

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

10:00 AM

Council Briefing Room

Members Present: Councilmember Ana Sandoval, *Chair, District 7*
Councilmember Mario Bravo, *District 1*
Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, *District 2*
Councilmember Phyllis Viagran, *District 3*
Councilmember Teri Castillo, *District 5*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. **Approval of minutes from the October 28, 2021, Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee meeting.**

Councilmember Viagran moved to approve the October 28, 2021 Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee Meeting minutes. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

None.

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. **The SASpeakUp Portal Project Update. [Jeff Coyle, Assistant City Manager; Laura Mayes, Assistant Director, Government and Public Affairs]**

Laura Mayes, Assistant Director, Government and Public Affairs Department, provided an

overview of the SA Speak Up portal that was released on November 1, 2021. Mayes noted that the release was considered a soft release and was still being revised based on community input. Mayes stated that the portal provided connectivity to constituent management, boards and commissions, agenda management, survey management, and calendar management.

Matt Llewellyn, Business Relationship Manager, Information Technology Services Department (ITSD), reviewed the portal development which included collaboration and coordination across key internal stakeholders and staff, four rounds of user testing with internal staff, training, and user-testing with an ad-hoc committee. Mayes stated that the Ad-Hoc Committee feedback was incorporated into the SA Speak Up portal and provided examples of changes based on their feedback. Llewellyn provided an update of on-going work which included the development of boards and commissions application system, additional training, user experience fixes and updates and continuous review and performance updates.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Sandoval congratulated the City team on the development of the site. She asked if a response process had been developed for comments submitted at the public portal. Mayes stated that as residents shared their contact information, a response process could be included in Phase 2.

Chair Sandoval encouraged staff to make the response process public. Chair Sandoval asked how the written comments process was supposed to work for each City Council and Council Committee meeting. Aurora Perkins, Deputy City Clerk, replied that written comments would be emailed to each Councilmember and the Mayor. Chair Sandoval stated that the response process should be discussed further.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez thanked the staff for their work on a more engaging process and asked of the issues identified with public comment sign up. Mayes stated that staff was eager to receive any comments and issues from the public to address. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked if a live stream was still available but comments during live access were not incorporated. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested that City Council presentations be provided and posted to the general public at least 1-2 days prior to the meeting even if in draft form.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how an unbiased response to submitted comments was being incorporated. Mayes replied that City staff were committed to providing an unbiased system and worked with committee members to create. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested that a formalized public response system be created in order to meet transparency and the resident's need for services.

Councilmember Bravo stated that positive feedback was received on the portal and stated that it was important to have continued feedback and input. Mayes stated that the Selection Committee

had two members that provided additional input from the beginning and worked with staff to make sure that feedback was being incorporated. Councilmember Bravo asked what happens with written comments submitted at Bond meetings. Mayes stated that a portal had been created for written comments and comments were collected throughout the entire process. Assistant City Manager David McCary stated that all written comments were responded to within 48 hours. Assistant City Manager Jeff Coyle added that a comprehensive list would be created and provided to the Bond Committee for review.

Councilmember Viagran asked what the costs were incurred by the program and asked if Council District meetings could be listed on the site. Mayes stated that Council District staff were receiving training on how to input meetings for the future. Councilmember Viagran requested that a 3-1-1 link be put on the site for resident ease. Coyle stated that it was important that all departments submit their events to the site for resident awareness. Councilmember Viagran requested that a link for written surveys be placed on the site as well. Mayes stated that the site had a link to ARPA documents and updates. Councilmember Viagran requested that the surveys be taken to City Committees.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she appreciated the ARPA surveys that were included in the site and asked if it was possible to include a time stamp of council agendas. Llewellyn stated that this was a requested item and was currently being addressed. Councilmember Castillo requested that written reports of public comment be provided to the City Council and asked if age demographics were being gathered for the site. Mayes stated that age and other demographics were being collected. Councilmember Castillo asked that City Council Members be included in the development of public surveys in order to provide feedback. Mayes stated that it would be incorporated.

