



Austin Independent School District

**Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

November 29, 2017

5:30 – 7:30 pm

Carruth Administration Center, 1111 W. 6th Street, Board Auditorium

Attendees

Members in Attendance

Bianca Bidiuc
Karen Bishop
Liz Cardinal
Laura Gass
Charlie Gutierrez
Kris Hafezizadeh
Sarah Holland
Cari Land
Sherry Lepine
Monica Lopez Magee*
Lauren Maples
Amanda Mortl
Matthew Nelson*
Susan Peterson
Mary Priddy*
Justo Ramirez
Lonnie Sclerandi
Ilya Schmulenson
Cory Skuldt
Richard Shearman
Ryan Spencer
Chris Stewart
Jeff Wacker
Jessica Wilson

* Indicates Committee Co-Chair

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary
Paul Turner

Members Not in Attendance

Rob Borowski
Sam DeSanto
Cassidy Ellis
Amir Emamian
Colleen Garland
Melina Martinez
Anne Muller
Vivian Perez
Abby Randall
Anneliese Tanner
Dub Taylor
James Tosh
Cynthia Wilcox
Louis Zachary

Citizens Communication

Mary Priddy

Visitors

Misty Olsson
Rodrigo Velez
Gaby Benitez
Pamela Abee Taulli
Christopher Stanton

Minutes

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

The ESAC Co-chair Mary Priddy facilitated the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Approval of the November 29, 2017 meeting minutes occurred at 5:41pm. The ESAC member Amanda Mortl motioned to approve the November 29, 2017 meeting minutes, seconded by Monica Lopez Magee. The meeting minutes were approved with no modifications at 5:41pm. Mary Priddy also welcomed new members to the ESAC: Susan Peterson, Lauren Maples, and Justo Ramirez.

II. Citizens Communications

The ESAC member and co-chair, Monica Lopez Magee announced that the City of Austin is interested in purchasing the AISD Blunn Creek Property to preserve the natural area. The South River City Citizens is exploring how best to support the proposal. There may be an opportunity for the ESAC to sign a letter of support. Ms. Lopez Magee will have additional information at the January meeting.

The ESAC member, Jessica Wilson, shared information about the Blue Index Waterscape Assessment, a partnership between Austin Watershed Protection, Austin Parks and Recreation Department, and the Blue Index Coalition. Community members are encouraged to upload photos and comments about 30 Austin waterscapes into the [assessment tool](#).

The ESAC member and co-chair, Mary Priddy, shared that the City of Austin Office of Sustainability [Bright Green Futures Grant Program](#) will announce this year's award recipients on Friday through a press release and web posts. Be on the lookout!

III. AISD Sustainability Updates

Austin ISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, began by reading the letter from AISD CFO, Nicole Conley-Johnson, thanking AISD sustainability partners for their contributions to help AISD earn local and national recognition for building sustainable facilities, while showcasing our buildings as living laboratories to inspire the next generation of designers, builders and leaders (see meeting materials for copy of the letter). Ms. Clary then provided highlights of recent sustainability initiatives at AISD. She began with photos from the October 12th Green Building Ceremony for the AISD Performing Arts Center. The building earned LEED Gold and AEGB 5-star ratings, and is the school district's highest-rated green building to date. The celebration featured a performance by the McCallum High School Jazz Band, sustainability-themed student artwork, and remarks from Alan Lambert, AISD Director of Fine Arts; Debbie Kimberly, Vice President, Austin Energy Customer Energy Solutions; Scott Gerhardt, President USGBC Central Texas; Amber Elenz, ACC District 5 Trustee; Mark Williams, former AISD Board President and current ACC Trustee; Greg Weaver, Catellus - Mueller Development; and Paul Turner, Executive Director AISD Facilities. Several ESAC members were also present to show their support. Ms.

Clary then updated the ESAC regarding the October 23rd Board recognition of AISD Facilities and Construction Management staff for their green building initiatives. Next, she provided a status report of the urban forest grant that is funding the current AISD tree inventory personnel. Since November 2017, 565 Trees have been inventoried at six different schools. The tree inventory will identify tree care needs, locate and identify heritage trees, prioritize trees for hazard mitigation, identify tree-deficient schools for future plantings, and enable the school district to strategically manage its urban forest. Ms. Clary also mentioned that 20 trees were severely damaged and/or uprooted during Hurricane Harvey. All were addressed swiftly through the AISD Forester, Lisa Killander. Ms. Clary then announced that the Schoolyard Improvement Review Committee now meets every other week with a purpose to ensure schools receive relevant information regarding future site developments, underground utility lines, and potential resources to help them plan and implement the project. Since September 2017, the committee has reviewed 25 projects related to gardens, greenhouses, apiaries, etc. Partner agencies must work with the school to submit the [Schoolyard Improvement Form](#) in advance of program implementation. Next, Ms. Clary showed the ESAC members a few of the [sustainability website](#) updates. The changes are meant to align with subcommittee organization with separate tabs for Waste & Procurement, Transportation & Air Quality, Food & Nature, and Water & Energy. The goal of the content is to assist with outreach and engagement, provide easy access to toolkits for teachers, inform about AISD sustainability, and provide Green Team support. The waste and Procurement page went live recently, and pages for the remaining action areas will continue to roll out this spring. See Meeting Materials for additional information.

IV. Action Area Updates

Mobility Specialist, Cory Skuldt, presented updates from the Transportation & Air quality subcommittee. These include employee discounts negotiated for carshare, bikeshare, and rideshare vendors; support for the development of a telework and flex-time policy, an inventory of bike racks at schools, and preliminary discussions with Austin Energy for a pilot program to bring electric vehicle charging stations to schools. Ms. Skuldt asked the ESAC members to please let her know of any infrastructure (bike racks), programs, and facilities that support alternative commutes to schools. She will add this info to the inventory. The subcommittee goals include AISD/transit connectivity and collaboration, Idling reduction on campuses, expansion of active transportation at schools, and collaboration for Safe Routes to Schools.

ESAC member, Karen Bishop, provided the Nature Subcommittee Update. This group is finalizing the list of existing green schoolyard features at schools, which will help identify areas in need of district support. The subcommittee is also analyzing Cities Connecting Children to Nature maps to identify nature-deficient areas to target with outreach and programming. Posters of the [Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#) (COBOR) are also being made to display in every schools. The COBOR was signed by AISD CFO, Nicole Conley-Johnson in November 2016. Additionally, in partnership with AISD Construction Management and the Audubon Society, the incinerator chimney was uncapped at Brooke Elementary to allow occupation by chimney swifts. Dual language educational signs were installed at the site. Additionally, 250 girls from 10 AISD schools were connected

to nature through the Girls Outside Co-op grant. The students took field trips to Westcave and Pedernales Falls State Park. Also, outdoor learning spaces have been included in the new Ed Specs for AISD construction projects. The ribbon cutting ceremony for the Green Schoolyard Project at Barrington Elementary is scheduled for March 24th.

Misty Olsson, AISD Food & Nutrition Services, provided the Food Subcommittee update. Food purchased from local sources has increased, which Ms. Olsson attributed largely to the cafeteria salad bars and a new food vendor with access to local farms. Food & Nutrition services is phasing out Styrofoam trays, with recyclable trays being delivered in March. The subcommittee is compiling a field trip guide for teachers and students who want to learn more about central Texas food systems.

AISD Energy & Water Manager, Richard Shearman, provided the Energy & Water Subcommittee update. He outlined the top seven goals for this action area, which includes sourcing 20% of AISD energy from renewable sources by 2020. Recent activities include exploring electronic billing with Austin Energy, tracking spikes in water consumption, and monitoring overnight electricity consumption through the Austin Energy Load Profiler.

The ESAC co-chair, Monica Lopez Magee, provided updates regarding Community Engagement. She recapped the poster-based feedback (still in development) so that new members would be up-to-speed. Another priority is to compile a list of “green” contacts for the district, and Ms. Magee asked that partner organizations share their list of AISD collaborators so she can begin to organize a list of those who would like to be in the know of AISD sustainability. This is a first step to organizing a professional development green team training for teachers.

Amanda Mortl, AISD Zero Waste Specialist, provided Waste and Procurement updates in the context of her presentation, “Trimming Our Wasteline: A State of the Waste Address,” later in the meeting. See Meeting Materials for additional information.

V. Subcommittee Group Time

The ESAC members convened with their subcommittees.

VI. Presentation: Trimming Our Wasteline: A State of the Waste Address

AISD Zero Waste Specialist, Amanda Mortl, provided an in-depth look into recycling and composting at AISD. Her presentation included AISD zero waste goals and metrics, discussion of available data, accomplishments, and next steps. She noted that AISD diversion is calculated using recycle and compost weight totals, provided by the waste hauler. Since landfill data is not available through haulers, the percentage of waste diverted is not currently known. Methods for estimating landfill data is in progress. Recycle and compost weights are available at the [TDS Green School Solutions Website](#). Ms. Mortl also included a snapshot of zero waste strategies underway at AISD, including zero waste event guidelines, custodial staff training, part-time staff member, and free recycle and compost bins for schools through a CAPCOG grant. Additionally, Ms.

Mortl is working to bring composting services to the remaining 26 middle and high schools who have yet to compost cafeteria waste, she is creating a downloadable toolkit with signs, integrating zero waste curriculum into the learning experience, and facilitating student leadership through zero waste projects. After the presentation, an ESAC member asked if the entire contents of a recycling bag are discarded into the landfill if it happens to contain any non-recyclables. The response was that the hauler accepts a small level of contamination, so it is not likely that the whole bag would be discarded if it contained minimal landfill materials. However, education for correct sorting is very important to reduce contamination, especially with compost. Another ESAC member mentioned that the Austin Council of PTAs may be interested in receiving the Zero Waste Event training. See Meeting Materials for additional information.

VII. Presentation: City of Austin: Zero Waste by 2040.

The presentation was postponed due to time constraints. A copy of the slides is included in the Meeting Materials.

VIII. Request for Information and Future Meetings

No requests were made.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29pm. The next regular ESAC meeting will be January 24, 2018.