



**Environmental Management Commission
Meeting Minutes – February 17, 2010**

Meeting Location: Mid-America Regional Council, 2nd Floor, Westview Meeting Room

Commissioners present: Carol Adams, Amy Bhesania, Stephen Hopkins, Dustin Jensen, Marty Kraft, Rachel Norton, Jack Schrimsher, Jim van Eman

Staff: Dennis Murphey, Andy Savastino, Jerry Shechter – OEQ; Matt Gigliotti – Law; Mike Manning – Health Department

Guests: Julie Coon – Johnson County Environmental Department; Kevin Chafin and Sadie Gardner – BTG; Mike Hoey; Ron McLinden – Regional Transit Alliance; Claus Wawrzinek – Sierra Club; Carolyn Davies – UMKC; Camealia Murray

Carol Adams, Co-Chair, opened the meeting at 4:10 pm; a quorum was present

A. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all Commissioners, staff and guests to the EMC meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

B. Minutes of the meeting of January 13, 2010 were reviewed. Jack Schrimsher made a motion, seconded by Stephen Hopkins, to adopt the minutes as presented. The motion passed.

Based on projections regarding the City budget process, there was consensus to move the February meeting from the 2/10/10 to 2/17/10.

C. Office of Environmental Quality – Dennis Murphey

1. Mercury Storage – Update – EMC and the City sent letters to US DOE in opposition to placement of the Mercury Storage facility in Kansas City at the Bannister Rd. plant. The DOE has issued a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) identifying the preferred alternate location in Texas. City Council has passed a resolution supporting this decision and has transmitted it to DOE. There will also be a letter from the City Manager and the Chief Environmental Officer. For this meeting, it is proposed the EMC consider a letter, drafted by co-chair Carol Adams. After review and discussion of the proposed draft there were suggestions for modification. Jim van Eman made a motion, seconded by Dustin Jensen, authorizing the Chairs to submit a letter to DOE, as amended, in support of a location other than the alternate in Kansas City. The motion passed.

D. Air Quality Program Issue – Mike Manning, Health Department

Mike Manning received a telephone call from Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) regarding the potential of 100% funding reductions from MDNR to the various air quality programs in Missouri. The call was re-directed to Rex Archer, Director, Health Department. The four local air quality programs in Missouri are funded in the range of 70% to 75% from MDNR with the balance from local match. Without the state funding, the air quality programs will be forced to shut down with the monitoring and inspections, it is presumed, to be handled by the state. There is, as of yet, nothing in writing from MDNR and there is not yet a Health Department strategy. The Health Department has presented this information for future consideration of support from the EMC in favor of not making 100% wholesale cuts across the board. The Health Department currently employees nine (9) people in the Air Quality Program.

E. EMC input to the City Budget for 2010-11 -

The EMC was provided copies of (1) a 15-page memo from the Acting City Manager summarizing the budget proposal subsequent to the initially submitted budget draft, and (2) a memo from the Mayor in response to the Manager's budget proposal. The Manager's memo identifies how a deficit of \$4.5 million may be addressed including lay-offs and other measures. City Council is hosting budget hearings in each Council district. Carl Adams attended the meeting in District 3 and Dennis Murphey attended the meeting in District 5.

Carol Adams reported that the District 3 meeting was well attended. The community expressed general support for the Green Impact Zone and concerns about reduced or eliminated funding for: Legal Aid, Keep Kansas City Beautiful, Community Gardens. Concern was also expressed regarding the proposed restructuring of the Human Relations Department into separate components. Almost all of the Council attended.

Dennis Murphey reported that the District 5 meeting was also well attended and that sentiment that was expressed closely mirrored that of the third district meeting. Almost all of the Council attended.

Last year, EMC sent a letter of input. The question put before the EMC was whether to do so again and, if so, what should be said? It was noted the EMC had not yet corresponded with the Council but only the City Manager. The EMC reviewed both the supplemental submission by the Acting City Manager and the follow-up by the Mayor. Items of interest to the Commissioners included:

1. Elimination of the BTG environmental education contract
2. Elimination of the BTG contract for KKCB
3. Loss of support for Community gardens
4. Lay-offs in most departments
5. Elimination of the free paint program
6. Decreased support for the EDC and for the sports stadia

The real question is what action the EMC should consider. With regard to BTG, there is the corresponding loss of environmental education and of volunteers from the community. This represents spin-off loss of services that are not now covered by the budget – that are leveraged by City funds – and a loss of context for the community to learn to support itself. From a policy perspective, what items are important in addressing sustainability in the community? Potential elements of the proposed letter were discussed in this context.

Ron McLinden felt that something should be included that addresses loss of funds for transit ... especially for operations. It was agreed that such concepts as transit, education, recycling and volunteerism should be understood as basic services. Therefore, the letter should include something about the benefits of volunteer engagement, about how to define basic services in a context of sustainability.

Jim van Eman made a motion, seconded by Jack Schrimsher, to authorize the co-chairs to draft a letter to the City Council addressing the concepts and the context outlined above, to circulate the draft for immediate comment and to forward the letter when complete. The motion passed.

F. Liaison Updates - None

G. Project Updates – None; Jim van Eman noted that the new City contract with Town and Country allows other municipalities to piggy-back on this agreement to help extend curbside recycling to ever larger areas.

H. Old Business – None

I. New Business

1. Carol Adams suggested the EMC invite Bernardo Garcia, Director of Water Services to a meeting in the near future to talk about the EMC, energy efficiency, green infrastructure and to speak about what is being done by the Water Department. It was suggested he be invited to the March meeting.
2. Rachel Norton reminded the EMC that the time for Environmental Excellence Awards is approaching and that she welcomes volunteers to help in judging submissions.
3. Rachel also noted that she had attend a meeting of the Environmental Coordinating Managers and that there had been some concern expressed about being able to meet their environmental obligations.
4. Matt Gigliotti reminded the EMC they have an obligation to annually review the by-laws. Dustin Jensen volunteered to lead that process.

J. Remarks and Announcements

1. Ron McLinden noted that the MARC Regional 2040 Plan and its alternate scenarios will be discussed on KCPT on February 25, 2010.
2. The proposal for the City to annex about 317 acres in Platte County is nearing decision and should reach a conclusion on February 25, 2010. Ron McLinden encouraged the EMC to encourage the City Council to defeat the annexation proposal. It was noted that there are seven votes needed to approve the annexation while nine votes are needed to rezone the property for the proposed use.

The next monthly meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2010 at MARC at 4:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm