

Sustainability Commission Meeting May 7, 2018

Meeting called to order at 5:35 pm by Chairperson Nadine Gomez.

Roll Call: Nadine Gomez, Julie Morris, Miriam Jackson, and Judy Nelson

ABSENT: Ann Gilmore

Ms. Gomez made a motion to excuse Mrs. Gilmore. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 4-0 vote.

Staff: Harrison Wicks, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Bridget Susel, Community Development Director
Eric Fink, Assistant Law Director

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of April 9, 2018:

The meeting reports will not be approved due to a lack of a quorum. The reports will be held as a public record.

Public Comment

Mary Claire O’Leary, 1160 Morris Road, Kent, OH - Ms. O’Leary submitted a letter to the Sustainability Commission concerning the use of single-use plastic straws.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to amend the agenda and move the Open Meeting Requirements item to the beginning of Old Business. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 4-0 vote.

Open Meeting Requirements- Mr. Fink presented information on Ohio Sunshine Laws and open meeting requirements to the Sustainability Commission. Mr. Fink commented for the commission to be in compliance with open meeting requirements, it is important to avoid quorums when corresponding, even in email. Mr. Fink commented that emails regarding meetings should be sent to Harrison or only one other member of the commission at a time. Ms. Susel confirmed the State of Ohio releases an annual yellow book covering proper procedure for public record requests and discussion. Ms. Susel confirmed the Sustainability Commission, as well as other City commissions and boards, are still subject to open meeting requirements, the same at City Council. Ms. Susel also commented that only items listed on the agenda can be discussed during official meetings to remain in compliance. Substantive discussion on items not on the agenda is a violation. Ms. Susel summed it up as no member of the public should be unaware of what a commission or board will discuss at an upcoming meeting. The public must be given adequate notice to attend and know what will be discussed. Mr. Fink commented it is important to be able to look back at meetings and see what topics were discussed for posterity. Ms. Susel commented that discussing matters outside of a commission meeting is a violation. Mr. Fink also commented that instances where a member

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of the commission is asked to speak to outside groups, they must first receive approval from the commission. Ms. Susel commented that during speaking engagements, commission members are speaking for the commission as a whole and so a consensus must be reached to decide how a member will address outside groups. Mr. Wicks could receive these requests first and present them to the commission members during meetings. Ms. Gomez asked if communication via email for event planning was a violation? Ms. Susel confirmed that event planning and logistical communication is not a matter of importance and are allowed, as long as the discussion doesn't move to specific agenda items or present new material. Mr. Fink commented that a good rule is to cc Harrison on emails so he is informed and will be aware of potential violations. Ms. Gomez asked if coordinating on the quarterly Tree City Bulletin article via email is a violation? Ms. Susel commented that she thinks this discussion should be completed during commission meetings. Mr. Fink agreed. Approval of a draft article for the Tree City Bulletin should be done during meeting time. Mrs. Nelson asked about attending events? Ms. Susel commented events where 3 or more commission members are present could be considered a meeting. As long as the members do not talk about agenda items or potentially new items, it should not constitute a violation. A general good practice is to have no more than 2 members present at an event. Ms. Susel commented that future commission agendas can have an 'Other Business' section to allow for items to be added to or removed from the agenda. Ongoing items in Old Business can stay, but new business items can rotate out as needed. Ms. Susel and Mr. Fink confirmed specificity of agenda items must allow the public to understand what will be discussed. Ms. Susel recommended adding more items to the agenda to specify what is discussed to avoid confusion. Mr. Wicks will track agenda items for quarterly review.

Ad Hoc Committee Update- Mrs. Morris presented on developments since the last meeting. The City acquired membership to the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and were given access to ClearPath Pro to conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory. Mrs. Morris commented on the ICLEI cohort trainings and live sessions and said they were beneficial. The next meeting of the ad-hoc committee is tentatively scheduled for May 21st. Mrs. Nelson commented that new Sustainability Commission member Dr. Andrew Scholl should attend the commission meeting in June prior to attending ad-hoc committee meetings. Mrs. Jackson asked how much the membership to ICLEI cost? Mrs. Morris confirmed membership cost \$600/annually and was a one-time payment from the Community Development Department to assist the Sustainability Commission in their directive from City Council to develop a climate action plan (CAP). Mrs. Jackson wanted to know when the ad-hoc committee will conduct community meetings? Mrs. Morris commented that community meetings will be conducted later in the CAP process, most likely after the GHG inventory. Mrs. Nelson asked if the community meeting structure could be approved by the Sustainability Commission first? Mrs. Morris agreed. Mr. Wicks confirmed he will research the question more but most likely the structure will be chosen by the commission.

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Farmers' Market Update- Mrs. Morris explained the donation drive to be conducted Saturday, May 12th. Mrs. Morris confirmed she will contact Family & Community Services (F&CS) to organize the donation pick up. Mrs. Morris confirmed a flyer was put together and disseminated at the previous Farmers' Market. Mr. Wicks confirmed he can share the event details on social media. Mrs. Gilmore confirmed she will be available around 1pm. Mrs. Nelson and Ms. Gomez will be unavailable that day. Mrs. Morris confirmed she can attend the Farmers' Market from 9-11am. Mrs. Jackson confirmed she can attend 11-1pm. Mrs. Morris confirmed she will pick up materials from Mrs. Nelson. There was a consensus that materials for outdoor tabling events should be held at the City's Service Administration Complex (SAC) located at 930 Overholt Road and members can pick them up the Friday before an event.

Community Information Update- Mrs. Nelson described the KSU earth fest and confirmed that tabling was successful. Reusable bags were distributed for free and the event was well attended.

Chickens- No new information. Mrs. Nelson confirmed that more discussion will be held during the next meeting.

Review Fracking Permits- No new information.

NEW BUSINESS

Household Hazardous Waste- Ms. Gomez conducted research into removal programs in Kent. Drop off services are available at the Portage County Recycling Center off of Mogadore Road, however, the types of waste materials accepted is limited. Mrs. Nelson asked if Republic Services provides services to pick up hazardous waste? Mr. Wicks confirmed he can look into services provided by Republic. Ms. Gomez asked who pays for the annual Spring Cleanup? Mr. Wicks confirmed it is paid for by the City to Republic Services to complete the program. Ms. Gomez and Mrs. Nelson asked if Republic Services and Portage County Recycling would be willing to do a hazardous waste pick up program? Mr. Wicks will conduct research to learn more. Ms. Gomez asked how much would a spring cleanup program cost compared to a household hazardous waste program? Mr. Wicks confirmed he can research the costs of such programs. Ms. Gomez asked if the ad-hoc committee is looking into disposal of hazardous waste as a part of the CAP? Mr. Wicks commented the ad-hoc committee is currently completing a GHG inventory and has not addressed hazardous waste at the moment. Mr. Wicks commented he can review programs provided by other organizations in the area, such as the Kent Habitat ReStore.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to add single use plastic straw public awareness campaign to new business for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and approved with a 4-0 vote.

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Ms. Gomez made a motion to remove community information update from old business for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and approved with a 4-0 vote.

Ms. Gomez made a motion to add community outreach update and sub-categories to new business for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and approved with a 4-0 vote.

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to remove fracking agenda item from old business. Motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and approved with a 4-0 vote.

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to have City staff review fracking item for changes and report to commission when necessary. Motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and approved with a 4-0 vote.

Mrs. Morris made a motion to move household hazardous waste to old business for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and approved with a 4-0 vote.

Mrs. Morris made a motion to add Tree City Bulletin Fall article item to new business for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and approved with a 4-0 vote.

NEXT MEETING

June 11, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Gomez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and was approved by a 4-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36pm.