Environmental Sustainability Committee Meeting

March 20, 2024, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

City Hall, Work Session Room

**Meeting Minutes**

1. **7:00 – 7:05 Call to order and welcome**

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| **Type** | **Name** | **Attendance** |
| Member | Faiza Alam | Present |
| Member | Marian Carroll | Present |
| Member | Timothy Killian | Absent |
| Member | Ben Lebron | Present |
| Member, Chair | Thomas Peterson | Present |
| Member, Vice Chair | Amanda Stamp  | Present |
| Member | Rusty Russell | Present |
| Member | Larry Kobayashi  | Present |
| Member | Greg Farley | Absent |
| Member, School Board Representative | Stacy Hall | Present |
| Member, Business Representative  | Elaine Wilks | Present |
| Student Representative | Asha Lowery | Present |
| Staff | Stefanie Kupka | Present |
| Staff | Melissa Pennett | Present |

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Peterson at 7:02 p.m. Meeting attendance is noted below.

1. **7:05 – 7:10 Public comments**

There were no public comments.

Tom suggested adding or moving committee member comments to the beginning of the meeting to discuss community comments or items of note.

* Larry and Amanda discussed a new sustainability section in the Mosby Woods newsletter.
* Rusty recommended the ESC members watch the work session presented on the turf versus grass debate for the Katherine Johnson Middle School field.
1. **7:10 – 7:15 Consideration of the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes**

Stacy made a motion to approve the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Amanda. The motion passed unanimously.

1. **7:15 – 7:45 recommendations for improvement (Rusty)**

Tom led a discussion as a follow-up to Councilmember Feingold's request for project review clarification and whether or not the ESC has the capacity to serve in a project review advisory capacity.

* The ESC would be most affected if they were involved and provided comments at the forefront of a project. The public is also interested in being at the beginning of these discussions and is the subject a lot in the community.
* The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) does provide comments to staff and council on certain projects.
* Rusty asked if the Planning Commission or Council should be responsible for requesting the ESC’s input as was done with the city hall landscaping project.
	+ Rusty also asked if PRAB and ESC should to meet periodically.
* Ben suggested increasing transparency in the City operations and requesting staff updates on upcoming projects for the ESC to be able to request more info and or provide comments at the beginning of a project.
* Faiza suggested Council should request at work sessions or public hearings for projects to get reviewed by the ESC.
* Tom asked if the ESC should have liaisons to other committees, boards, and commissions.
* Amanda asked if the ESC should have a collaborative meeting with PRAB, and other commissions periodically.
	+ Rusty, asked if the ESC should have a work session with the School Board.
* Ben encouraged the ESC to understand where there are gaps in working with other boards and commissions.
* Rusty suggested having a special speaker each month to learn what we don’t know in other departments and aspects of the city.
1. **7:45 – 8:05 ESC City Planning Update**

Stefanie provided the ESC an update on the Comprehensive Plan:

* Last month staff presented the proposed update on the sustainability chapter and the natural environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission is still accepting comments by May 15.
* There will be a public outreach meeting in June, the date is still to be determined.
	+ ESC is requesting a staff update at the next meeting.
* The updated version of the Comprehensive Plan is aiming to implement sustainability into all of the chapters and have more intersectionality.
* Amanda asked if there is a specific goal that mentions a benchmarking target for areas of open space.

Stefanie provided the ESC an update on the Fairfax City Small Area Plan:

* Staff are in the process of developing the Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan, and taking input. Information is available on the Engage Fairfax Page.
* Tom asked if the ESC should provide input as a group, or as individuals.
	+ Rusty has volunteered to collect ESC thoughts on the Fairfax Circle Amall Area Plan.
1. **8:05 – 8:20 FY25 Fairfax City Budget Public Hearings (4/30/24, 5/7/24 (adoption))**

Stefanie provided an update on the FY25 budget. The Council will adopt the budget on May 7th. There are two public hearings left, one on April 30, and one on May 7 where they will adopt the budget. If the ESC is interested, they are welcome to provide comments or submit a letter of support for the proposed projects.

* Ben has volunteered to take the lead on drafting a letter of support
* Faiza has volunteered to speak in support of the recycling and trash carts and requested staff to resend the budget items for review.
1. **8:20 – 8:30 Solar day and ESC initiative template update (Elaine)**

Stefanie, Elaine, and Dominion have a meeting set for Friday to discuss a solar day initiative.

1. **8:30 – 8:40 Electric Vehicle Update**

Staff provided an update on the various electrification projects the City is undertaking:

* The Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan is budgeted to develop a long-term strategic plan to prepare the City of Fairfax for electric vehicles (EVs), including EV infrastructure, where the demand is going to be, and how to phase in electric vehicles. The Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan is going to be coupled with:
	+ Adopting a fleet electrification policy, to require vehicles purchased by the city to be electric when appropriate,
	+ Engage with the community to encourage the adoption of EVs for personal use,
	+ Determine what resources will be needed to implement this plan for a successful transition.
		- Tom asked if the ESC will be able to play a role in this plan like the green building policy.
			* Stefanie responded, yes the ESC will play a role in the plan development.
		- Tom asked if there would be a regional approach to this plan.
			* Stefanie responded yes, city staff have consistent conversations with our neighboring jurisdiction and regional partners that will be incorporated into the plan.
		- Tom asked for staff to share any relevant multi-jurisdictional and regional collaboration and information that would be important for the ESC to know.
* Electric Vehicle Charging Stations rate change
	+ Beginning July 1, the 4 public EV charging stations at City Hall and Old Town Hall will be transitioned from free, to a fee structure. The new rate will be the first three hours free, and $0.43 kilowatts per hour thereafter.
* Federal Direct Pay
	+ The City plans to submit direct pay tax forms for the electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations that were purchased in 2023.
1. **8:40 – 8:45 Chairperson items**
	* It is Annual Report time - for the next meeting bring your list and notes for the focus areas.
	* Alternative locations for meetings - let’s revisit this topic and see if there are other places we could meet to help bridge the physical barriers for meetings.
	* Reordering the agenda - bringing committee member items to the front will hopefully avoid some of the time constraints at the end of the meeting.
	* Gift for Zeke - each ESC member has agreed to donate their money to get a gift for Anna, Hannah, and baby Zeke. Stacy will collect the money and coordinate a gift.
2. **8:45 – 8:55 Committee member items**
* Rusty PRAB update.
	+ The Parks are redoing all of the signs. Please take a look at it.
	+ Rusty also requested to be an avid part of the new communications strategy.
* Marian has officially resigned.
1. **8:55 – 9:00 Staff items**
	* Solarize VIRGINIA will run from April 1 to June 30
	* Spring Clean-up Day is Sunday, April 21
	* HisTree Day is Saturday, April 27
	* Green Building Policy Update
		+ Close to finishing our first draft, and tentatively plan on presenting the first draft to the ESC at the July meeting. There will be an at-large public meeting, but that date has yet to be set. Staff are aiming to adopt the green building policy by the end of the year.
	* New City Manager, Lazlo Palko will start April 29
	* New staff
		+ New Assistant City Manager, Melanie ZIpp
		+ New City Clerk, Melissa Shinaberry
		+ The City is hiring a part-time, temporary climate and energy manager. Once the job is posted, the ESC is being requested to share around their groups.
2. **Adjourn**

TheMeeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m. The next regular ESC meeting is May 15, 2024 at 7 p.m.

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