

City of San Antonio



Minutes Community Health Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Chair: Teri Castillo, Dist. 5

Dr. Sukh Kaur, Dist. 1 | Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Marina Alderete Gavito, Dist. 7

Monday, December 16, 2024

1:00 PM

City Hall

The Community Health Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 1:03 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Teri Castillo, *Chair*
Dr. Sukh Kaur, *Member*
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Marina Alderete Gavito, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. **Approval of minutes from the Community Health Committee meeting on Friday, November 22, 2024.**

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the November 22, 2024 Community Health Committee meeting. Councilmember Kaur seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Castillo, Kaur, Rocha Garcia

Absent: Viagran, Alderete Gavito

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Briefing and Possible Action on

- 2. Briefing and possible action regarding the Municipal Setting Designation (MSD) application for the former Zarzamora Service Center property, located in Council District 5.** [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Razi Hosseini, Director, Public Works]

Luis Maltos, Assistant Director of Public Works provided background on the Municipal Settings Designation (MSD) which is allowed by State Law to address existing groundwater contamination beneath certain properties to allow them to be redeveloped. Maltos stated that in 2003, the Texas Legislature voted to amend the Texas Health and Safety Code and allow municipalities to authorize MSDs to address existing groundwater contamination beneath redeveloping properties. In April 2016, the San Antonio City Council approved the MSD Ordinance (Ordinance # 2016-04-07-0247) which would restrict the potable use of shallow groundwater for human consumption.

Maltos listed the benefits of the MSD as protecting the public from human consumption of shallow contaminated groundwater, promoting redevelopment of under-utilized properties, allowing the City to transform the old Zarzamora Service Center into green space for the expansion of Normoyle Park, and ensuring that the park would be safe for public park use.

Maltos provided a project timeline which indicated that an administrative and technical review of the MSD Application was performed in February 2023. He noted that by September of 2023, the engineers determined that the plume was stable and concentrations of contamination had decreased. In June 2024, the City received SAWS and Edwards Aquifer Authority concurrence and a public meeting was conducted in November 2024. He stated that the Community Health Committee was briefed on the MSD application in December 2024 and next steps would include: City Council Action (MSD Ordinance) in January 2025, SAWS Board (Resolution of Support) in February 2025 with TCEQ Review (60 to 90 days) to be completed by March 2025. Maltos added that the result was expected to receive TCEQ Approval and Issue Certificate of Completion in the Summer of 2025.

Dr. Kenneth Tramm, Environmental Engineer with Modern Geosciences, provided detailed information on the former Zarzamora Service Center site at 4503-4719 South Zarzamora which was a 29-acre City-owned property first developed in the 1960s and used for City vehicle maintenance and fire-fighter training Aqueous Film Forming Foam; (AFFF) use ended in 1986). He noted that there were 12 underground storage tanks (USTs) installed/removed from 1962 – 2019. Tramm reported that in the 1980s regional groundwater impact was found at Kelly Air Force Base (AFB) on “East Kelly” or Zone 4 that extended to and through the Site. He indicated that Kelly AFB installed over 600 monitor wells to address chlorinated solvent releases affecting on and off-site properties between 1986 and 2023. Tramm stated that a 2007 Public Health Assessment “concluded that the off-site environmental contamination in the East Kelly area posed no apparent public health hazard.”

Tramm listed Assessment and Remedial Activities which included removal or closure of the USTs which was completed. He reported that in 2014, a potential purchaser confirmed that polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were at the site along with Kelly AFB cVOCs in groundwater, and the site was entered into the Texas Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP No. 2686) by the potential purchaser; later taken over by the City. He noted that the City completed an

assessment and targeted remedial measures (soil and infrastructure removal) between 2015 and 2024 which included over 250 investigation points (groundwater, soil, soilgas, wipe samples), 12 USTs removed, Burn Pit Residue excavations, Drain system excavation, and removal of the tower and the addition of an engineered cap in August/September 2024. The Soil on the South West corner of the property contained PFHpA, PFHxS, PFOS, and PFOA, according to Tramm.

