

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, March 1, 2021. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: James Azeltine, Deb Filla, Julie Cain, Mary Larson, Chuck Sipple, and Lisa Harrison

Councilmembers Present via Zoom: Andrew Osman and Jim Rawlings

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator; Patty Bennett, City Attorney; Stacie Stromberg, Assistant City Clerk; Ross Kurz, Information Services Director; and Mark Tepesch, IS Senior Specialist

Climate Action KC

Mayor Dunn explained the Climate Action KC Playbook was published in December 2019 by the Mid-American Regional Council (MARC) and supported by the U.S. Engineers. Councilmember Filla also acknowledged credit to those at MARC who distilled the Playbook from a larger publication to draw down what is practical for local governments to act upon.

Scott Lambers, City Administrator, addressed the Governing Body with his summation of the items in the Playbook. He explained that the items on the summary are either City-related, non-City related, or what the City is already doing. He stated his goal is to achieve consensus on the non-City related items to eliminate those from the list, review the on-going items, and discuss items that the Council may want to consider pursuing or discussing at a later time.

Mr. Lambers reviewed each item on the Playbook Table of Contents:

- **Funding a Clean Energy Resource Center:** Not practical at a City level. There may be some participation of the City financially but not for each entity to staff at such a facility. Should be implemented at County or a County-wide not-for-profit.

Mayor Dunn stated that Kansas City, MO already has a Metropolitan Energy Center that Leawood could use as a resource, but if it were implemented in Kansas, it would most likely be done in Johnson County. Councilmember Filla noted that the Playbook states when action is encouraged or should be taken.

- **Adopt Strong Building Codes:**
 - A. Completed. The City has adopted the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code.
 - B. Stretch codes are not needed as City regularly updates its building codes.

- C. The International Green Construction Code is too aggressive and is better utilized as a volunteer model code.
- **Stretch Your Building Code:** Completed. Building Code compliance is fully funded annually.
- **Retrocommissioning:** Not Applicable. This is for large commercial buildings in urban settings.

Mr. Lambers stated the retrocommissioning does not fit Leawood. Councilmember Sipple stated it would most likely be for buildings along Tomahawk Creek Pkwy and he would not want to impose it on privately owned buildings. Councilmember Filla stated the City can do this with its own buildings, to lead by example. Councilmember Harrison stated that the City can lead by benchmarking our own buildings and encourage owners of large buildings to benchmark voluntarily. She wondered if the City can use the Chamber and Economic Development Council (EDC) to help with encouragement.

- **Green Building Standards for New Buildings or Major Renovations:** Adopt Green Building Standards for new buildings or major renovations to existing buildings.

Mr. Lambers stated because of the costs, an incentive would typically be offered with a mandate. He does not feel that is the direction the City should take, and recommends following the benchmarking to lead by example and encourage businesses through the EDC. Councilmember Harrison asked if the new fire station and new pool house are using these standards. Mr. Lambers stated the architects are using best practices in construction but the City is not trying to achieve LEED standards.

- **Home Energy Disclosure:** Require a Home Energy Score Report for buyers and renters.
- **Train City Staff in Energy Efficient Behavior:** Not Applicable. City facilities are automated for maximum energy efficiencies.
- **PACE Financing:** Not Applicable. PACE financing is not permitted in Kansas.
- **Energy Efficiency Competition:** Property Tax Abatement for residential energy efficiency improvements. Can be discussed later.
- **Grants for Green Roofs or Cool Roofs:** This can be discussed later.
- **Energy Performance Contracts:**

Mr. Lambers stated that he arranged several reviews of the City's utility usage and found there was not enough inefficiency to warrant companies getting involved. Councilmember Sipple commented that this is similar to switching the street lights over to LED bulbs.

- **Switch Municipal Lighting to LED:** Ongoing. The City is switching municipal street lighting and traffic signals to LED lighting.

Mr. Lambers stated the City is moving forward with this. Councilmember Harrison inquired what percent of the lights have been switched to LED lights throughout the City. Mr. Lambers estimated it is approximately 25% but he would check with Public Works. Councilmembers Cain and Larson stated that they have heard complaints from residents that do not like the brighter lights shining in their backyards. Councilmember Sipple replied that there are different level of brightness in LED bulbs. Councilmember Cain pointed out that when the City is at 100% LED lighting, staff should be aware of the level of brightness of the bulbs being used. Councilmember Filla commented that if the bulbs are brighter, then the number of street lights could be spaced apart further. Mayor Dunn stated that would be very expensive to move the poles but it could be considered going forward.

- **Implement a Leak Detection Program:** Not Applicable. Water leak detection is under the jurisdiction of Water District No. 1.
- **Join Renewable Direct Program:** Completed. The City of Leawood has partnered with Evergy to buy into wind energy.
- **Adopt Solar-Friendly Codes and Permitting Practices and Solar Ready Roofs:**

Mr. Lambers stated the City has not done much for this except in the commercial area.

- **On-site Solar Generation:**

Mr. Lambers stated there has been a concern of these not to be placed on roofs but in yards, but that it can be discussed later. Councilmember Harrison suggested if City-owned buildings, such as the Parks and Rec or Public Works maintenance buildings, could use these because of their locations where aesthetics were not a problem.

- **Biogas Generator at Wastewater Plants and Landfills:** Not Applicable. The City of Leawood is not involved with wastewater or landfills.
- **Use Biochar and Compost in Managed Landscapes:** Can be done.

Councilmember Filla asked if there is any partnership between the waste management companies and Parks and Rec, or if the land in the flood plain at Ironwoods Park could be used as a dumpsite for leaves and yard waste, then residents can come back and get free compost. Mayor Dunn replied that that land was purchased by the City but has yet to be developed, and is also surrounded by residential homes. Councilmember Azeltine stated the composting is already being done by the waste management companies and Councilmember Cain added that Suburban Lawn and Garden has a site in Martin City. Councilmember Sipple mentioned that big machinery is needed to manage the compost and he does not want that in Ironwoods Park.

