

**Environmental Management Commission****Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2015**

Meeting Location: Mid-America Regional Council, Westview Room

Commissioners present: Carol Adams, Bob Berkebile, Caroline Davies, Julie Davis, Gloria Ortiz Fisher, Seft Hunter, Julie Koppen, Marty Kraft, Robin Martinez, DJ Pierre, Jack Schrimsher

Commissioners Absent: Jensen Adams, Maria Coppock, Rachel Guthrie, Jim Hansen, Kimberly Hill, Ben Proffer

Staff: Dennis Murphey, Andy Savastino, Jerry Shechter – Office of Environmental Quality (OEQ); Matt Gigliotti – Law Department; Marleen Leonce – Public Works/Solid Waste

Guests: Tom Jacobs – MARC; Cassandra Ford – BTG; Mary Nemecek, Kathy Gates and Jeanette Hartshorn – KC Native Plant Initiative (NPI)

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 pm; a quorum was present

- A. Welcome and Introductions - The Chair welcomed commissioners, staff, and guests who introduced themselves.
- B. Minutes – Molly Davies made a motion, seconded by Julie Davis, to approve minutes of the meetings of July and August 2015. The motion passed.
- C. KC Native Plant Initiative (NPI) – Jeanette Hartshorn, Kathy Gates and Mary Nemecek  
Bob Berkebile opened the conversation indicating he is really excited about the potential of this initiative and the importance of native plants and pollinators.

Kathy Gates, KFGGKC – The focus of the initiative is to restore, improve and protect the quality of the natural environment. At the base of this initiative is actions taken by the Westport Garden Club, the oldest garden club west of the Mississippi, and the Garden Clubs of America, which is an advocacy voice. Inspiration has come from Doug Ladd, who authored “Tallgrass Prairie”, Roy Diblick, who authored “Know Maintenance Perennial Garden” and Douglas Tallamany, who authored “Bringing Nature Home”. The focus of the initiative is education and research and a partner is Powell Garden regarding the why and how of native plants. There are about 60 partners in the initiative and a grant application has been made for a 2 year project in the amount of \$230,000.

Jeanette Hartshorn, Project Coordinator of KC Native Plants, has been engaging representatives of the public and private sectors. She detailed a vision and a mission statement which focus on life diversity and inter-connections. One of the intentions is to cultivate opportunities for relationships in promoting natural surroundings and the benefits of the outdoors. Goals are to be addressed through education and advocacy, by influencing local planning and strategic use and management of native landscapes. Critical elements include coordination among various non-profit organizations to be engaged in promoting native landscaping at all levels for benefit of the environment, the economy and people.

Mary Nemecek, Audubon Society is also interested in addressing the decline of the Monarch butterfly. The grant, noted above, has been applied for from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Announcement of grants is expected in mid-September. One of the partners in the educational process is Bridging The Gap (BTG). A focus is trying to figure out what be done and what can be offered to others. Marty Kraft volunteered to help with codes issues.

Bob Berkebile asked for EMC input and support.

- D. Sustainable Circles – Andy Savastino  
Sustainability Circles began in Kansas City in January 2015 when we were approached by a company called REV to participate in a process to develop a “sustainability action plan” (SAP) which would entail development of a 5-year plan. There are 11 participants in this first Sustainability Circle.

Given that the City already had several plans – Climate Protection, Solid Waste Management, Trails, Bikes, etc, the question was how would we fit into the defined process? It was decided to use the process of developing the SAP to re-invigorate the existing four green teams of the Green Solutions activity. Several of the green teams had become less and

less active and it was hoped this process would make a difference. Four new green team facilitators were secured and Andy Savastino became the Green Team Coordinator. In the process, we have developed vision and mission statements with overall goals established in the Climate Protection Plan. We began with a set of about 100 proposed initiatives and separated them by green team. A copy of the 80 individual green team initiatives was distributed at the meeting. Each participant will make a presentation to all Sustainability Circles participants on September 15th detailing our progress. Tracking metrics are being developed by each team for each initiative and KC Stat has been engaged in the process so there are reporting and transparency elements.

There was general input and questions.

E. EMC Retreat – Carol Adams

Since the EMC meeting in November is 11/11, which is Veteran's Day, this regular EMC meeting will be cancelled. The dates on November 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> have been discussed as potential dates for the retreat. Following discussion, Bob Berkebile made a motion, seconded by Gloria Fisher, to approve Saturday, November 7, 2015 as the date of the 2015 EMC retreat. The motion was approved. It was decided the time frame should be 9:00 am to about 1:00 pm. The meeting place is to be determined. Staff was requested to send out a Hold the Date notice.

F. Office of Environmental Quality – Dennis Murphey

1. PACE Program – There has been a new, second PACE entity developed called ShowMe PACE. Dennis defined the PACE program as an opportunity for securing financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements to buildings. This newly formed PACE program has about \$50 million in capital available and is focusing on larger projects. While City Council has authorized KCMO affiliation with the first PACE entity (Missouri Clean Energy District), it has not yet done so for the second entity. The Law Department is reviewing proposed documents for potential affiliation.
2. The City has been notified that STAR (Sustainability Tool for Assessment and Rating) Communities has selected KCMO to participate in a training/orientation program in preparation for entering the STAR assessment and rating process. Cookingham-Noll Fellow Aaron Shroyer and Eric Roche, KC Stat, will attend a two-day orientation session in Washington, DC and will lead the assessment effort.
3. Dennis and Jerry will go to Lawrence, KS next week for the annual face to face meeting of the Heartland Regional Sustainability Network. At the meeting, Sustainability staff from the region – Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Oklahoma – will talk about urban agriculture and climate adaptation.
4. JC Martel has been hired by the Institute for Market Transformation (IMT) to work with Jennifer Gunby on the City Energy Project. JC will focus her efforts on the Energy Empowerment Ordinance and on data.
5. Climate Champions, the metro area designation which is flowing through MARC, will sponsor a series of four workshops regarding the development of regional climate resilience strategy. A featured speaker will be climatologist Chris Anderson from Iowa State University. Tom Jacobs provided more detail and noted that an expected outcome will be formulation of a high level resilience strategy. Carol Adams indicated she thought it would be appropriate that the EMC have a liaison to the process. The first workshop is scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm, at Kauffman Foundation Conference Center.
6. Andy Savastino talked about the 2015 Green Fair to be held Thursday September 17<sup>th</sup> in Curry Park at 11<sup>th</sup> & Oak from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. There will be a tour of Posty Cards at 3:00 pm. The theme of the fair is "Sustainable Business Practices".

G. Liaison Updates

1. Air Quality – Carol Adams – There will be a series of AQ planning sessions beginning November 12<sup>th</sup>.
2. LEED –No report
3. CEP – No report
4. Solid Waste –No report
5. Climate Protection Steering Committee – No report
6. Health – This new liaison position was created and Seft Hunter was asked to be that liaison because he is also a Commissioner on the Health Commission.

H. Legal Brief – Matt Gigliotti; No report

I. Old Business – There is one non-attending Commissioner. Carol Adams will send an e-mail to the Mayor's Officer asking that a replacement be appointed.

J. Old Business

1. Jerry Shechter - Vacant Properties Task Force - Center for Community Progress (CCP) grant application has been submitted asking for assistance in data aggregation for vacant properties.

K. New Business – For the retreat, Dennis was asked to provide a background briefing to Commissioners, at the October 14 EMC meeting, that consists of the presentation provided to the new City Council at a Business Session in August. The purpose is to engage the Commissioners in putting ideas forward.

L. Visitors' Remarks

1. Cassandra Ford introduced herself as the replacement at BTG for Sadie Gardner. Her name will be placed on the list of people to be notified of EMC meetings.
2. Everyone thanked Molly Davies and Andy Savastino for their work on the Environmental Achievement Awards
3. Marty Kraft thanked Robin Martinez for his work on the Keystone XL pipeline case.
4. Bob Berkebile noted the work Seft Hunter has done in Manheim Neighborhood and his involvement as a leader, including the Bancroft redevelopment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm

The next regular monthly meeting is:

October 14, 2015 at 4:00 pm  
Mid-America Regional Council  
600 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor - Westview Room  
Kansas City, MO