

**CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION  
Council Chambers, Urbana City Building  
Tuesday, March 6, 2018**

**Commissioners Present:** Chairperson Stacy Gloss, Dustin Allred, Claire Johnson, Todd Rusk, Andrew Stumpf, Morgan White, Tesfaye Wolde-Medhin

**Staff Present:** Scott Tess, Barb Stiehl

**Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum**

Chairperson Stacy Gloss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Barb Stiehl called the roll and a quorum was present.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Mr. Rusk, second by Ms. Johnson, to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.

**Public Input**

Public input was heard during discussion.

**Communications**

***Staff Report***

Scott Tess provided an update on the Climate Action Plan (CAP). He added that staff continued to work with Sun Power toward a two megawatt solar array at the site of the closed landfill. Staff was working on a lease option that would be the format for a permanent lease.

Mr. Tess is working with Midwest Renewable Energy Association to continue Solar Urbana-Champaign 3.0. An RFP will be published in April.

He noted that staff had completed a draft for calendar year 2017 on community greenhouse gas inventory, not just for City facilities, but also for all within the City's borders.

An update on Environmental Division activities was provided. These included meetings with student groups conducting studies with the City and University of Illinois to look at solar energy and storage at particular locations; and meetings with Act Green to discuss renewable energy credits and the renewable energy markets.

Mr. Tess mentioned that the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency was accepting public comments on the use of monies awarded to the State because of the Volkswagen settlement. He said that the use of the monies would focus on traditional pollution reduction with an emphasis on air quality non-attainment areas. A link to the information was provided in the packet.

U-Cycle staff attend the U of I Housing Fair to talk to students about the City's recycling programs since many students live off-campus in housing located in Urbana. Staff collected internal data about waste and recycling. The results of the collection will be discussed at next month's meeting.

The Mayor and Council released information about their top five goals for the next four years.

The next meeting on April 3, 2018 at 7 p.m. will include a visioning exercise for the future of Lincoln Square and the surrounding parking areas.

Mr. Allred asked about the outcome of the student study.

Mr. Tess said that the study will look at a couple of facilities (for backup solar energy and battery storage) to model the benefits of the use of that option.

Todd Rusk asked if the study would be similar to the study conducted at the fire station.

Mr. Tess said that the discussion of battery backup at the fire station was no longer under consideration as the fire station may be moved within the next 25 years so the installation of solar energy would not be a consideration. He said that other options might be available since hourly pricing of energy was not available at the time of the fire station. He said hourly pricing might make other options viable.

Amanda Soskin asked if the recycling data was collected Citywide or just for City facilities. She asked how it was measured.

Scott Tess stated that the data was collected for City facilities and projects only. He said that one method of collecting data was based upon container size and level of service. The other data collected was based upon the amount of materials saved and recycled from Engineering and Operations projects. He added that it was not a waste characterization study where each piece of waste and recycled material was analyzed.

Ms. Soskin asked if that type of study would be done to see if there were any changes over a period of time.

Mr. Tess said that a waste characterization study was completed once with the intention of providing recycling education and then repeating the study to see if educational efforts had made an impact on recycling amounts. He mentioned that the initial study was provided without a cost, but afterward a fee was required which did not provide the City with opportunities to conduct follow-up studies.

Ms. Soskin asked if the Lincoln Square visioning exercise was focused on sustainable options or on general options.

Mr. Tess said that it all input would be welcomed, but considering the general focus of this commission, sustainability would be included.

## Continuing Business

### *Public Engagement*

Mr. Rusk, co-chair of the Public Engagement Committee, stated that the committee had not met during the last month. He said that the committee had conversations to address the Climate Action Plan and Council goals with those in the commercial sector. He also mentioned that preliminary discussions had occurred to promote energy efficiency in low- to moderate-income households in relation to the Climate Action Plan and the Council goal to invest in older housing stock. He added that Chairperson Gloss and he met with the Future Cities group at the Urbana Middle School.

Mr. Stumpf said that he met with the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) to discuss the availability of the water guidance document and to determine if RPC had a document which discussed energy guidance. He said that RPC did not have an energy guidance document, but RPC would consider the feasibility of creating a document if requested by the Sustainability Advisory Commission.

Ms. White asked if the water guidance document included information about both potable water and stormwater.

Mr. Stumpf explained that the water guidance document provided information about protecting and preserving water sources. He felt that an energy guidance document would be helpful in providing information about the use of solar and wind energy and to reduce the carbon footprint.

Chairperson Gloss asked who would benefit from the document and how it would differ from the Climate Action Plan.

Mr. Stumpf said the document would provide information for a range of users and extend the range of what was already mentioned in the Climate Action Plan.

Mr. Tess recommended that RPC be asked if the creation of the document would fit within their current schedule and if additional funding would be needed.

Mr. Stumpf said that if the Sustainability Advisory Commission requested the creation of the document, RPC would determine if the assignment would be within the scope of their work assignments or if additional funding was needed.

Morgan White moved to request RPC to draft an energy guidance document that would provide information to all of RPC's jurisdiction, not just the City of Urbana.

Todd Rusk seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by voice vote.

Mr. Tess said that Mr. Stumpf and he would determine how to submit the proposal to RPC.

## New Business

### *Presentation on Waste and Recycling Topics*

Amanda Soskin, Urbana resident, presented information about waste and recycling topics. Ms. Soskin stated that urban areas contained 54% of the world's population, consumed 75% of natural resources, created 85% of the global GDP, produced 50% of the global waste and emitted 60-80% of greenhouse gases. Ms. Soskin recommended that to prevent environmental degradation and resource scarcity, communities needed to go from a linear economy (source, produce, consume, discard) to a circular economy (source, produce, consume, cycle back into the economy). To encourage a circular economy, she recommended designing out waste and pollution, keeping products at their highest value and in use, and regenerating natural resources. To implement a circular economy would require policy makers to rule by example, reflect sustainability in all actions, create a culture of sustainability and circularity with both private and public entities, cultivate collaborative networks and coalitions to promote circularity, provide open data to all to improve the lives of citizens and apply technological solutions where possible.

