

**COMMUNITY HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND CULTURE  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
AUGUST 26, 2021 2:00 PM  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>Chair, District 7</i> Councilmember Mario Bravo, <i>District 1</i> Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, <i>District 2</i> Councilmember Phyllis Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Teri Castillo, <i>District 5</i>
<b>Members Absent:</b>	None
<b>Staff Present:</b>	David McCary, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Monica Hernandez, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Alma Lozano, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Tina J. Flores, <i>City Clerk</i> ; Aurora Perkins, <i>Deputy City Clerk</i> ; Claude Jacob, <i>Director, Metro Health</i> ; Doug Melnick, <i>Director, Office of Sustainability</i> ; Homer Garcia III, <i>Director, Parks and Recreation</i> ; Ruben Flores, <i>Assistant Director, Building and Equipment Services</i> ; Laura Mayes, <i>Assistant Director, Government and Public Affairs</i> ; and Matt Llewellyn, <i>Business Relations Manager, Information and Technology Department</i>
<b>Others Present:</b>	Andrew Peterson, PGA, President & CEO, Municipal Golf Association (MGA-SA);

**Call to order**

Assistant City Manager McCary called the meeting to order.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

- 1. Approval of the minutes from the Community Health, and Equity Committee meetings on April 31, 2021, May 14, 2021, May 27, 2021, and June 11, 2021.**

Councilmember Viagran moved to approve the minutes of the April 31, 2021, May 14, 2021, May 27, 2021, and June 11, 2021 Community Health, and Equity Committee Meetings. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion prevailed unanimously by those present. Absent: Chair Sandoval.

**Public Comments**

Cynthia Spielman stated that the Resident Connection Platform had flaws and noted the irony in the exclusion of the community prior to implementation. Ms. Spielman requested that the City develop a process allowing residents to provide feedback and recommended having focus groups.

Velma Pena stated that the Westside Neighborhood Association Coalition advocated for area residents and stated that the digital divide imposed barriers making it difficult for many to participate which effectively silenced them. She noted that the Resident Connection Platform did not incorporate the 2019 Guiding Principles for Public Participation and indicated that the City still had the opportunity to make system changes.

Bonnie Conner, former District 8 Councilmember, provided the Committee with website improvement recommendations to include simplifying the City’s website, providing instructions on how to access information and navigate the website, and implementing a notification system to allow residents to receive topic and district specific information. She requested that the 200-foot notification provision required for zoning cases as outlined in Chapter 35 of the Development Code be updated.

Bianca Maldonado detailed the challenges she encountered accessing information on the City’s website and detailed the limitations of the Resident Connection Platform.

## **Briefing and Possible Action on**

### **2. The City's COVID-19 response and preparedness by Metro Health staff.** [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude Jacob, Director, Metro Health]

Claude Jacob reported on the COVID-19 burden to Bexar County over the last 18 months, as follows:

Cases	275,167
Fatalities	3,772
7-day moving average	1,254
Positivity rate	13.6%

Mr. Jacob reported a decrease in the COVID-19 positivity rate over the last two weeks and cautioned that the rate could increase from the third wave of COVID-19 and holiday celebrations. He noted that the local positivity rate of 13.6% was higher than the national average of 9.6%. Mr. Jacob reported that Hispanics represented 60% of the total Bexar County population and represented 70% of the COVID-19 cases to date.

Mr. Jacob stated that for the week of August 24, 2021, hospitalizations were as follows:

In Hospital	1,418
In ICU	407
On Ventilator	245
Unvaccinated Inpatient	85%

Mr. Jacob addressed the importance of being vaccinated, especially for individuals with underlying health issues, as 50% of patients hospitalized in July 2021 had diabetes.

Mr. Jacob addressed the impact to local hospitals to include a decline in the number of available beds and staffing shortages. He stated that the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council submitted a request for State staffing assistance and that 295 support staff members were deployed in the first round and 316 in the second round. Mr. Jacob noted that area hospitals hired 1,000 contractors to supplement the State support staff and the County would continue to build capacity.

