

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Ana Sandoval, Dist. 7

Mario Bravo, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2

Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Teri Castillo, Dist. 5

Thursday, April 28, 2022

2:00 PM

City Hall

Members Present: Ana Sandoval, *Chair*
Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, *Member*
Phyllis Viagran *Member*
Teri Castillo, *Member*

Members Absent: Mario Bravo, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. **Approval of minutes for the April 12, 2022, Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee meeting.**

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez moved to Approve the minutes for the April 12, 2022 Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee meeting. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Sandoval, McKee-Rodriguez, Castillo

Absent: Bravo, Viagran

Public Comments

There were no 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]

Claude Jacob, Director of Metro Health, provided an update on the City's COVID-19 response including the number of deaths, positivity rate, hospitalizations and percent of eligible population vaccinated. He reported that the community was at a Mild Risk Level. Jacob stated that Metro Health was monitoring several warning indicators and he provided an update on the Vaccination Incentive Program and other events to promote vaccination. Jacob reported that the new BA.2 sub-variant of Omicron was the dominant strain of COVID.

Chair Sandoval asked whether the new variant displayed different symptoms, about the availability of test kits, and what would trigger Metro Health to recommend residents to resume wearing masks. Jacob stated that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended wearing face masks indoors particularly for persons with higher risks but added that vaccinations were the best defense against COVID. Chair Sandoval asked what the City Management's position was on masking for employees. David McCary, Assistant City Manager, stated that masks were available for City staff including City Council staff.

Councilmember Castillo suggested the spike from Fiesta could be expected very soon. Jacob agreed that the spike from events typically occurred 3 weeks post events but noted that most Fiesta events were outdoors which was less risky. Councilmember Castillo recommended that testing be made available in areas that emerge as hot spots for infection and offered to host vaccination events at senior centers.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested the vaccination percentage of each ethnicity. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concern that the cost of testing was causing many people to not get tested. Jacob clarified that the CDC has recommended looking at hospital trends as a key warning indicator because so many people are using home test kits and may not be reporting.

3. The ReWorksSA Pinnacle Awards program for environmentally sustainable businesses and presentation of awards. [David W. McCary, Assistant City Manager; Josephine Valencia, Deputy Director, Solid Waste Management]

Assistant City Manager David McCary introduced Josephine Valencia, Solid Waste Management Services Deputy Director, who provided an overview of the ReWorksSA Pinnacle Award for Excellence in Sustainability which recognized companies that went beyond the goals of recycling and found ways to benefit the entire environment. Valencia announced the following Pinnacle Award winners: San Antonio Botanical Gardens, Steves & Sons, Inc., and VIA Metropolitan Transit.

Chair Sandoval announced that Councilmember Viagran had joined the meeting.

Chair Sandoval invited the award winners to speak on behalf of their organizations and thanked all of the winners and the Solid Waste Department staff for their work.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez recognized the award winners especially the Botanical Gardens in City Council District 2.

Councilmember Castillo recognized the award winners, especially Steves & Sons because they were located in Council District 5.

Councilmember Viagran thanked all of the award winners and noted that although none of the winners were located in Council District 3, VIA served all residents.

4. The Disability Access Advisory Committee's (DAAC) purpose, accomplishments, and partnership with the City. [Andy Segovia, City Attorney; Nicholas Dominguez, Interim Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion]

Jose Martinez, Chair of the Disability Access Advisory Committee (DAAC), provided an overview of the purpose and work of the DAAC. Martinez explained that DAAC's members represented the disability community and provided advice to the Disability Access Office (DAO). Martinez noted that there were two vacancies on the DAAC from City Council Districts 6 and 10 that needed to be filled as soon as possible.

Martinez listed the DAAC's 2021 accomplishments including recommendation letters, administrative improvements and presentations and training. Martinez provided information on the planned work for 2022 with a focus on equity, opportunity and accessibility and planned a review of upcoming Bond projects to ensure they met the needs of all residents.

Assistant City Manager McCary introduced the staff of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office: Nicholas Dominguez, Interim Director; Debra Scharven, Disability Access Manager; and Krista Cover, Assistant City Attorney assigned to assist the DEI Office.

Councilmember Viagran recommended more involvement by the DAAC in all work of the City, particularly the San Antonio Housing Trust (SAHT) and Visit San Antonio. Scharven stated that she would facilitate the connection.

Councilmember Castillo suggested that the DAAC should be involved with the Housing Bond, SAHT, and the Unified Development Code update process.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez wanted to work with the DAAC to evaluate the role of the Council District 2 Field Office in reaching out to serve persons with disabilities.

Chair Sandoval acknowledged the inclusion of the DAAC Annual Report in the Committee packet and requested a copy of the DAAC's Recommendation Letters.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.

Approved

Ana Sandoval, Chair

Respectfully Submitted

Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk