



Commission Agenda
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 - 5:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Webinar

Sustainability Commissioners: Chair Mtima Richardson, Vice Chair Laura Allen, Art Farley, Louisa de Heer, Drew Johnson, Karyn Kaplan, Mike McFarlane, Mitra Gruwell, Dennis Reynolds, Jan Bohman, Hannah Shafer and Councilor Emily Semple **Staff:** Brooke Freed (CMO)

	<u>Starting time</u>
1. <u>Opening (15 minutes)</u>	5:30 p.m.
- Action item: Review and approve agenda	
- Ice Breakers	
- Land Acknowledgement	
- Action item: Approve January meeting minutes	
2. <u>Public Comment (5 minutes)</u>	5:45 p.m.
3. <u>Commissioner Response to Public Comment (5 minutes)</u>	5:50 p.m.
4. <u>Staff Updates (5 minutes)</u>	5:55 p.m.
5. <u>Emerging areas of interest (20 minutes)</u>	6:00 p.m.
Discussion:	
• Review draft letter to council re Waste Management	
• Review draft letter to council re Air Quality	
6. <u>Committee Updates (20 min)</u>	6:20 p.m.
7. <u>Commissioner Updates (10 minutes)</u>	6:40 p.m.
8. <u>Council Communications and Updates (10 minutes)</u>	6:50 p.m.
9. <u>Closing: next steps, other follow-up (10 minutes)</u>	7:00 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Sustainability Commission will be on March 16, 2022. Meeting details for future meetings will be posted when available on the [Sustainability Commission](http://www.eugene-or.gov/sustainability) website.

The Sustainability Commission welcomes your interest in these agenda items. All meetings are open to the public and are wheelchair accessible. For the hearing impaired, an interpreter FM assistive listening system can be provided with 48 hours notice prior to the meeting. Spanish language interpretation may also be provided given 48 hours notice. To arrange for these services or for more information about this commission, contact commission staff at 541-682-5010.

El sitio de la reunión tiene acceso para sillas de ruedas. Hay accesorios disponibles para personas con afecciones del oído, o se les puede proveer un intérprete avisando con 48 horas de anticipación. También se provee el servicio de intérpretes en idioma español avisando con 48 horas de anticipación. Para reservar estos servicios llame a la recepcionista al 541-682-5010.

Eugene Sustainability Commission - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 - 5:30 p.m., via Zoom Webinar

Present: Chair Mtima Richardson, Vice Chair Laura Allen, Art Farley, Louisa de Heer, Karyn Kaplan, Mike McFarlane, Mitra Gruwell, Jan Bohman, Hannah Shafer, Councilor Emily Semple

Absent: Dennis Reynolds, Drew Johnson

Staff: Jason Dedrick (CMO)

Call to Order

Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Richardson called for a motion to approve the January agenda with the addition of an action item to the Committee Updates section.

Action Item: Approve Amended January 2022 Agenda

Moved: Jan Bohman

Seconded: Art Farley

Vote: All in favor

Chair Richardson led an icebreaker that allowed Commissioners to get to know each other better. The question of the day was: *what is your favorite act of service?*

Chair Richardson led the Commission through a land acknowledgement.

Chair Richardson called for a motion to approve November minutes or request for discussion.

Action Item: Approve November 2021 Meeting Minutes

Moved: Jan Bohman

Seconded: Laura Allen

Vote: All in favor

Abstain: Mitra Gruwell

Public Comment

No public comment.

Commissioner Response to Public Comment

N/A.

Staff Updates

Jason Dedrick provided staffing updates for the City Manager's Office:

- Jason Dedrick noted that both sustainability positions are currently vacant, with work progressing to refill those vacancies; noted staff are reviewing the position descriptions to ensure they are well-supported and generate interest from a quality pool of talent.
- Commissioner Bohman asked at what level the positions will be posted; Jason Dedrick noted they will be full-time regular positions and are currently undergoing a classification review.
- Commissioner Bohman asked about the estimated timelines for posting and hiring; Jason Dedrick committed to share further information with the commission once available.

Emerging Areas of Interest

Emerging Areas of Interest are in alignment with this section of the Commission's work plan.

- Commissioner Kaplan reviewed a draft letter from the Waste Management Committee which recommends the City mandate all events utilize sustainable waste management practices; noted this issue was elevated to a City Council work session on 10/27/21; noted there are large events which have been managed effectively, but many more do not participate in sustainable waste management practices.
- Commissioner de Heer asked if Council expressed any concerns regarding cost or dissuasion from business owners.
- Councilor Semple noted Council requested staff to return with additional information on this topic; stated she is prepared to bring this issue back to Council when the Commission is ready.
- Councilor Bohman expressed disappointment that there is widely available knowledge and access to resources supporting sustainable waste management but participation remains relatively low; stated the draft letter conveys the importance and impact of this issue well; stated that asking Council to impose mandates may be difficult and non-punitive options, such as incentivizing the use of sustainable waste management practices, should also be considered.
- Vice Chair Allen asked if there has been any data collection performed around potential cost savings; suggested that some of the supporting data within the draft letter be moved to an appendix, making for a more concise communication.
- Commissioner de Heer concurred with Vice Chair Allen's idea for an appendix and further suggested stacking the introduction with keywords focused on impact and obligations; asked about partnering with Lane County on this, given their interrelated goals around anaerobic digestion and landfill upgrades.
- Commissioner Farley agreed with the benefit of having a concise introduction or some form of cover letter; stated his support for moving forward with the letter.
- Councilor Bohman asked about possible opportunities for engagement with the University of Oregon on this issue.
- Commissioner de Heer suggested completing letter revisions now but waiting to deliver the letter until new support staff is in place.
- Chair Richardson concluded that the letter would be revised but held for delivery until staff support is in place.

Committee Updates

Chair Richardson introduced the next section of the meeting. Committees include Urban Forestry, Carbon Offsets, and Resiliency Hubs.

- Commissioner Farley noted that vehicle carbon emissions are the top contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in the community and discussed the formation of an ad hoc committee charged with performing a deeper analysis into the adoption of electric vehicles and prohibiting new gas stations in Eugene.
- Councilor Semple voiced support for the formation of this committee; noted the City's ongoing desire and efforts to reduce dependencies on fossil fuel.
- Commissioner de Heer noted staff presentation from the City's transportation team on electric vehicle adoption and related goals and asked if it would be appropriate for transportation staff to join this committee; discussed the possibility of new federal dollars from the infrastructure bill and how Eugene could position itself as a recipient of funding.

Action Item: *Approve a proposal to establish a Committee to research electric vehicle adoption and prohibiting new gas stations within the City of Eugene.*

Moved: Mitra Gruwell

Seconded: Laura Allen

Vote: All in favor

- Vice Chair Allen noted the Electrification Committee met in December but is experiencing challenges related to the lack of staff support; next meeting is January 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
- Commissioner Farley noted the Offset Committee met in December and January; progress is being made and he anticipates their proposal will be ready in the coming months; next meeting is February 7, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.
- Chair Richardson requested that Jason Dedrick notify the Sustainability Commission once he has information on where to direct Commission questions in the interim.
- Vice Chair Allen asked that the full Commission and subcommittee meeting dates and times be regularly updated on the website, which is currently outdated.

Commissioner Updates

Chair Richardson asked if any Commissioners had updates to share with the group.

- Commissioner de Heer highlighted the recent announcement from the Department of Environmental Quality and the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency regarding the JH Baxter lumber processing facility and recent findings of elevated levels of dioxins in nearby parks and neighborhoods; stated the challenges of having no air quality experts within the City and the need for tracking the advancement of pollution and notification to communities; expressed hope the Commission will reengage the proposal for a City Council work session.
- Commissioner Farley urged new commissioners to bring forward any committee proposals of priority and interest to ensure they can continue engaging Council on critical issues.
- Vice Chair Allen asked about writing letters to the City in support of ongoing cleanup and prevention efforts.
- Councilor Semple noted Councilor Groves recently created a work session poll to address chronic toxic pollutants, which passed and will be placed on a future City Council agenda; encouraged letter writing to reemphasize this critical issue and urge Council to schedule the work session.

Council Communications and Updates

- Councilor Semple shared a construction update on the Farmers Market Pavilion and Plaza, noting its construction from Oregon grown cross-laminated timber; noted recent work session on the Eugene Public Library and the great work being done with levy money; noted recent work session on the World Athletic Championships Oregon22 and shared details of the Riverfront Festival and Riverbank Park; noted recent work session on affordable housing, funding and expansion projects; noted recent work session on the successful review of Municipal Court Presiding Judge Greg Gill; noted upcoming Council discussions on housing implementation pipeline and steam plant restoration project,
- Commissioner Bohman requested as major projects move forward, to please encourage requiring them to be fully electric.

Closing: Next Steps, Other Follow-Up

- Chair Richardson shared the next Sustainability Commission meeting (February 16,2022) will host the Breach Collective to present a report on legal pathways for restricting natural gas use in new

construction in Oregon, and to please look into Breach's work as to prepare questions and comments in advance; stated they will follow up with an email on future meeting dates of the Urban Forestry Committee.

Chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

DATE

Dear Mayor Vinis and Eugene City Council,

The Sustainability Commission wrote to you on January 25 and February 22, 2021, to request a work session and review of the attached proposal regarding a city ordinance to **require** all large events to implement common sense, zero waste practices to assist the city in:

- Reducing GHG effects from large events associated with food waste
- Meeting our region's obligation towards the state goals of 50% waste diversion
- Reducing pressure on the county landfill
- Creating opportunities to educate the public and implement waste reduction practices
- Standardizing waste reduction at local events

Thank you for honoring our earlier request and holding a work session on Large Events Waste Management on October 27, 2021. However, it appears, from this session, that the issue is tabled indefinitely.

With the upcoming planning for a significant number of large events to be held in Eugene, the Sustainability Commission requests that this issue be further investigated and reviewed for **implementation of an ordinance requiring all events** to utilize existing city resources (<https://www.eugene-or.gov/2755/Sustainable-Event-Resources>) to reduce waste and climate impacts.

The city of Eugene has done an excellent job of demonstrating that this can be done, including creating extensive resources for tracking and mechanisms to reduce overall event waste. It is currently voluntary. The Sustainability Commission is requesting that the city take it a step further and make this practice mandatory. Allowing this to be just a voluntary practice is not yielding needed results.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
The Eugene Sustainability Commission

See attached addendum for additional comments.

ADDENDUM ON LARGE EVENTS

Though the work session was valuable, the Sustainability Commission would like to add the following comments:

The county recently issued a GHG assessment, indicating that the landfill generated the majority of GHG's produced through waste portion in the county. Waste accounts for 8% of GHG produced in Eugene: https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/59286/2019-Eugene-Community_GHG

According to the Lane County Solid Waste Plan, food waste makes up 18% of total landfill tons and is a significant contributor to GHG production:

https://p1cdn4static.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_3585797/File/Lane_Co_SWMP-2019-07-26-FINAL.pdf

- Large events serve and discard large quantities of food waste. Mandatory waste reduction and reporting for large events is a well-focused and enforceable way to capture and reduce food waste, lessening the impact on the landfill and on GHG production.
- Large events produce a plethora of waste from infrastructure (wood, steel, carpet, electrical wires, lighting, turf etc...), food waste, cardboard, paper, and plastic.
- Creating a large events waste requirement would provide a simple solution for a significant issue. Including: requirements for alternatives to plastic cups, such as reusable souvenir cups, metal cups and pre-packaged beverages.
- Forcing the University of Oregon (UO) to focus on food waste, would be one benefit of an ordinance. While UO is part of the Pac-12 Green Sports Sustainability Program, it currently has minimal waste management and reduction initiatives. As a result, UO has not ranked in the Pac 12 Zero Waste Challenge.
- OSU has a definitive zero waste program for all football and basketball games, and has been recognized by the Pac 12 on zero waste initiatives, whereas the UO has none. Olympic events, collegiate football and basketball programs have been planning and implementing zero waste practices nationwide.
- According to "Do Something", college football games can generate between 50-100 tons of waste. (<https://www.dosomething.org/us/articles/8-ways-to-green-your-football-season#:~:text=An%20average%20college%20football%20game,field%20if%20they%20let%20you>)
- In the work session, the focus was on the past Olympic trials. In past years, the City worked directly with the trials to create a zero waste event. This was highly successful with waste reduction and recovery rates reaching over 75%. This ended in 2016 as the city created a suggested list of sustainability and waste reduction resources for events. Though the city staff

will assist an event, there is no requirement for waste tracking or minimization. An event can opt to pay for certification, but there is no system in place to ensure all events participate in this process. For the Olympic Trials event in 2021, there were no plans in place to reduce waste.

- There are many other large, recurring events in Eugene beyond the four-year cycle of Olympic Trials. The number and size of events is growing with increased facilities and population. Collegiate athletic events and community concert events are recurring throughout the year, with no mechanisms in place to reduce, recycle or implement needed sustainable practices. An ordinance would encompass these types of events and more.
- There are local recycling processors that can accept a variety of plastics, cardboard and paper products, compost/food waste, and industrial materials such as wood, metal, electronics and organics (such as plants).
- Though the State of Oregon recently passed the Modernizing Recycling Act, it will take up to 10 years to implement. There is nothing in that legislation directly addressing large events.
- Creating an ordinance for zero-waste large events is a low hanging fruit that will reduce landfill impacts and GHG production. The State of California has implemented an Events Recycling Law, AB2176:
https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=200320040AB2176
- Examples of states and cities that have implemented these types of laws include: Washington, Maryland, Minnesota, Austin, Texas and Salt Lake City.
- One of the key elements of the law would be submitting a waste management plan and reporting on its implementation. Reporting is a key mechanism to assist the city in the assessment of waste production and GHG production. These requirements would be included in any licensing or permitting process for large events.

Implementing a Large Events Waste Management Ordinance would be an important step that could facilitate Eugene's efforts to reduce its climate impacts.

Mayor Vinis and Eugene City Council,

The Sustainability Commission has been closely following many recent stories that directly relate to recent recommendations brought to Council on the urgent need for action to improve our air quality. From JH Baxter's frightening airborne toxics to the mounting research on indoor air pollution linked to home heating, the Sustainability Commission asks that the City Council take up our recommendations in a work session, and direct staff and resources as necessary to make measurable progress.

While the city's Sustainability program is experiencing transition, our community is continuing to experience unacceptable health and quality of life impacts from degraded air quality. There are opportunities to study home heating options as a component of the Council's requested building decarbonization study, and our community deserves action to prevent future toxics impacts from legacy polluters. The time is now to make our future cleaner.

Please take up the Sustainability Commission's 2021 Air Quality Recommendations in a Council work session.

In gratitude for your tireless efforts.

- The Eugene Sustainability Commission