Tramm explained that an overlook would be created by adding an engineered cap to minimize future impact on groundwater leeching. He noted that the Regional Hydrology of the impacted property was that the Perched Groundwater Unit was encountered at a depth of 30 feet and extended about 10 to 15 with variable flow patterns, but generally flowing east from the Site. No registered or threatened wells were within one-half mile and a municipal source of water (SAWS) was available for the property which made the MSD viable.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Castillo thanked Tramm for walking the community through the MSD process and providing assurances that the impacted groundwater would not be used for drinking and would not cause issues. Tramm stated that the water had been known to contain contamination since the 1980s and since this was a unit of shallow perched groundwater that had improved in the past five years it still contained chlorinated compounds and the designation would ensure that no one could use the water for drinking. Tramm explained that while a cap was not required, it was recommended by SAWS to add a clay cap to prohibit this shallow water from seeping deeper into the aquifer and this also aligned with the redevelopment plan for the property.

Chair Castillo noted that the property was at the intersection of several school districts and near the Port Authority and would become a nice park. Maltos stated that there would be a thorough public input process to determine what amenities were needed in the park. John Peterek reminded the Committee that the first step was to approve the MSD.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if the Sierra Club or other organizations attended the community meeting, and asked of the overall attendance, and the largest concern. Maltos stated that there were approximately 50 people in attendance, but those organizations did not attend, however, the largest concern was for safety since this would become a park and would be used by residents.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked how often the water would be tracked and monitored. Tramm mentioned that every dollar spent should address the risk that was there and since there were no shallow wells within a half mile, there would not be any monitoring once the TCEQ issued a certificate of completion with the designation of the MSD which would ensure no future water wells would be drilled. Tramm explained that the community was more concerned about the soil which is why the southwest corner would be capped with the clay and would prevent the public from being in contact with the soil. Maltos explained that the clay cap was similar to what was placed at Pearsall Park which was built over a landfill. Councilmember Alderete Gavito wanted to ensure safety in the future and recommended regular reporting to the City Council.

Councilmember Viagran asked if there was any recertification process for the MSD. Tramm stated that to certify an MSD, there would be a public meeting, hearing, ordinance, and approval

by the water authority in the area (SAWS) then the TCEQ would confirm that the use of groundwater was prohibited under the MSD. He added that the voluntary cleanup program began in 2014, and would continue until satisfied, at which time TCEQ would issue a certificate of completion, and the required future monitoring would be set forth in the certificate. Councilmember Viagran wanted to ensure that everything was in place so that the park could be built and be continually used by the public.

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Castillo, Kaur, Viagran, Rocha Garcia
Absent: Alderete Gavito

3. Briefing on Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan [Erik, Walsh, City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Metro Health]

Dr. Claude Jacob, Director of Metro Health provided an overview of the five-year Strategic Plan. He noted that the documents required for the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) re-accreditation included: Strategic Plan, Quality Improvement Plan, Health Equity Action Plan, Workforce Development Plan, Community Needs Assessment, and Community Health Improvement Plan.

Jacob reported that Metro Health received a Public Health Infrastructure Grant (PHIG) in 2022 from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Public Health Infrastructure Grant of up to \$25.5 million over five years to support SA Forward and Metro Health 2.0 with the goals of rebuilding public health, strengthening the public health workforce, and transforming public health data.

Jacob explained that SA Forward was a five-year (FY2022-2026) community blueprint informed by community priorities, tracked on a community facing dashboard that addressed health disparities exacerbated by COVID-19. He reported that Metro Health 2.0 was a five-year (FY2023-2027) Departmental Strategic Plan informed by national frameworks, tracked on an internal performance dashboard that addressed outdated public health infrastructure. Jacob added that both efforts were funded by the General Fund and the CDC Public Health Infrastructure Grant.

The six focus areas for Metro Health 2.0, according to Jacob, included community engagement, partnerships, financing, public health laws and governance, data and information technology, and workforce. Jacob highlighted the 2024 accomplishments for each of the focus areas.

