



**Environmental Management Commission
Meeting Minutes – February 8, 2017**

Meeting Location: MARC, Westview Room, 2nd Floor, 600 Broadway, KCMO

Commissioners present: Carol Adams, Jensen Adams, Bob Berkebile, Caroline (Molly) Davies, Jim Hansen, Seft Hunter, Julie Koppen, Marty Kraft, Robin Martinez, DJ Pierre, Ben Proffer, Nacente Seabury

Commissioners Absent: Gloria Ortiz Fisher, Rachel Guthrie, Kimberly Hill, Jack Schrimsher, Emily Truebner

Staff: Dennis Murphey, Andy Savastino, Jerry Shechter – OEQ; Matt Gigliotti – Law

Guests: John Fish Kurmann – 350KC, Joy Heaviland - Heartland Conservation Alliance, Vera Williams – Surface Water Solutions

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm; A quorum was present

- A. Welcome and Introductions – Co-chairs Carol Adams and Bob Berkebile welcomed commissioners, staff, and guests who introduced themselves.
- B. Minutes – A motion was made by Bob Berkebile, seconded by Molly Davies, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 2017; the motion passed..
- C. The Climate Emergency – John Fish Kurmann, 350KC
The basic question posed by Mr. Kurmann is “Why are we not acting like climate change is an emergency?” He presented a powerpoint which noted a Pew Research Center poll which indicated that respondents did not see the issue as an emergency. People do not perceive climate change to be extreme in its consequences at the present time. He noted the prevailing attitude among residents of the USA is to wait until an immediate problem exists and then to act.

John noted there are three points to consider when considering whether climate change is an emergency: (1) warming lags behind the actual emissions and, as a result, appears to be disconnected, (2) carbon lingers for a very long time, and (3) there are tipping points – these are multiple points with reinforcing feedback loops with some (many) of them being irreversible. The historical model for addressing such large issues has been “mobilization for war”. As recently as 2016, the national election had, as one focal point, climate change impact as a litmus test for leadership.

Mr. Kurmann indicated his intent in making this presentation is not to tell the EMC or the City what to do but to stimulate further discussion and on another level. The first step, he said, was to act like there is an emergency and address the question of how to get people to accept the concept and to act. In Australia, for instance, many cities have declared climate change to be an emergency. There followed a general discussion of various ideas including potential actionable steps including: (1) carbon tax and rebates for a revenue neutral action, (2) eliminate subsidies to fossil fuels, (3) Bob Berkebile noted the need for compelling stories. There was discussion regarding the need to address social justice locally and globally.

The EMC decided to set a special meeting date to continue the conversation and asked staff to secure a meeting location:

DATE: Wednesday, February 22, 2017
TIME: 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
PLACE: To be determined
TOPIC: The urgency of climate change

April 29, 2017 – There will be a march in Washington, DC and possibly in KC.

April 22, 2017 - Earth Day – There will be a march for science in Washington, DC and possibly in KC

The Chair thanked Mr. Kurmann for his presentation.

D. Retreat Priorities

1. Education – Jensen Adams –
 - a. Nine schools are participating in the Green Schools program application
 - b. The Education work group did not meet this month
 - c. KC Public Schools was asked by the Council for Great City Schools to participate with Houston in development of a white paper and toolkit on energy and sustainability in schools.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Air Quality – No report
2. LEED – No report
3. Solid Waste Planning – No report.
4. Climate Protection Steering Committee – Bob Berkebile – The next meeting of the CPSC is Friday, February 17, 2017 in the 10th Floor meeting room of City Hall at 3:00 pm. The primary presentation on the agenda is the STAR Rating System and results
5. Vacant Lots – Robin Martinez – A group is working on the question of valuation of vacant properties
6. Health Commission – Seft Hunter reported he has met with Dr. Rex Archer and Dr. Martin Anderson about a possible presentation to the EMC re: life expectancy. The Chair asked that this be put on the agenda for the March EMC meeting.
7. Water Cost of Service Task Force – Carol Adams – The task force has not advanced recommendations, but is moving in a general direction of placing greater emphasis on early implementation of flow reduction strategies. The current thinking favors greater reliance on green infrastructure as a way to reduce the need for more concrete and steel. Once flow reduction strategies are in place, it would be appropriate to re-evaluate the scope of the originally proposed larger storage projects, such as tunnels, collection structures, etc, which drive higher costs. There may be a role for the EMC to advocate for on-site storm water management as part of this larger strategy. There was general discussion in support of EMC's re-engagement..

F. Office of Environmental Quality - Dennis Murphey, OEQ

1. The position vacated by JC Martel has been filled by acceptance of an offer by Jesse Fields who is planning to start February 13, 2017. Mr. Fields appears to have capabilities, based upon his education and previous work, similar to those of Ms. Martel.
2. The ShowMe Green Sales Tax Holiday is coming up the week of Earth Day in April. City Council is being asked to approve a resolution authorizing the City's participating again this year. The legislation is being sponsored by Councilman Scott Taylor.
3. City Energy Project – Ten cities have been selected for Phase 2 including St. Louis and Des Moines. St. Louis has just recently adopted a benchmarking ordinance.
4. The new Mo Department of Natural Resources Director is Carol Comer.
5. April 4, 2017 – The City has authorized a general obligation bonds election. Each of the three issues needs 57% of the vote for passage. Staff was asked to send out the fact sheet.

G. Environmental Achievement Awards – Andy Savastino indicated there is a problem in obtaining additional photos that make up the physical award the EMC has used for years. OEQ has had a previously purchased supply of the photos but that supply is nearly exhausted and the photographer is apparently not willing to continue. He asked what the EMC would like to do and asked for opinions as to whether to stay with the existing photos and their content or use something else – something other than photos and/or different content. The current consensus is to stay with the framed photos. The Chair asked that this topic be on the Old Business agenda for the March meeting.

H. Legal Brief – Matt Gigliotti, Law Department, presented several issues while indicating there was nothing of immediate concern needing to be addressed.

I. Old Business – None

J. New Business - None

K. Visitor Remarks

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm

**The next EMC meeting is: March 8, 2017
 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm**

MARC - 600 Broadway, 2nd Floor - Westview Meeting Room