

Natural Resources Commission Minutes
January 28, 2019; 6:30 p.m.

Present: Courtney Hall, John Johnston, Richard McCann, Greg Miller, Alan Pryor, Hannah Safford, Evan Schmidt

Absent: none

Staff: Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, Community Development & Sustainability

1. Introductions and Swearing in of New Commissioners

Staff administered the Oath of Office to new Natural Resources Commissioners Courtney Hall, Richard McCann, Greg Miller and Hannah Safford and welcomed them to the NRC.

2. Approval of Agenda – Approved unanimously 7-0 (Pryor/McCann).

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Liaisons –

Staff noted that Cool Davis and city staff completed a Home Heating and Cooling Workshop on January 27 at the Senior Center. The event was very well attended and successful. A summary report will be available at a later date. Also, city staff will be presenting information on City of Davis sustainability implementation structure and funding at the February 8 Yolo County Climate Compact. The City is considering adding an electric scooter program, similar to the current JumpBikes program. City staff, Councilmembers and Commissioners are able to test out the scooters, available at City Hall.

John Johnston noted that he attended the Unitrans Advisory Commission meeting. The main topic was progress on transitioning the fleet to electric buses. A major impact on Unitrans operations has been the increase in minimum wage in California. Additionally, he noted that the Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative is having a Quarterly workshop on February 6 to address regional impacts of the 4th California Climate Change Assessment, <http://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/>

Evan Schmidt invited commissioners to attend the free February 8 Cleaner Air Partnership luncheon.

Richard McCann provided information about the March 2019 Burger Battle, featuring plant-based burgers at restaurants in Davis. Groups can form teams for friendly competitions.

3. Public Comment –

Lorenzo Kristov spoke to the Commission about the Climate Mobilization Movement, which encourages local jurisdictions to develop resolutions declaring a climate emergency and proposing mobilization efforts to restore a safe climate, www.theclimatemobilization.org/. A group in Davis is working on a resolution to go to City Council in 1-2 months. Lorenzo encouraged the NRC to address issues that can accelerate GHG reduction efforts. Steve Nyholm stated that he supports comments made by Lorenzo.

William Schoen spoke to the Commission about solid waste Senate Bill 1383, which addresses recovery of pre-consumer edible food to mitigate food insecurity in the county. He stated that 1 in 5 students are on free or reduced lunches. By planning ahead, in conjunction with organizations such as the Yolo Food Bank, 100% food security can be assured. The YFB has a new facility which can provide 5000 additional meals per day, or 2 million pounds of food per year in Yolo County. Sustainable funding mechanisms exist to address regulatory plan requirements of SB 1383.

City Council member Lucas Frerichs welcomed the new commissioners and said that he is looking forward to working with the Commission in the coming year. Lucas also spoke about the climate

mobilization resolution and stated that the CC Legislative subcommittee is working with the community group to bring the item to Council.

4. Consent Calendar

A. Minutes – November 26, 2018. – Approved unanimously 7-0 (Pryor/McCann).

5. Regular Items

A. Potential Modifications to Yard Material Collection Service

Public works staff Stan Gryczko and Adrienne Heinig presented information on the ‘Loose in the Streets’ (LITS) program rate study and direction from City Council to select from three proposed options to modify the system from a cost containment perspective—reduction to 16,15 or 12 pick-ups per year. The current schedule includes 18 pick-ups per year, including monthly from Jan to Oct and weekly from mid-Oct to mid-Jan. The program requires lead vehicle for transport of collected green waste, followed by a ‘claw’ vehicle to scoop up the materials. Frequently, the a sweeper vehicle follows the same route to clean the streets the next day.

A LITS public workshop was held on January 7, 2019, and several other commissions have had input to date, including Tree; Bicycling, Transportation and Street Safety; and Utility Rate Advisory (URAC) Commissions. There have been a wide variety of community concerns, reflecting comments on a full spectrum of the issue—both on the request for more pick-ups side and conversely for reduced pick-ups or eliminating the program. These concerns include environmental and sustainability issues, impacts on stormwater systems, bicycle and traffic safety (moving around piles at sides of street), greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, wear and tear on streets, etc.