Mr. Jacob reported that the local COVID-19 Risk Level was severe and that the City would be transitioning from mass vaccination sites to mobile and pop-up clinics. He stated that 82% of eligible individuals in Bexar County age 12 and older received one vaccination, 66% were fully vaccinated.

Mr. Jacob noted that of the total County population, 12% were partially vaccinated and t residents between the ages of 18 and 29 accounted for 20% of the current COVID-19 hospitalizations as they had the lowest vaccination rate.

Mr. Jacob provided an overview of outreach efforts and strategies to encourage the public to get vaccinated and stated that a targeted media approach was used and included vaccination events and incentives. He reported that the same messaging approach would be used in August, National Immunization Month, and in February, American Heart Month. Mr. Jacob stated that additional incentives could be offered to the general public in the fall.

Chair Sandoval entered the meeting at this time.

Mr. Jacob reported that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that the Pfizer COVID-19 booster would be available starting in mid-September and individuals 16 and older would be eligible to receive the booster. He stated emergency-use authorization practices would continue to cover children between 12 and 15 and that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) was scheduled to discuss amending recommendations on the Pfizer vaccine.

Mr. Jacob reiterated precautions for fully vaccinated individuals which included wearing a mask in public indoor settings regardless of transmission level, getting tested within three to five days after exposure, and wearing a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until testing negative for the virus. Mr. Jacob stated that close contact was defined as someone who had been within 6-feet of an infected person for a minimum of 15 cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period. He reported that the CDC recommended universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools and while on a school bus regardless of vaccination status.

Mr. Jacob reported on the temporary injunction granted to the City and Bexar County regarding mask wearing and stated that the City Attorney's Office would be able to address specific questions.

Councilman Bravo requested information on the effectiveness of receiving just one COVID-19 vaccine. Mr. Jacob stated that he would provide the Committee with detailed information as there were several variables to be considered, such as the type of vaccine administered and age. He noted that research found that the effective rate was between 30 and 40% after receiving the first of the two shots and that individuals would be fully vaccinated after receiving the second dose. Mr. Jacob stated that new challenges include the waning of immunity, the Delta Strain of COVID-19, and frequent updates to CDC guidance.

Councilman Bravo asked for the percentage of the total Bexar County population required to reach herd immunity and requested that future presentations indicate vaccination rates based on the total population rather than the total eligible population. Mr. Jacob stated that reports indicated between 70 and 80% of the eligible population needed to be fully vaccinated in order to reach head immunity and that research was still being conducted. He stated that data would be reported as requested and clarified that the reporting of data was consistent with other jurisdictions.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested information on the process used to track the dates vaccines had been administered. Mr. Jacob reported on the challenges encountered in contacting individuals, as between 10 and 12% still needed the second COVID-19 vaccine. He noted that the number of individuals returning for the second shot varied based on several factors to include vaccinations still being administered and that the interval between the first and second COVID-19 vaccination varied based on the vaccine administered. Mr. Jacob stated that additional information regarding the availability of booster shots would be released soon and that the best method for informing the public had not been determined.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked about media outreach efforts used to notify individuals still needing the second shot. Mr. Jacob reported that the tracking system used by Metro Health had a Reminder System for mailing reminder cards and sending text messages based on vaccine intervals.

Councilmember Viagran stressed the importance for Metro Health to communicate to the public about getting the second COVID-19 vaccination, as the positivity rate for San Antonio was higher than the national rate and the City had the highest rate of diabetes in the country. Mr. Jacob stated that targeted messaging approach addressed the need for individuals with chronic diseases to get vaccinated.

Councilmember Castillo asked of the impact evictions would have on the local positivity rate. Mr. Jacob reported that social challenges, in general, increased the COVID-19 positivity rate and stated that temporary emergency shelters could be activated which would mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Councilmember Castillo requested that Metro Health provide vaccination and mental health information to entities located in District 5 and to everyone scheduled for eviction. She reported that the vaccination rate for the Fire Department was 60% and requested the rate for the Police Department. Mr. Jacob stated that Metro Health did not track vaccination rates for the department and would provide the Committee with the data.

Councilmember Bravo stated that he would like for the City to take the lead in changing the methodology used for reporting COVID-19 data. Mr. Jacob stated that data was collected and reported in accordance with federal and state standards and would seek guidance on the request.

### **3. Proposed updates to the Sustainable Fleet Acquisition & Management Policy.** [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer]

Doug Melnick reported that the City purchased and managed vehicles in accordance with the 2010 Vehicle Fleet Environmental Acquisition Policy and proposed to replace it with the Sustainable Fleet Acquisition & Management Policy that aligned with the City's sustainability, transportation, and air quality goals. He reported that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased by 5,000 metric of CO<sub>2</sub> from 2016 and was due to the purchase of additional heavy vehicles and increased fuel consumption by Police, Fire, Solid Waste, and Public Works. Mr. Melnick stated that the proposed Policy included a mechanism to track vehicle emissions and identify the most efficient vehicles for purchase.

Mr. Melnick reported that the proposed Policy was created utilizing an integrated interdepartmental delivery team process and that participating departments evaluated best practices and identified goals to be achieved. He highlighted that Policy goals included reducing the consumption of fossil fuels,

improving department operational and fiscal efficiency, and minimizing fleet composition to the lowest possible footprint. Mr. Melnick stated that Policy goals would be achieved by purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles that produced the lowest emissions within the vehicle class and type; were commercially available and reasonably cost competitive; and capable of completing job functions. He reported that prior approval from the City Manager would be needed to purchase vehicles that did not meet Policy criteria.

Mr. Melnick reported that the Fleet Review and Policy Steering Committee would be tasked with reviewing and recommending Policy Amendments, identifying Policy Exemptions, and producing an Annual Report. He stated that Steering Committee Members would be identified by the City Manager and that Committee composition would include one representative each from the Office of Sustainability (OS) and the Building and Equipment Services Department (BESD). Mr. Melnick stated that the proposed Policy outlined an Appeal Process that required the submission of a memo addressed to the Directors of BESD, OS, and the Office of Management and Budget.

Mr. Melnick noted that the proposed Policy would not result in a financial burden for departments and that purchasing electric vehicles would be more cost effective.

Chair Sandoval requested additional information regarding Steering Committee Membership. Mr. Melnick reported that Steering Committee Members would be identified by the City Manager and Committee composition would include one representative each from OS and BESD. Ruben Flores added that Steering Committee composition would include representatives from Police, Fire, Solid Waste, and Public Works.

Chair Sandoval asked for clarification regarding the proposed Policy serving as an update to the 2010 Policy or a replacement and requested a status on the proposed Policy. Mr. Melnick reported that the Policy was a replacement and that a draft document was available for review and approval. Chair Sandoval recommended that the item be continued to the next meeting as the Committee did not have the opportunity to review the presentation. Mr. McCary stated that the item would be added to the next agenda.

Councilmember Viagran stated that she supported the right-sizing concept and requested that parking spaces at Police Headquarters be redesignated. She noted that the Fleet Review and Policy Steering Committee could report to multiple Committees and recommended that a staff member or Council Committee Member serve on the Steering Committee. Chair Sandoval stated she supported the recommendation.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez volunteered to serve on the Steering Committee and requested that vehicle purchases be monitored for cost efficiency and intended use. Mr. Melnick stated that best practices were followed when making purchases. Mr. Flores reported that the Vehicle Replacement Program had an extensive review process and considered various factors to make a decision.

Chair Sandoval requested that OS provide the Committee with periodic status reports and include a comprehensive list of all fleet purchases, cost savings to the City, Policy exception requests submitted and determination, and Steering Committee composition.

**4. The SASpeakUp Portal project, presented by Government and Public Affairs and Information Technology Services Department staff. [Jeff Coyle, Assistant City Manager; Laura Mayes, Assistant Director, Government, and Public Affairs]**

Laura Mayes detailed the history of the SASpeakUp Portal Project and stated that in 2015 residents were surveyed for the first time on the City's public engagement process. She stated that in 2018, Councilmember Sandoval submitted a City Council Consideration Request (CCR) on public participation and that the City created and implemented a Public Participation Minimum Standards Policy; in 2019 the City Council adopted the Policy, and a Public Participation Administrative Directive was implemented. She added that in 2020, the City implemented a virtual Public Comment Portal, approved the Resident Connection Portal Platform and launched the new Agenda System.

Ms. Mayes reported that the provisions outlined in the Guiding Principles of Public Participation required the City to communicate with residents respectfully and that information was required to be transparent and accessible. She highlighted the benefits of the Portal which included centralized accessibility of constituent data and the standardization of processes. Ms. Mayes noted that the Constituent Management, Agenda Management and Virtual Comment Components were available to the public and staff training was still in progress. She highlighted the operational benefits of the Survey Management Component which included the centralization of community data, allowed residents to select desired communication method, offered a better understanding of resident needs, and offered residents the ability to target information based on interests.

Ms. Mayes demonstrated how to access the Virtual Comment Portal and stated that the public would be informed of the process. She stated that the City was working with the vendor to make changes as the system was designed for in person meetings. Ms. Mayes reported that in September additional staff training would be provided and that 311 data would be integrated into the Constituent Management Component. She stated that the Boards and Commissions Component was being configured and that the Calendar and Surveys features of the system were in the testing phase.

Ms. Mayes stated that success would be measured quantitatively using several indicators to include identifying the number of engagements with the City, the Calendar and Agendas; the number of Board and Commission applications submitted; diverse representation, resident attendance and participation at meetings and events, and the number of residents accessing the SASpeakUp Portal. She stated that other factors to be considered included responding and providing timely information and keeping the residents informed.

Chair Sandoval asked about the inclusion of stakeholders in the development of the Portal. Ms. Mayes reported that the City requested assistance from various sources to obtain resident feedback and requested Committee Members provide feedback. She stated that the Portal was custom built to the City's specifications and reported that some elements were being designed and others adjusted.

Chair Sandoval requested that each member of the CHEC Committee nominate one member of the public to assist GPA with testing the Portal as part of an Ad Hoc Committee. She requested clarification on the integration of data at the departmental level. Matt Llewellyn reported that departments and employees would have access to different Portal Components based on need.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested information on the process to be utilized by GPA to implement the recommendations made during Public Comment. Ms. Mayes reported that the City had already contacted the vendor to make adjustments.

Councilmember Viagran stated that she planned on testing the system to determine the cause of errors and that additional funds needed to be earmarked in the Budget for marketing and outreach efforts informing the public about the system, features, and navigation process.

Ms. Mayes stated that she would provide the Committee with videos that demonstrate how to navigate the Portal and features.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she supported the formation of a work group as it would assist in identifying solutions. She noted that the District 5 staff encounter issues with generating reports and information in reports was not correct. Mr. Llewellyn responded that each of the District field offices had been experiencing issues.

Mr. Bravo stated that all of the speakers that addressed the Committee reported experiencing technical difficulties and noted that more individuals could encounter the same problems. He stated that he would be proposing the creation of a Director of Public Comment position with a budget allocation of \$.5 million as the City needed a dedicated staff member managing the public engagement process. He recommended that residents addressing the Council receive free parking or be provided a bus pass. Mr. McCary stated that he would speak to the Deputy City Manager and would report back to the Committee.

Mr. Coyle reported that GPA had one staff member dedicated to supporting public comment for the 40 City departments. He stated that Administrative Directives and Guiding Principles enabled GPA to streamline the public participation process and to provide departments with guidance on the Public Participation process.

Chair Sandoval requested a voice vote from Committee Members regarding the City providing citizens registered to speak free parking or a via bus pass. She stated that she supported the recommendation.

Councilmember Bravo stated that he was in support of providing free parking and bus passes to residents addressing the Council and attending Board Meetings.

Councilmember Viagran stated that she was not in favor of the recommendation offering free parking nor for adding positions. She recommended that public engagement duties be absorbed by other departments and staff.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she was in support of the City providing free parking and bus passes.

