people from her department at NAU worked with a lot of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff to develop the NAU land acknowledgement. She said she hopes that City Council did the same and involved the people this was impacting in their decision and phrasing. She said the Commission should use the same acknowledgement as Council if that was the case. She added that the Commission should be proactive

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about trying to recruit an Indigenous community member to be on the Commission, recognizing that because they had been meeting remotely with videos off for the past year she did not know if there was someone on the Commission already in that demographic.

Commissioner Steiger asked if the acknowledgement was developed by City Council. Chair McCain said it was developed by City Staff, led by the Native American liaison with the consultation of others, and that City Council approved it as presented to them. Commissioner Steiger asked how it would be used and what kind of impact it would have. Chair McCain said that City Council would be reading it at every meeting as an invitation to do more and be more conscious.

Commissioner McCormick said she appreciated the conversation, adding that land acknowledgements are complex and that they can be negative in that they don't provoke action. She said that there should be a piece that recognizes the pain that settler colonialism has caused and is still causing. She said the acknowledgement was a great reminder at the beginning of every meeting and that there would hopefully be an addition or edit at a future time. She said because it was created with the Indigenous people and Commission for the City, the Sustainability Commission should say it and engage with it. Chair McCain agreed, noting that the City did process and approve it. He said following that example, he would love for the Sustainability Commission to approve it. He added that the Indigenous Circle is an entity that is doing a great deal of work pressuring the City to do more, and that in his work with them he would look for people who might want to be on the Commission. He said as the Commission does its work, the Commissioners can address specific issues so that the statement is not just empty words. He noted that the approval of the Reclaimed Water Agreement is coming up, and that if the topic is in the Commission's purview, they could potentially address it.

Moved by Commissioner Steiger, seconded by Chair McCain to approve a reading of the Land Acknowledgement used by City Council at the beginning of Sustainability Commission meetings and to list it on the agenda.

Vote: 4-1 Passed with Vice Chair White in opposition

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G. Staff Update (5 minutes)

Marissa Molloy, Administrative Assistant, City of Flagstaff
Requested Action: Informational

Ms. Molloy presented an update on the Sustainability Section Staff's activities.

Chair McCain asked if Kaeli Wells would be moving into the liaison role. Ms. Molloy said because Ms. Wells is still wrapping some projects up, she will be taking over the liaison role in February. Chair McCain expressed support for Ms. Wells taking over this role and noted that Ms. Molloy would still be assisting with the grants.

H. Year in Review (10 minutes)

Chair McCain
Requested Action: Informational

Chair McCain presented on the year's highlights for the Sustainability Commission. He spoke about Commissioners who left and new Commissioners who joined, the new mission and vision statements, the Commission awarding over \$60,000 in grants, the new and improved application and guidelines, the new Grant Workshop, the bus wrap art collaboration with BPAC, the Major Regional Plan Amendment, approval of the CNP, feedback given on the Active Transportation Master Plan, and the Letter of Recommendation for the Downtown Mile Project. He requested that Commissioners complete an online google form to provide feedback.

6. To and From

Ms. Molloy added clarification on Business item D by stating that the Jay Holt project is moving forward negating the need to reallocate funds.

Chair McCain said he would like to have an election for the Chair and Vice Chair in January, noting that he is interested in Chairing for one more year and he would like to open it up to anyone who is interested in being Chair or Vice Chair.

7. Future Agenda Item Requests

None

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8. Adjournment

The meeting of the Sustainability Commission on December 9th, 2021, adjourned at 6:33 pm.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on _____, at _____ a.m./p.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Disability Awareness Commission with the City Clerk. This notice has been posted on the City's website and can be downloaded at www.flagstaff.az.gov.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2020.

Jenny Niemann, Sustainability Commission Staff Liaison