Chairperson Gloss asked Ms. Soskin to provide her notes so they could be included with the meeting minutes. She asked Ms. Soskin to give examples of circular economies and practices.

Ms. Soskin mentioned a project in the United Kingdom where Phillips lighting was leasing lighting to an organization. She said that bulbs were replaced and reused to create less waste. She mentioned a program in Oregon where food trucks charged deposits on plastic ware and recycled it when returned by customers.

Mr. Rusk asked if Ms. Soskin had suggestions on ways waste streams could be reduced.

Ms. Soskin recommended reducing the use of plastic bags. She suggested a fee be charged on plastic bags and that consumers be encouraged to use other items to carry goods. She said that there was a program in Olympia, Washington where food scraps were composted. Ms. Soskin said that much of the food waste could be diverted.

Mr. Tess stated that diverting food scraps did create challenges. He mentioned that adding food scraps to the Landscape Recycling Center (LRC) would require the purchase of additional capital equipment for processing the food. He mentioned that yard waste could sit for a period of time, but food scraps would require more attention. He added that the cleanliness of the site would be extremely important. He noted that there would need to be an increase in the sale of compost at the LRC to justify processing the scraps. In addition, if the program were completed on a large scale, it would require an increase in curbside recycling taxes. He said corncobs from the Urbana Sweetcorn Festival had been composted at the site. The disposal containers for corncobs had to be monitored frequently to avoid contamination, but the City continues to take corncobs to the LRC following the Sweetcorn Festival. He said that the City was working with a grocery store to take food waste, but that store was no longer in business.

Ms. Soskin encouraged the City to continue to create less waste.

***SAC Bylaws Amendment for Youth Seat***

Chairperson Gloss noted that when the Climate Inheritance Resolution was brought before City Council, Mayor Diane Marlin was amenable to including a youth member to the Sustainability Advisory Commission. Ms. Gloss stated that one of the bylaw amendments allowed the Mayor to appoint and the Council to approve one member to the Commission who had attained the age of 16, but had not attained the age of 18 to be a member. She added that the youth member would not be able to vote on resolutions that would bind the Sustainability Advisory Commission, City or other departments, but the youth member would be able to vote on recommendations that were non-binding. She expressed her thanks to the Mayor for encouraging opportunities where SAC could engage youth participation in the community.

Chairperson Gloss reviewed the other recommended amendments to the bylaws. One recommended change would be to add a section to codify the selection of a co-chairperson for the Commission. She explained that the amendment would allow the Mayor and members of the Commission to choose the co-chairperson.

Chairperson Gloss stated that the last amendment would develop the duties of the Commission to include the ability to review and make recommendations to any development of sustainability planning documents and not be limited solely to the review of the Climate Action Plan and the Sustainability Plan.

Morgan White moved to approve the recommended amendments to the Sustainability Advisory Commission's bylaws.

Todd Rusk seconded the motion.

Mr. Rusk asked if the age limit could be lowered to 14 years of age to increase the number of potential candidates.

Mr. Tess explained that the upper limit was set at 18 years of age since once a person reached that age, the person could be appointed as an adult member. He wondered if there might be a legal concern to have members younger than 16 years of age.

Ms. White amended her motion to lower the age for the youth member from 16 years of age to 14 years of age with a one-year term renewed annually, but that ended when the youth member attained the age of 18 years.

Claire Johnson seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by voice vote.

***Environmental Sustainability Division Annual Report***

Scott Tess reviewed the contents of the draft Environmental Sustainability Division Annual Report. Mr. Tess noted that the report showed that the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is near the goal set for 2020. He said that it was currently at 24% and the goal was 25%. He mentioned that the electrification of vehicles and municipal electric aggregation savings had contributed to the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Mr. Tess stated that the City of Urbana's water consumption was below the national average.

Regarding waste and recycling, Mr. Tess said that the data was dependent upon input provided by the licensed haulers in Urbana. He stated that since the City oversaw the recycling program, the data was more reliable.

For nuisance abatement, Mr. Tess explained that the nuisance abatement program was switching to an inspection management database. At present, he said that the reports were not available.

Ms. White asked if the name of the division could appear on the front page and the report be double-sided. She also requested the inclusion of the 2040 goal for 100% reduction of greenhouse gases on the graph shown on page 3 of the report.

Discussion followed regarding the best way to show the goal on the graph.

Ms. White asked if the municipal electric aggregation program was only for residents.

Mr. Tess said that by State law only residents were allowed to participate in the program. He mentioned that Champaign County had a program in which commercial entities could participate.

Chairperson Gloss asked when the final draft of the report would go to City Council so Commissioners would have an opportunity to provide input.

Mr. Tess said that he planned to distribute the report to Council as part of staff reports. He said that he would incorporate minor changes. If there were major changes, he could wait until after the next Sustainability Advisory Commission meeting and then submit it to Council.

Ms. Soskin asked about tracking the quality of recycling.

Mr. Tess said that the diversion goal was 90%. He explained that quality was reported by the hauler and always hit 90%. He mentioned that when unacceptable or contaminated materials were found in toters, the toters were tagged so residents would know the toters were not collected because the materials were contaminated.

### **Announcements**

*Free to Ride* documentary will be shown at the Transportation Building, Mathews Avenue, Room #112 at 4:00 p.m., March 7, 2018.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

This meeting was recorded.