The Goals of Community Engagement were to: increase public awareness of Metro Health programs and services by empowering staff to serve as community ambassadors, guide and support public-facing staff in the development of strategies/practices to equitably engage community members, and ensure systematic inclusion of community members in decision-making processes. Jacob reported that in 2024 a staff survey on community needs was conducted, language access services were expanded, 16 health equity trainings for public-facing staff were conducted; and the department hosted five community conversations, four focus groups, and close to 400 individual surveys on food insecurity

The Goal of Data and Information Technology was to implement department-wide data and infrastructure modernization plan to transform Metro Health into a world-class, data-driven public health system. Jacob reported that in 2024, Metro Health completed the ‘Standardized and Equitable Data’ Pilot Initiative across three major programs (Oral Health, Project Worth, TB), secured placement in the CDC Foundation’s Workforce Acceleration Initiative (WAI) which dedicated three technical experts to the department.

The Financing Goals were to: identify funds to address gaps in core programs, retain existing staff, and dedicate resources for operational needs, enhance fiscal management practices, and create a dashboard to enhance internal communications. Jacob reported that in 2024, the department’s fiscal team used Smartsheet software to track purchase requisitions, funded 22 SA Forward positions through the CDC's Public Health Infrastructure Grant, and created a Smartsheet dashboard for monthly budget review meetings with programs.

The Goals for Partnerships included creating new and expanding existing partnerships, generating funding to support work with community partners, and helping staff build knowledge and skills to cultivate effective partnerships and collaborations. Jacob reported that in 2024, Metro Health coordinated 44 convenings with area partners representing 10 sectors and administered \$650,000 to community partners addressing key health disparities. Additionally, according to Jacob, 31 cross-sector partners began implementing strategies to address food insecurity and housing instability, and to end the HIV Epidemic

The Public Health Laws and Governance Goals included advancing Metro Health’s public policy agenda, and supporting and communicating public health roles. In 2024, Jacob reported that Metro Health made 12 legislative recommendations to promote healthy public policies. advanced health policy priorities through participation in 13 local and State-wide advocacy coalitions, and distributed shared communications toolkits to partners to promote aligned messaging on food insecurity.

The Workforce Goals included investing in recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce through formal partnerships with academic institutions, implementing a comprehensive professional development program to equip staff to respond to evolving and complex public health challenges, and enhancing recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention policies in collaboration with the City’s Human Resources Department. Jacob reported that in 2024, Metro Health hosted two CDC Public Health Associates, 18 interns, and 399 clinical rotation students; participated in multiple career/internship fairs; enhanced the department’s new hire onboarding process, achieved a 100% attendance rate for orientation sessions; and introduced policies and procedures to improve equitable recruitment, hiring, and staff engagement practices.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Castillo asked if any significant trends were reported by outreach workers within the survey. Jacob stated that they were a resource in which Metro Health invested and wanted to ensure a good relationship. Chair Castillo requested a copy of the legislative session report as the community was concerned about strengthening air quality and soil monitoring for metal and other recycling businesses. She noted that sometimes the college students felt training requirements were more difficult than the university had as they often did not have enough time to eat.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked what was meant by “rebuilding public health.” Jacob explained that this was a national effort to rebuild local health departments after the COVID-19 Pandemic including moving from paper versus web-based platforms.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia thanked Jacob for his commitment to the CHEST Initiative and asked how the department targeted the most vulnerable within the strategic plan. Jacob noted that the equity atlas was used to help the department geographically locate its resources and provide outreach across the community. Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted that she had received a text message about the Insulin Program and asked who was on that text list. Jacob indicated that the Insulin Initiative had identified hard-to-reach populations by zip code.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported the CDC grant and the WAI and asked how Jacob was looking to maintain program stability aside from grants. Jacob stated that he was happy to have successful grant applications but appreciated the General Fund support as well. She asked Jacob to identify the most common weaknesses in the SWOT analysis. Jacob stated that national surveys showed public health staff were overworked and were experiencing burnout.

Councilmember Viagran liked the idea of rebuilding public health because there was a trend in which patients did not feel heard. She requested a list of the 44 partners that were represented, to ensure representation of those on the South Side.

Councilmember Kaur asked how often Metro Health met with its partners to understand their funding needs and determine which grants were being targeted and requested a map of partners. Jacob stated that mobilizing and strengthening partnerships were a key component of the framework and he could provide a list of partnerships. Councilmember Kaur was curious about the workforce hiring process and how long it took to recruit and hire an applicant. Jacob stated that it depended on the type of job and the required skills, but the department currently had a 8% vacancy rate.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested a status update on ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative including partners. She asked how we addressed the preventive care needs for employees and supported the Employee Programs DEER OAKS. Jacob noted that Metro Health had a dedicated resource working with Human Resources to work directly with employees. She asked how many families had been helped directly and through partners as well as an update on the legislative front. Councilmember Rocha Garcia applauded the 100% attendance for orientation.

The item was for briefing only so no action was taken.

4. Consideration of 6 At-Large appointments to the Municipal Golf Association – San Antonio Board of Directors. [Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk]

Ryan Harrison, Assistant to the Director for the Parks and Recreation Department (Parks) presented background on the City’s At-Large appointments to the MGA-SA Board of Directors which consisted of 15 members, of which, seven were at-large members selected by the MGA-SA Board, six were at-large members appointed by the City Council for two-year terms. He noted that the Board also had two ex-officio members appointed by the City Manager which were the Parks Director and Finance Assistant Director. He mentioned that the board met 6-7 times annually and had various subcommittees that met monthly or as needed (Finance,

Construction, Long-Range Planning, Diversity and Inclusion).

Harrison noted that 26 applications were received, but one was ineligible. He indicated that an Ad-Hoc Committee of the Community Health Committee was created in August 2024 and reviewed the applications and selected eight applicants for interview.

Harrison stated that the Committee interviewed current appointees Jenny Carnes, Gretchen Garceau-Kragh, Geronimo Guerra, and Jason Sandoval who was a new applicant. He noted that the following current board members provided a written statement: Demonte Alexander, Javier Paredes, and Heather Wedige. Harrison added that a new applicant Mary Carriker provided a written statement.

Chair Castillo recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 2:36 p.m. to deliberate the appointment of Municipal Golf Association – San Antonio board members pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters) and to discuss related legal issues, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Chair Castillo reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 2:56 p.m. and announced that no official action had been taken in Executive Session.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to recommend and forward the following applicants for consideration by City Council: Jenny Carnes, Gretchen Garceau-Kragh, Geronimo Guerra, Jason Sandoval, and Heather Wedige. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Castillo, Kaur, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Alderete Gavito

5. A briefing on general updates to Chapter 22 – Parks and Recreation of San Antonio Municipal Code. [David W. McCary, Assistant City Manager; Homer Garcia III, Director, Parks and Recreation]

Ryan Harrison, Assistant to the Director for the Parks and Recreation Department (Parks) presented background on City Code Section 22 Parks and Recreation. Harrison recommended an update to Section 22-2 Vending in Parks since Council District 7 had requested that Parks evaluate coffee vending services for Woodlawn Lake Park (WLP) as the current City Code prohibited vending in WLP except for the Mobile Vending Program. He noted that this update would add Woodlawn Lake Community Room for Food and Non-Alcoholic Drink Vending Services as allowable and streamline language for current Mobile Vending Program.

Harrison proposed removing Koger Stokes Softball Complex at San Pedro Springs Park from Section 22-1: Exemption from Alcohol Restriction since the ball park no longer existed. He proposed to add the Polo Field Driving Range building at Brackenridge Park (First Tee) and the Golf Expansion Area at O.P. Schnabel Park to the Section 22-1: Exemption from Alcohol Restriction and update various facility name changes.

Harrison also recommended removing the following Sections: 22-14 Botanical Garden Fees, Section 22-28 Park Curfew Hours subsection (d) Comanche Lookout Park, Section 22- 33

Hertzberg Circus Museum Fees as the Museum did not exist, and Sections 116,117, and 119-131 of Article VII: Municipal Golf Courses. He also recommended updates to Section 118 of Article VII.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Alderete Gavito spoke in support of the vending opportunities at Woodlawn Lake Park and the golf centers.

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Castillo, Kaur, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Alderete Gavito

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Approved

Teri Castillo, Chair

*Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk*