

Sustainability Advisory Board

November 15th, 2019 MINUTES

Welcome, Introductions, and News

- Members greet. Guests are welcomed and introduced.

The SAB meeting came to order

- Bill Schutte makes a motion to approve the amended agenda. Alicia Jennings second. The motion passed unanimously.
- Alicia Jennings makes a motion to approve the October 10, 2019 minutes. Bill Schutte second. The motion passed unanimously.

Metro KC Climate Action Coalition – Alicia Jennings

- Members received a copy of the book “Drawdown” by Paul Hawken who was a speaker at the environmental climate change conference in Johnson County last September.
- Alicia Jennings opined 2 red flags about climate change. One, climate change is the largest threat to our national security, as per Chris King, a retired Brigadier General from Leavenworth. She shared several examples to support that theory. Two, according to Paul Hawken, climate change is like a car speeding to a cliff. The faster you go, the faster you are going over the cliff. If you slow down, you are still going over the cliff, it will just take longer to get there, but it’s still going to happen. In his opinion, there is no time to waste and things must be done now.
- Members discuss other conference issues including composting, free bus rides, parking subsidies, recycling questions and minimizing commercial trash from businesses and construction sites, an issue that was brought up at the last meeting by County Commissioner Becky Fast. Chair Sipple suggests scheduling WM or WCA to a discussion at a future meeting. Bob Pierson agreed to coordinate.

Update on Elimination of Plastic Bags – Alicia Jennings

- Alicia Jennings and Kathy Corbin are proposing to form a task force of 5-7 people (3 for, 3 against and 1 environmental expert) to study the environmental problems of single use plastics and design a plan to see what works, what’s realistic, and how long it may take to see some reduction. Alicia Jennings and Kathy Corbin would like to see significant work in 2020. They want to include Mimi Moffit, the head of a similar task force formed last October in Wichita. Kathy Corbin has been in contact with Lori Lawrence, also of Wichita and involved with the single-use plastic issue.
- Chair Sipple is interested in Hawaii’s progress on the elimination / reduction in single-use plastics.
- Bill Schutte suggests more language in the proposal to form a task force. He would like it to be more definitive and not just a concept when it is presented to Council. He is suggesting a council report. Council Member Debra Filla and Mark Ciaramitaro provided their input of what should be included, objectives and expected recommendations. The more this board prepares for the better the outcome.
 - To be more helpful to the Council is for the committee to answer these questions.
 - What is the magnitude of this problem?
 - Why is this committee pursuing it?
 - Why limiting and / or prohibiting single-use plastic makes sense to our streets and parks.
- Suggested contact is Craig Wood of Johnson County Environmental. He does the landfill analysis and would be able to provide the stats of how much plastic there is in the landfill. Food waste is the number 1 waste in the landfill.
- Alicia Jennings, Kathy Corbin and Bill Schutte will work on their proposal to present at the next meeting. Dr. Shelley Bhattacharya would like to have focus groups to engage the community, to learn what is important

ATTENDEES

7:30 am • Leawood City Hall
4800 Town Center Drive
Main Conference Room

- Chuck Sipple, Chair**
- Lisa Harrison, Vice-Chair**
- Dr. Shelley Bhattacharya**
- Erin Chacey**
- Mark Ciaramitaro**
- Kathy Corbin**
- Alicia Jennings**
- Bob Pierson**
- Jim Potter**
- Bill Schutte**
- Truss Tyson**

- Chris Claxton**
Parks & Recreation Director
- Brian Anderson**
Parks Superintendent
- Marica Putman**
Administrative Graphics Tech
- Scott Gamerl**
Outdoor Education Supervisor
- Kevin Jeffries**
President and CEO
Leawood Chamber of Commerce

- Guest**
- Dennis Patton, Jo Co Extension Agent**
- Debra Filla, Council Member Ward 1**

and what has value. Also suggested are surveys or questionnaires for the HOA meeting. This is not a precursor to the meeting but rather a building block as to additional input.

✚ **Metro KC Climate Coalition – Council Member Debra Filla**

- Debra Filla reviews how this coalition came to be. This was initiated at a regional level by Roeland Park Mayor Mike Kelly and Shawnee Councilwoman Lindsey Constance.
 - Kansas City is 5th in terms of cities that will be impacted by global change.
 - Brian Anderson in Parks & Recreation and Dave Roberts in Public Works attended the Academy for Climate Change for Professionals recently. They may be able to give a brief report for the January meeting. Others have attended too.
 - Debra Filla shared news of an award presented to Kansas City is part of the European Commission's International Urban Cooperation of Regional and Metro Scale Climate Leaders to support and help with a climate action plan. Kansas City is one of four U.S. regions selected by the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy to receive technical assistance to develop a regional Climate Action Plan. Other regions selected are Chicago, Denver and Washington D.C.
 - Goals:
 - Draft a regional Climate Action Plan
 - Develop State legislative platforms for climate action
 - Create a policy playbook of solutions that can be implemented by municipal elected leaders
 - Facilitate an annual Climate Action Summit
 - Debra Filla can send out the link of the conference. She is asking for support, participating in every level of sustainability as a City and work towards mitigation of climate change. She will make the recommendation to Council. When the plan comes out she would like a work session to see which one they can tackle first. For example, chemical lawns are an issue for water as well as children and pets. Three inches of turf doesn't absorb water and it runs off, impacting native plants. She shares what she would like to do for her yard. Members discuss this further along with other concerns such as lake algae blooms.
 - Debra Filla requests a motion to ask City Council to support and participate in this Climate Action Plan that is coming out. A brief discussion on native plantings and city ordinances follows. She reiterates that the core of this board is to support sustainability and this is simply saying that we think climate change needs to be addressed and support solutions for it. That's all that recommendation is saying. Members discuss it further. She will forward the recommendation to participate and support the Metro Kansas City Climate Action Coalition.
 - Vice-Chair Harrison and Erin Chacey have been and are currently participating with Metro Kansas City Climate Action Coalition.
 - Debra Filla reiterates that in the beginning, this (SAB) board was citizen education based. This Climate Action Plan is a much broader action plan for the city to embark upon. It is not the charter of this group to say how the City is run, to look at ordinances, or to determine what the Planning Commission is going to do but simply working with HOAs. Recommendations from this (CA) committee goes beyond the scope of this committee. The committee will not be involved. The staff will be looking at implementing a change in the ordinance to allow for native grasses to be done, etc. This committee does not have the skillset to manage the building, etc. All the board can do is support.
- Jim Potter makes a motion to recommend to City Council to support and participate in this Climate Action Plan that is coming out. Erin Chacey second the motion. The motion passes unanimously.
- A brief discussion concerning the motion request.
- Bill Schutte makes an amended motion to recommend to City Council that this committee supports participation in the Metro Kansas City Climate Action Coalition. Mark Ciaramitaro second the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

✚ **Theme of HOA Sustainability Summit – April 16, 2020**

- Guest Dennis Patton, Jo Co Extension Agent, is unable to speak at the HOA Sustainability Summit as he will be out of town that day (in Liberal, Kansas). Members discuss options for speakers (Deep Roots Organization, etc.), topics, goals and moving dates.

- Theme is: **Practical Lawns and Sustainable Landscaping for Residential and Common Areas**. The audience is: HOAs.
- Speaking to the committee, Dennis Patton shares other options to consider. He speaks highly of Deep Roots Organization, Grow Native, and more. He suggests the board consider speakers that best matches Leawood within the theme. His root systems slides are fabulous but they maybe at a higher level than what is expected at the meeting. There's a lot of people who do not understand what is being suggested so Leawood may need to start off with basic ideas and grow from there with enlightenment, encouragement and education. For many residents, this theme is new to them. He suggests speaker William Roth Gibson of Down to Earth Services.
- From an HOA standpoint, residents want to know how to choose and nurture successful perennials, cheaper native plants, save money on common areas, lawns that look good, pesticides, and abide by the rules of Leawood. More practical applications at this time. Dennis Patton feels that William Roth Gibson is the speaker for Leawood. He is practical, works with rain gardens and native plants. He can also have his staff be there to educate residents. Scott Gamerl like the staff idea and suggested they have "I'm a Master Gardner, Ask Me a Question" sticker. Then they could float around the room. Great idea! Members discuss other ideas for the meeting such as native grasses like a blue grass fescue lawn and lawn alternatives.
- Mark Ciaramitaro suggests that Chair Sipple secure William Roth Gibson ASAP. Marica Putman reminds Chair Sipple of the upcoming Parks & Recreation Program Guide deadline for the HOA Sustainability Summit Ad. Chair Sipple sums up tasks to select a new speaker, provide a vendor table for Dennis Patton's group with Master Gardner stickers, and more. At the last meeting, Erin Chacey volunteered to come up with some vendor prospects that are related to the present topic.

🌱 **Community Gardens Update – Council Member Debra Filla**

- Task force was extended to November.
- The task force made a recommendation to get a permanent site for a community garden. With help from Chris Claxton, David Ley, and Brian Anderson, space was found at Ironwoods Park underneath the KCP&L utility lines next to the maintenance building. Tasks left to do is adding 3 parking slots and teeing off the water. After the updates she will update the recommendation for a permanent garden at the council meeting on Monday.
- Chair Sipple asked whether this Community Garden community should be under Parks & Recreation Board rather than SAB. One of the recommendation is to determine if the task force could continue for another year, help with implementation plans for the permanent garden, and come up with a structure for it like the tree board as a subcommittee or a subcommittee to Parks & Recreation Board. Mark Ciaramitaro volunteers to help with contracts, by-laws, etc. He has had a lot of experience with community gardens.

🌱 **Mission Trail Elementary Grant Request**

- In the past, this committee has provided grants to schools that did various sustainability projects.
- Mission Trail Elementary School has made an application to enable them to continue composting food waste from their cafeteria.
- The grant award is \$500. The principal is Mrs. Debra Bond and is 100% behind this.

Chair Sipple makes a recommendation to approve this grant for Mission Trail Elementary. Mark Ciaramitaro makes a motion. Dr. Shelley Bhattacharya second the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

- Mark Ciaramitaro asks that at the end of the year, the school provide a note of their success or not that is measurable.
- The Blue Valley School District is not 100% in favor of food waste composting. It may be discontinued due to the high costs of the program. Chair Sipple and Chris Claxton shared their previous visit at the school. The committee has grant money to give out but the schools are not interested. Jim Potter had a similar application from Prairie Star. It was successful but they have not submitted another application. Dr. Shelley Bhattacharya described what she has seen in the schools with sealed milk being tossed into trash. After talking with the Blue Valley head nutritionist, they went with one milk instead of two. Chair Sipple requested that Erin Chacey and Dr. Shelley Bhattacharya work together to approach Leawood Elementary and Prairie Star principals about applying for grants in January. Members discuss this further. Shawnee Mission School District has made this waste composting part of their program.

- Erin Chacey shares that Mrs. Debra Bond has been supportive but that this is not an out of sight, out of mind issue but rather a budgetary one at Mission Trail Elementary. She almost cancelled the composting program this year and going forward. The \$500 grant does not cover all the expenses. It is more like \$2,000. Mrs. Debra Bond has even paid for bags out of her own pocket. Blue Valley School District does not realize they should be participating and supporting this composting program. It is because of the parents at Mission Trail Elementary that it was brought back. She suggests talking to the Blue Valley School District to encourage the other Blue Valley schools in mass to apply for these grants for food composting and make progress moving forward. Members discuss raising the grant money to \$1,000 or a big scholarship grant to help cover the cost. The HOA Sustainability Summit is open to everyone. Perhaps these school districts could attend.

Additional Notes

- Bob Pierson has provided trash totals from the Extravaganza in October.
- Meetings will continue on Friday.

Adjourn

▪ **Upcoming Meetings**

- **Next potential SAB meeting is January 10th, 2020.**
- Tentative future meeting dates in 2020: February 14th, March 13th, and April 10th, June 12th, September 11th, November 13th.
- HOA Sustainability Summit April 16th.