Chair Sandoval suggested that the topics of public comment, surveys and other outreach be provided as individual agenda items for Committee review.

3. The Sales Tax Venue Proposition 2 – Greenway Trails. [David W. McCary, Assistant City Manager; Homer Garcia III, Director, Parks and Recreation]

Homer Garcia, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, provided a briefing on the Proposition 2 - Sales Tax Venue Project and introduced Brandon Ross, Parks Manager, who provided a program overview whose main goal was to improve the quality of life for City residents and visitors to include development of pedestrian and bicycle mobility, park system connectivity and open space and habitat conservation.

Ross stated that the 2015 Sales Tax Program was collected in full in March 2021 for \$81.7 million. Ross stated that the overall program accomplishments included 86 miles of greenways trails were completed, 13.7 miles were under construction, and 10.5 miles in design or planning phase.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Sandoval asked if a map of San Antonio River Authority (SARA) service areas was available. Ross stated that it would be provided. Chair Sandoval asked of the process for prioritizing projects. Ross stated that the program was creek-based but that trailhead paths were important to that development. Ross reviewed the areas being improved. Chair Sandoval asked if a map or prioritized list was available. Ross stated that there was not a formalized list but that feedback from residents and partners was utilized.

Chair Sandoval asked how equity was included in the project process. Ross stated that it was important to review the entire city for existing services. Ross noted that staff researched where opportunities for park or trail connectivity were needed. Ross stated that Council District 5 was a priority for projects. Ross reviewed the process used in Council District 2 for improvements. Chair Sandoval asked if the Equity Office was involved in the analysis. Assistant City Manager David McCary stated that the Office of Equity and the Parks and Recreation Department were developing an Equity Action Plan for parks development and would be presenting it to the Committee once completed.

Councilmember Castillo asked if data had been collected on trail usage for work, recreation, and other purposes. Ross stated that data was collected and provided by electronic counters' bicycle and pedestrian usage and provided examples for various park trails usage provided by electronic counters. Councilmember Castillo requested that the data be provided to the Committee.

Councilmember Castillo asked what discussions had been held between the Bexar County Appraisal District (BCAD) and the Neighborhood and Housing Department (NHSD). Ross stated that there were no formalized discussions with the BCAD but staff worked closely with NHSD. Councilmember Castillo asked if discussions with Public Works had occurred to meet pedestrian needs specifically in the Lone Star District.

Councilmember Viagran stated that northside sector trails had been completed first but that Southside trails still needed attention and should be prioritized with improved amenities specifically in the Mission Reach area. Councilmember Viagran requested an update on the design of Southside parks and trailways. She asked if a dashboard was available of trailway improvements. Ross stated that a dashboard was available online.

Chair Sandoval asked if funding for the projects under design and planning was identified. Ross stated that all but the Martinez and Mudd Creek projects did not have City funding but were to be funded by Bexar County.

5. The SA Climate Ready Technical Advisory Committee Energy Industry Vacancy. [David

McCary, Assistant City Manager; Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer]

Item 5 was addressed at this time.

Doug Melnick provided an overview of the San Antonio Climate Advisory Plan and the associated Technical and Community Advisory Committee and the Climate Equity Advisory Committee. He provided an overview of the selection process for the SA Climate Ready Technical Advisory Committee vacancy and stated that the Selection Committee recommended Mr. David Walter as the energy industry representative for the SA Climate Ready.

Chair Sandoval asked of the other candidate that was considered for the position. Melnick stated that Nick Jones was the other candidate who was considered but was not selected based on his limited experience. Melnick stated that he had reached out to Jones to ask that he be involved in other committees within the Climate Equity Committee which he agreed to do.

Walter provided an overview of his qualifications and background specifically in the energy field and thanked the Committee for his consideration.

Chair Sandoval asked of the remaining committee's make-up and their expertise. Melnick provided an overview of the Advisory Committee make-up and their fields of expertise and representation to include the renewable energy sector. Melnick also reviewed the partner organization representation on the Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Viagran asked Walter as to what motivated him to apply for the board position. Walter stated that his industry had an impact on all individuals and it was important to stay involved. Councilmember Viagran expressed support for the appointment.

Councilmember Castillo expressed support for the appointment.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked of Walters' view of the Paris Climate Agreement. Walter stated that the Paris Agreement addressed much of the identified factors for energy and San Antonio decided to make the agreement a priority to address and develop policy. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked for clarification on the effects of climate on marginalized communities. Walter stated that climate change would affect marginalized communities the most because: 1) Marginalized communities did not have resources to adapt to climate change; and 2) Policies may increase energy costs.

Councilmember Bravo moved to approve and forward the appointment of David Walter to The SA Climate Ready Technical Advisory Committee to the full City Council for consideration. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District on air quality and ground-level Ozone. [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Health]**

Mario Martinez, Assistant Director, Metro Health, provided an overview of the air quality and ozone attainment which included impacts of health and environmental impacts to poor air quality; air quality monitoring and status; the Ozone Attainment Master Plan; and Ozone moderate nonattainment. Martinez reported that Bexar County did not achieve Ozone attainment and that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would most likely reclassify Bexar County to Moderate Nonattainment status in early 2022. Martinez reviewed the EPA requirements of this reclassification and the City's focus to meet the EPA requirements.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Sandoval stated that there was a challenge of ozone air shed that surpassed the county lines but it was important to address how regulatory challenges and the impact of the health burden of ozone. She asked if the Ozone Master Plan could be shared with the Committee and if staff could provide updates of items addressed in the Plan. Martinez stated that the Plan and committee monthly updates would be provided.

Councilmember Bravo pointed out that Bexar County had been identified as meeting ozone levels which was unique because many times the County and surrounding counties would be included in those designations in order to address regulation requirements to reduce impacts. Councilmember Bravo asked of the impact of being classified a moderate non-attainment for business expansion. Martinez stated that clarifications were still being gathered. Councilmember Bravo clarified that business expansion would need to address energy air shed issues and improvements to air quality output. Councilmember Bravo reviewed air quality monitor categories and needed actions and stated that he was interested in learning more about available resources at the County and City level.

Councilmember Viagran stressed that communications on ozone level health impacts were crucial to the community and what residents could do to improve levels. Councilmember Viagran stated that she was surprised that levels were not decreased in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions on travel. Martinez stated that the environment and air streams were impacting the ozone levels. Councilmember Viagran prioritized the development of green space.

Councilmember Castillo stated that the increase of home and material demolitions impacted the environment and the City needed to address the spread of harmful materials into the environment when demolitions occurred. Councilmember Castillo asked for the number of super fund sites in San Antonio. Martinez stated that the information would be provided. City staff reviewed the EPA process of addressing super fund sites remediation and corrections.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how much impact the Spruce Plant had on the ozone levels. Kyle stated the information could be provided for all the plants. Melnick stated that the Spruce Plant was identified as a high producer. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked if it was known how the reduction of plants impacts could be measured. Kyle stated that an analysis would be required on all the factors of demolition and that CPS Energy would need to provide that analysis along with partnering with the EPA for impacting factors. Assistant City Manager David McCary stated that once the list of plants was provided, a baseline for each of the plants could be provided as well.

Chair Sandoval recommended that an individual with an expertise on energy strategy and a member of the equity team be included in the Ozone Technical Committee. She asked where funding was provided for these initiatives. Martinez clarified that ozone efforts were funded under the General Fund and other grants supported other energy efforts. Chair Sandoval asked if staff monitored the regulatory review of the EPA. Martinez replied that staff would continually monitor proposed recommendations.

Claude Jacobs noted that the Office of Climate Change and Equity was developed to assist in addressing climate change and other factors such as ozone impact.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Chair Sandoval adjourned the meeting at 12:19 PM.

Ana Sandoval, Chair

Respectfully Submitted

Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk