

Sustainability Commission Meeting, February 9, 2026, Meeting Summary

Members in Attendance: Lynn Gregor, Justine Gallo, Maryjayne Stone

Others in Attendance: Heidi Shaffer-Bish, Bridget Susel, Julie Morris

Meeting Called to Order: by Julie Morris at 5:35 PM; roll call completed

- **Excused Absence:** for member Julie Grant – Maryjayne motioned, Justine seconded, unanimous approval
- **Officer Elections:**
 - Brief review of the position responsibilities was had
 - Chair and Vice Chair elections postponed to next meeting (April 6) to allow for full member participation in the position nomination and election process
 - Lynn motioned to move the election to the next meeting, Justine seconded and the motion passed with unanimous approval
- **Proposed Bylaws Review and Discussion covered the following topics:**
 - **New Provisions in Bylaws and Suggested Edits:**
 - The proposed bylaws draft reflects additional edits made by Heidi to help address the issues raised by the Commission’s statement of concerns made to Council at the December Council Committee meeting, as well as in response to subsequent meetings with members and staff regarding same
 - The proposed bylaws amendments allow the Commission to gain authority to modify future bylaws without Council approval – a key difference from the current Commission bylaws structure – and is paired with an Ordinance that brings the Commission in-line with Council’s Standing Rules of Order for Boards and Commissions & Roberts Rules of Order for Small Groups
 - Council is likely to remove the voting role for a Council member provision in the proposed bylaws because Council member Heide Shaffer-Bish reported no one can serve on two boards or commissions, including Council, at the same time
 - A non-voting, long-term, liaison role for Council members to the Commission could be discussed as an alternative per Heidi, and Commission members agreed to this suggestion
 - Suggested edits to the proposed bylaws draft made by members at tonight’s meeting included clarifying and adding language for:
 - Differences between work sessions &/or ad hoc meetings vs. special meetings (non-voting vs. voting)
 - Quorum requirements for special meetings will be clarified
 - Staff will revise the bylaws draft language to include the suggested edits and send an updated draft to members for review ahead of the Commission’s April 6th meeting
 - If the updated bylaws draft is approved by the Commission at the April 6th meeting, Bridget will bring same to the May Council Committee meeting (5/6/26) for discussion
 - **Commission Membership Update:**
 - There ended up being two open positions on the Commission at the end of December 2025, and one vacancy remains
 - One position was filled with the appointment of Lynn Gregor to the vacancy left by Judy Nelson’s term expiring
 - The remaining vacancy is due to Tracy Wallach’s resignation from the commission on 12/17/25, as, per Council’s standing rules of order, no one can serve on two City

committees at one time, and both Council itself and the Sustainability Commission are considered committees under those rules

- Advertising is required for the open position and staff will verify this is in-process of being done
- **Staff Budget & Commission Meeting Frequency:**
 - Quarterly formal meetings were confirmed as required due to staff overtime limits
 - Bridget explained there are 9 boards and commissions under the Community Development Department with a set department overtime budget that is shared and used to staff all those boards
 - The Sustainability Commission is the only board that meets monthly, and with the inclusion of evening and weekend sustainability events, a disproportionate share of the overtime went to this Commission, and superseded the budget
 - Bridget advised it is a Citywide directive from Budget and Finance to reduce overtime hours as a payroll issue
 - Work sessions, ad hoc group, and special meetings are encouraged for initiative/event planning and for working on Commission business in between the formal quarterly meetings
 - Logistics of how to call a work session or ad hoc session were discussed, as was the process for calling a special meeting, which will need public meeting notice to comply with sunshine laws
- **Proposed Core Components of Commission Work were reviewed:**
 - Input & advisory, education & outreach, and community sustainability connections were each explained and discussed over the course of the meeting, with examples provided of how they could work to further City, Commission, and Community sustainability goals
 - It was noted that these components could be changed, added-to, and/or removed as the Commission sees fit in future bylaws updates once the amended bylaws are authorized by Council
- **Good of the Order Discussion covered the following items:**
 - **Event Participation Approved:**
 - Members approved of the Sustainability Commission's representation at all the tabling events listed on page 2 of the Staff Report that was provided with the February meeting materials, should invitations to same be received
 - Motion was made by Maryjayne and seconded by Justine, with unanimous approval
 - It was noted that events held outside of the Community Development Department's business hours will need to be fully staffed by one or several of the Commission members, as needed
 - Julie M. will coordinate logistics for these events via email with the Commission members
 - **Compost Pilot Program:**
 - Members approved of the Sustainability Commission's representation on the newly formed and still developing Kent Area Food Waste Diversion/Compost community project
 - Lynn and Justine were appointed as commission representatives to the project
 - Motion to approve their appointments to the project made by Justine and seconded by Maryjayne with unanimous approval
 - **Earth Month (April 2026) and Sustainability Month (October 2026):**
 - Motion to begin planning for the events and/or activities the Commission will hold during these months was made by Justine and seconded by Maryjayne with unanimous approval; ideas include newsletter articles, business collaborations, bike events, and additional Lights Out events
 - **Newsletter Contributions:**
 - Articles for the April edition requested (Earth Month, Dark Sky/Light Pollution education, event calendar were all suggested topics for same)
 - The content deadline for the Spring edition is Friday, April 10th
 - **Dark Sky Initiative:**

- Education campaign planned for April newsletter, and for tabling, events, and other items throughout 2026
- Proclamation targeted for April 2027; cultural change around lighting use was emphasized noting shield use, lower wattage, and warm spectrum LEDs (among other suggestions) as helpful in addressing light pollution issues

Adjournment: Maryjayne motioned, Justine seconded, and hearing no further comments, members passed the motion with unanimous approval. The meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.

Next Meeting: The next Sustainability Commission meeting will be held April 6, 2026, starting at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Community Room.