

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes

### Community Health, Environment, & Culture

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**Thursday, February 24, 2022**

**2:00 PM**

**Municipal Plaza Building**

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**Members Present:** Ana Sandoval, *Chair*  
Mario Bravo, *Member*  
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*  
TeriCastillo, *Member*

**Members Absent:** Jalen McKee-Rodriguez *Member*

#### Approval of Minutes

**1. Approval of minutes for the February 8, 2021, Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee meeting.**

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve the minutes of the February 8, 2022 Community Health, Environment, and Culture Council Committee meeting. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Sandoval, Viagran, Castillo

**Abstain:** Bravo

**Absent:** McKee-Rodriguez

#### Public Comments

#### Briefing and Possible Action on

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

Metro Health Director Claude Jacob provided a monthly COVID-19 update which included the review of the current Bexar County COVID-19 risk levels, hospitalization data, overall cases of COVID-19, moving average comparisons, and fully vaccination levels by population. Jacob

clarified that fully vaccinated terminology was considered receiving two sets of vaccination and did not cover receiving a booster vaccination. Jacob also reviewed the status of COVID-19 Vaccination Incentives utilization and stated that over 8,700 gift cards had been distributed to individuals receiving full vaccination. Jacob provided an update of mass vaccination and testing sites activity to include activity at the Alamodome Vaccination Site.

Chair Sandoval asked for clarification on the reporting of individual cases for individuals contracting the virus repeated times. Jacob confirmed that each case was reported individually. Chair Sandoval requested a chart that would report fully vaccination rates by age group. Jacob stated that staff would provide that to the Committee.

Chair Sandoval requested a report on the proposed spending plan of ARPA funds related to COVID-19 and in changes of updated algorithm.

Councilmember Castillo asked if data was available on gift cards distributed by Council District. Jacob stated that the data would be prepared and provided to the Council Districts. Councilmember Castillo requested a list of compiled vaccine sites by Council District. Jacob stated that staff would provide that information.

Councilmember Viagran asked if staff anticipated the need to conduct vaccinations every year. Jacob stated that it was uncertain if vaccines would be required every year, but that staff and the medical community were proceeding as if it would.

Councilmember Bravo asked for clarification on related data of COVID-19 cases and morbidities. Jacob stated that data was still being evaluated on possible relation to individuals with morbidity diseases and data would be available at a later date when sufficient data had been gathered. Councilmember Bravo asked for clarification on the need for a second booster in being fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Jacob stated that data was continuously being evaluated and studied and updates would be provided as approved by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Chair Sandoval thanked Jacob and staff for continued updates and no action was taken on this Item.

**3. A briefing on the implementation status of the SA Climate Ready, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.** [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer]

Doug Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer, provided a briefing on the implementation status of the SA Climate Ready, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan which included the gathering of benchmark data with other municipalities. Melnick reviewed what a Benchmark Ordinance entailed and stated that it included development of a policy that required a large building owner to measure building energy and/or water consumption, performance, and comparison to other similar buildings. Melnick noted that benchmarks acted as a score card for energy conservation and he reviewed the benefits of these type of Ordinances.

Melnick outlined the impact of benchmarking and potential emission reductions because of

implemented Ordinances. He reviewed the actions of the Benchmarking Subcommittee and timeline for continued review of benchmark outcomes and recommendations to CHEC and ultimately to the full City Council.

Melnick reviewed the benefits of municipal on-site solar implementation for facilities and stated that a Request for Proposal (RFP) would be solicited. He reviewed the RFP timeline, scope and next steps in releasing the solicitation. Melnick provided an update of the Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure under the EVSA Initiative which included a multifaceted approach to include EV public charging stations, education and outreach, COSA fleet electrification, building code updates and Federal infrastructure funding coordination. He noted that there was a \$408 million initiative provided under the Volkswagen Grant Settlement and which would be mostly administered by TxDOT. Julia Murphy, Deputy Sustainability Officer, provided clarification of the funding plan and grant application process.

## DISCUSSION

Chair Sandoval asked for clarification on benchmarking outcomes which would only include reporting of energy usage. Melnick confirmed that the benchmarks would be concentrating on reporting of energy conservation and education of potential improvements and resources to make improvements.

Councilmember Castillo stated that Council District 5 staff had attended an educational session and learned of resources available. Councilmember Castillo asked if electric bikes were able to utilize the charge stations. Melnick confirmed that the charge stations could also be used for electric bicycles.

Councilmember Bravo stated that he felt that there were great strides in energy conservation efforts, more action was needed to meet global energy efficiency. Councilmember Bravo stated that he wanted to accelerate the release of the RFP. Assistant City Manager David McCary stated that it was important to conduct the benchmarking in order to ensure that the appropriate scope of work was included in the RFP. Councilmember Bravo stated that he felt that the solar component could be released immediately to have the solar vendors determine the appropriate scope and future improvements. Melnick stated that he would gladly meet with Councilmember Bravo to discuss the RFP scope and sought out benchmarks. McCary reiterated that it was important to identify the scope and allow time to properly evaluate it.

Councilmember Viagran stated that the RFP timeline provided an opportunity to identify small, minority and women owned businesses to participate in the contract and noted that time was needed to determine how and who was available to participate in identified scope.

Councilmember Viagran asked how often the benchmarking report or analysis would be updated due to telework employer activity being so prevalent. Melnick stated that the analysis would be reported annually.

Councilmember Bravo reiterated the importance of releasing the RFP as soon as possible and felt that it would have an economic impact to the City if the RFP was delayed.

No action was required for Item 3.

**4. Briefing regarding access to information through the San Antonio Public Library.**  
[David W. McCary, Assistant City Manager; Ramiro S. Salazar, Library Director, San Antonio Public Library]

Library Director Ramiro Salazar provided a briefing on access to information through the San Antonio Library System and reviewed the resources available by the System. He noted that the Library System had programs for all age groups, had a large community footprint, provided digital inclusion to patrons and had a very responsive Library staff. Salazar stated that the Library's goal was to remove barriers to access of services which included the removal of late fee fines. Salazar reviewed the Library Strategic Plan which included Pandemic response and lessons learned, facilitating access and resource availability, public education, advancing digital and program inclusion.

**DISCUSSION**

Chair Sandoval asked if it would be helpful if the City approached the State Capital to address the needs for services or other actions for Library access. Salazar confirmed that outreach would be beneficial to ensure continued access to Library resources.

Councilmember Castillo stated that Libraries acted as social hubs for individuals to gain knowledge of their history and needed to ensure continued access to resources for all aspects of their lives. Councilmember Castillo reiterated the need for and importance of libraries to a community.

Councilmember Viagran was supportive of a resolution that eliminated barriers to library resources and asked what efforts were being done to expand digital inclusion. Salazar stated that digital inclusion was an important available resource of the Library system and that the Strategic Plan included expanding services in areas that were challenged in digital resources. Councilmember Viagran requested that an area be available at Libraries for individuals who were needing to conduct virtual interviews and expansion of Children's Library services.

Chair Sandoval reiterated the importance of having Library resources available to the community especially in areas economically and digitally challenged. Chair Sandoval requested clarification from the City Attorney's Office as to if a resolution could be brought forth to the establish protection of library services access and freedom to read. City Attorney Monica Hernandez clarified that a resolution could be brought forth by the Committee for full City Council approval.

Councilmember Castillo moved to request a Resolution for protecting Library assets and the freedom to read. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Sandoval, Bravo, Viagran, Castillo  
**Absent:** McKee-Rodriguez

## **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:26 PM.

**Approved**

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*Ana Sandoval, Chair*

**Respectfully Submitted**

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*Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk*