

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements:

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 3:11 p.m. There were 11 members present at roll call.

Commissioner Chapman left the meeting at 4:02 pm.

Commissioner Knoop left the meeting at 4:15 pm

Commissioner Chapman joined the meeting at 4:41 pm.

Commissioner Chapman announced an opportunity for experiential-learning taking place every second Saturday at Spaces of Opportunity. He also shared an opportunity for service-learning gardening sessions every 4th Saturday at Garden of Tomorrow through October.

Chair Lobo gave praise to the NCA5 Southwest Region Engagement Workshop.

Commissioner Barr added this was the 5th national climate assessment and the event highlighted climate change impacts in the desert southwest region.

2. Review and approval of March 14, Minutes

Commissioner Tetrault made a motion to approve the April 11, 2024 minutes.

Commissioner Gorsegrner seconded the motion and it carried 11-0.

3. Public Comment

No members of the public requested to speak.

4. Tiger Mountain Foundation Presentation and Discussion

Commissioner Chapman, TigerMountain Foundation (TMF) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), introduced TMF speakers Megan Herrick, Rodney Smith, Stephanie Duarte, Nelle Ellis, and Trinity Peterson. The group gave a presentation on TMF including mission, community involvement, administration and workforce development, sustainability, and more. TMF discussed how their work aligns with several of the International Sustainability goals.

Commissioner Gorsegrner asked about land development concerns.

Commissioner Chapman discussed considerations and planning for land development, and that sometimes it may be difficult to obtain a lease.

Chair Lobo asked if TMF was a national organization.

Commissioner Chapman replied TMF was a local South Phoenix based organization that has received national and global attention.

Vice Chair Torres commented on farmers, equity and urban agriculture and opportunities available through the USDA.

Ms. Duarte commended TMF for workforce and career development opportunities.

Chair Lobo asked about data tracking for impact.

Ms. Duarte replied with an overview of documentation, report plans, and tracking for volunteers, field work, lesson plans, culturally mindful nutrition, and more.

5. Local First Arizona Presentation and Discussion

Jason Lowry, Local First Arizona Sustainability Initiatives Director, gave a presentation on Local First Arizona, specifically the Green Business Boot Camp program. He reported 97 percent (600,000) of Arizona businesses have fewer than 20 employees which is 40 percent of Arizona workers.

Commissioner Sandweg commented on the bootcamp program, which he participated in a couple of years ago. He applauded the opportunity and noted its impact on Copper Star Coffee.

Mr. Lowry discussed how resources have expanded over the years, including more rebates and grants available to small businesses.

Chair Lobo asked for thoughts on engaging the small business community.

Mr. Lowry spoke about Flagstaff, and how reports from working with small businesses would be shared with the City of Flagstaff.

Chair Lobo asked how recruitment worked for the bootcamp.

Mr. Lowry responded demand was increasing and word of mouth was becoming more common.

Commissioner Gorsegrner asked about green banks.

Mr. Lowry commented on green banks details, and discussed the Growth Partners Arizona organization.

Vice Chair Torres applauded Local First Arizona's work and asked about reducing cost burdens for small businesses to help reduce the heat island effect.

Mr. Lowry discussed investigating grants, rebates, and large return on investment projects, such as planting shade trees on properties for building health.

Commissioner Barr commented on trees and noted competing incentives for tree removal in some scenarios.

Mr. Lowry clarified removal would apply to water-intensive trees.

Chair Lobo asked if Local First Arizona worked with City departments.

Mr. Lowry replied yes.

Vice Chair Torres asked if participating businesses got recognition.

Mr. Lowry responded some participants used marketing to promote themselves for completing the program.

Vice Chair Torres asked if there was an organization that provides certification for green businesses.

Mr. Lowry responded Local First Arizona offered a state-wide green business certification.

Chair Lobo asked the Commission about connections to the Climate Action Plan.

Commissioner Knoop asked if Mr. Lowry has engaged with the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Lowry replied he personally has not.

Vice Chair Torres asked if there was a sustainability chamber.

Katrina Gerster, Environmental Programs Specialist, responded there was a Green Business Chamber.

Commissioner Chapman thanked Mr. Lowry for his work and presentation.

6. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Chair Lobo noted future agenda items including the City of Phoenix Office of Heat Response and Mitigation Tree and Shade Master Plan update, and Arizona Sustainability Alliance Urban Forestry Roundtable update.

Vice Chair Torres suggested the Arizona Green Chamber of Commerce give a presentation on background information and what kind of businesses they work with. She also recommended having the Public Works Phoenix Green Leaders speak.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Vermeer, Administrative Assistant II