- **Promote Small-and Large-Scale Composting:** City can advocate for it.
- **Support and Incentivize Urban Agriculture:** Ongoing. Community gardens.
- **Reduce Meat Consumption.**
- **Raise Awareness About Household Food Waste:**

Councilmember Sipple stated that the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) has contributed on many occasions to the food waste compost program at Mission Trails School. He stated that the Blue Valley School District will not fund the program. Councilmember Filla stated that Shawnee Mission School District has made it part of their program.

- **Protect and Increase Urban and Suburban Forests and Plant and Protect Street Trees:** Ongoing.
- **Earn Recognition for Urban Forest Stewardship with a Tree City USA Growth Award:**

Mr. Lambers stated that this could be a consideration for the SAB. Mayor Dunn stated that the City has been a Tree City USA for 23 years. Councilmember Filla stated that staff in Parks and Rec have already done some of the work for the Growth Award by acquiring the software to create baseline data. She asked if there could be a staff report at a City Council meeting to update the Governing Body.

- **Plant Shade Trees:** Ongoing
- **Harvest and Utilize High-Value Wood Products from Trees That Must Be Removed:**

Mr. Lambers stated the City uses the wood for mulch, not sawing it into boards for housing material. Councilmember Sipple noted that the new Parks facilities will be able to use the high-value wood products since there will be space in the facility to build park benches.

- **Plant native plants and Remove Invasive Species in Parks and Along Greenways:** Ongoing.

Councilmember Azeltine asked for examples. Mayor Dunn replied that it would be thistle and honeysuckle. Councilmember Filla pointed out why honeysuckle is not good along the creeks and how some residents are not aware of the problem. Mr. Lambers stated that HOAs could help educate the residents to help identify the potential problems that these plants create for nature.

- **Conserve Key Natural Assets and Open Space, Including Working Lands:** Ongoing.

Mr. Lambers stated the City is doing this through the planning process in terms of creating buffer zones and conservation zones.

- **Fully Fund Parks and Recreation System:** Completed.

- **Water Efficiency Measures and EPA WaterSense Partnership:** Not Applicable. Water District No.1.
- **Conduct a Waste Audit:** Not applicable. Johnson County.

Councilmember Filla asked why it is not being done for City buildings. Mr. Lambers stated the audit would be done at the landfill and they would not know where it came from. Councilmember Harrison noted that she is not sure that trash and recycling are being kept separate when picked up by the overnight cleaning crews and mentioned the amount of paper that is used in the Council Chambers. Patty Bennett, City Attorney, stated she thought that crews took the City Hall recycling to the Justice Center for recycling but that David Ley, Public Works Director, may know for sure. She also mentioned the paper in the Shred-it bin is recycled for a fee. Councilmember Filla indicated an audit should be done for this reason. Councilmember Harrison stated labeled bins and clear directions to staff and crews should be made to avoid commingling the waste.

- **Increase Waste Reduction and Recycling:**

Mr. Lambers stated much of this is already taking place. Councilmember Sipple stated the City requires the waste haulers to provide a recycling service.

- **Enact Pricing Policies:** Not Applicable. Private companies.
- **Adopt a Green Purchasing Policy:** This can be discussed later.
- **Earn Walk-Friendly Community Designation:** Ongoing.

Mr. Lambers stated he is unsure if the City has applied for this designation yet. Councilmember Sipple stated it could be referred to the Bike/Walk Committee to review the requirements.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units:** Not applicable.

Mr. Lambers stated these are not allowed in the City. He stated it is the new housing crisis option to allow multiple units on a single-family lot.

- **Reduce Minimum On-site Parking:** Not applicable.

Mr. Lambers explained this would be directed to the hotels that were converted into housing by allowing residents to park on the streets. Councilmember Cain asked if there is an ordinance referring to how many vehicles are allowed at one residence. Mr. Lambers stated no.

- **Green Vehicle Purchasing:**

Mr. Lambers stated the City is in the process with the Police Department for the purchase of an electric vehicle. Councilmember Azeltine asked if the City has any hybrid vehicles. Mr. Lambers replied no because of the high cost versus the savings at trade-in.

- **Complete Streets and Sidewalks:**

Councilmember Filla stated she believes these have been implemented with the City's Complete Streets Program and that the City already has a plan in place for sidewalks that is in process.

- **Promote Electric Vehicles and EV-Ready Code:** Ongoing.
- **No Idling Zones:** No policy. Usually associated with schools.
- **Increase Mass Transit Ridership:** Not applicable. Johnson County.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** Not applicable. For large cities and there is minimal County bus service to Leawood.
- **Commuter Incentives:** This can be discussed later.
- **Earn Bicycle-Friendly Community Designation:** Ongoing.
- **Safe Routes to School:** Ongoing.
- **Create Cycling Networks:** Ongoing.

Mr. Lambers stated that many of these items the City is already engaged in doing. Councilmember Sipple stated that the City should be proud of its efforts.

Councilmember Filla asked if there is a map or app available for electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Lambers remarked that Kansas Evergy would have that available since the stations are their facilities and equipment.

Councilmember Harrison asked if there is a chance to have a commuter lot for ride/shares at State Line Rd. and 106th St. Councilmember Sipple stated he also liked the idea. Mayor Dunn cautioned of the area being used for food trucks and the Farmer's Market and that it is located within a flood plain. Councilmember Harrison stated that commuters would likely be using the lot during work hours and not on weekends. Mr. Lambers stated it would need to go through the planning process.

Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. Lambers for his work on the summary.

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.