**5. The Municipal Golf Association – San Antonio (MGSA) City Board applications process.**  
[David W. McCary, CPM, Assistant City Manager; Homer Garcia III, Director, Parks and Recreation]

Homer Garcia reported that the Municipal Golf Association – San Antonio (MGA-SA) Board of Directors had six vacancies and Directors would be appointed by the full City Council. Andrew Peterson played a video that highlighted the mission of MGA-SA and reinvestments made to facilities and affordability and accessibility. He stated that the demographics of members had changed over the years and that women and children represented the majority of its current membership base and that more multigenerational and multicultural families were playing golf.

Mr. Peterson reported that the 501(c)(3) non-profit status of the MGA-SA resulted in oversight by a 15-member Board of Directors and consisted as follows:

- 6 at-large members appointed by the full City Council after nomination by the Community, Health, Environment, and Culture Council Committee
- 7 at-large members selected by the MGA-SA Board
- 2 ex-officio City of San Antonio employees appointed by the City Manager
  - Parks and Recreation Director and Assistant Finance Director

Mr. Peterson highlighted the composition of the Board and stated that it was responsible for managing a \$12 million operating budget. He reported that MGA-SA was created in 2007 to assume management of seven City-owned golf courses and given three years to complete the transition. Mr. Peterson noted that in June 2012, an amendment was added to modify repayment terms; and in May 2015, a second amendment added Northern Hills Golf Course as the eighth City-owned golf course managed by MGA-SA. He provided a list of the City's eight golf courses by Council District: District 1: 3 courses; District 2: 1 course; District 3: 2 courses; District 8: 1 course; and District 10: 1 course.

Mr. Peterson reported that in FY 2020, MGA-SA employed 229 staff members with a third employed full-time; had a record high of rounds of golf played; exceeded \$15 million in total revenue; had a membership base of over 10,300 individuals, and had 65,000 media subscribers. He added that MGA-SA partnered with over 45 schools and universities around the City to provide access to all eight golf courses at reduced rates and sponsored over 115 corporate charity golf tournaments at all eight golf courses. Mr. Peterson reported that women represented 25% of its members which was higher than the national average and that most members were between the age of 25 and 34.

Mr. Garcia highlighted the MGA-SA Board structure and responsibilities and stated that he as the Parks and Recreation Director and Melanie Keaton as the Assistant Finance Director also served on the Board as ex-officio members. He stated that the MGA-SA Board met on average 6 times a year; had five sub-committees which addressed Finance, Construction, Long Range Planning, Diversity and Inclusion; and was comprised as follows:

Male	1
Female	4
African American	None
Asian/Pacific Islander	None
Hispanic	6
White/Caucasian	9
Other	None
Unknown/Did not Answer	None



Mr. Garcia reported that a total of 27 applications had been submitted for the six vacancies that expired May 31, 2021 and demographic information is as follows:

Male	22
Female	5
African American	3
Asian/Pacific Islander	None
Hispanic	10
White/Caucasian	11
Other	None
Unknown/Did not Answer	3

Mr. Garcia highlighted next steps which included staff reviewing applications to verify eligibility and the Ad Hoc Review Committee identifying applicants for consideration by the full Council Committee on September 23, 2021 meeting. He reported that the Committee would recommend six applicants for approval by the full City Council at an October meeting.

Councilmember Viagran volunteered to serve as one of the two Ad Hoc Committee Members.

Councilmember Bravo requested information regarding sustainability efforts implemented by MGA-SA. Mr. Peterson reported that MGA-SA and the Board prioritized sustainability efforts and reinvesting in golf courses and addressed the importance in creating a lasting environment while making golf more affordable to all.

Chair Sandoval stated that discussion on Ad Hoc Committee membership would continue and that names would be announced next week.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 PM.

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***Ana Sandoval, Chair***

***Respectfully Submitted,***

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***Melinda L. Uriegas, TRMC  
Assistant City Clerk,  
Office of the City Clerk***