Commissioners had a number of questions for staff, summarized here with responses. Can you pick up the same quantity of green waste with fewer pick-ups? (Probably) What percent of residents use this service? (20-30% each pick-up, but there is no information of total percentage of households that take advantage of the program over the course of the year) What are other program costs? (All program vehicles (see above) will need to be replaced within 3-5 years. The costs of recapitalizing fleet will be significant) What comparisons are there to other California cities? (Only 6 jurisdictions in state have similar service, including Davis, Woodland and Sacramento).

In public comment, Lucas Frerichs and William Schoen commented on pickup statistics, rates and costs. Residents who need more pickups can currently and will continue to be able to order an extra cart at cost of service (+/- \$5 per month). Lorenzo Kristov noted that he perceives that there are two issues—1) tree leaf and litter (street, community and residential trees) and 2) yard waste. These may need to be dealt with separately. Also, he noted that URAC approved a motion to phase out the LITS program, due to recapitalization costs and other concerns.

Following commission discussion on the topic, including methods to reduce GHG emissions of the program, pros and cons of service reduction related both to community perception and increasing the service at times of the year most needed, the following motion was approved unanimously (moved by McCann, seconded by Pryor, with friendly amendment added by Safford and accepted by first and second):

“In light of the environmental considerations of the Loose in the Streets (LITS) service and the age and replacement cost of the LITS equipment, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) recommends that City Council direct staff and appropriate commissions to collect data and study whether and how this program continues. The NRC endorses substantial reduction in pickups in the current program (such as

12/year), which should be distributed throughout the year, with scheduling as per community needs and data-driven information (such as more pickups from October to February).”

In further discussion, Stan Gryczo stated that staff would come back to commissions with a scoping study for input.

B. Update on URAC/NRC roles

John Johnston and Evan Schmidt reported to the rest of the NRC on a coordination meeting held this month between the Chairs and staff liaisons of the NRC and URAC, along with Mayor Brett Lee and Councilmember Lucas Frerichs. In the URAC joint meeting with City Council, a request was made to expand URAC’s role to include consideration of long term environmental issues when setting rate recommendations for the services under their purview (utilities that are enterprise funds, including wastewater, stormwater and water). During the coordination meeting, all agreed that it would be beneficial to set up a process for information flow and collaboration among commissions with interconnected issues, such as URAC and NRC.

It was recommended to further develop an approach and matrix of types of topics covered, based on a model suggested for discussion by John Johnston. The model shows a URAC focus on economic issues and NRC focus on environmental issues. For example, if an environmental mandate is proposed, NRC would give input on what needs to be done; URAC would give input on the most cost-effective way to do it. Similarly, in reaching for a city environmental goal, NRC would take the lead to propose actions; however if the key issue is addressing optimization of cost effectiveness of city services, URAC would take the lead and NRC would give input on environmental attractiveness of alternatives. Both commissions will continue to refine suggested changes for clarity and to avoid creating unclear overlap between them. NRC will also address this issue at the joint meeting with City Council.

C. Environmental Recognition Awards

The Environmental Recognition Awards will be accepting nominations until March 15. An NRC ERA subcommittee (2-3 Commissioners) will review nominations and recommend awardees prior to the March 25 NRC meeting, where the selections will be discussed and approved. City Council approval of NRC recommendations will likely be by consent at the April 9 meeting, followed by a ceremony to present the awards, which has been requested for the April 23 meeting, still to be confirmed.

D. Joint Meeting with City Council

Goals and input for the joint meeting with the City Council on March 19, 2019 were discussed. The main purpose will be to establish the big long-term NRC issues with City Council, including but not limited to the needed update to the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), and other environmental policies including building and vehicle electrification, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy, residential energy efficiency (including single family and multi-family, owner occupied and rental properties), solid waste, wood smoke, etc. The meeting is intended to be a dialog, with an initial presentation by the NRC Chair, and following discussion about the NRC mission, workplan/ goals and upcoming work. A quorum of the NRC is not required but all Commissioners are encouraged to attend.

E. Commission Orientation

Staff and continuing Commissioners (Johnston, Pryor and Schmidt) presented an orientation to all commissioners about City Commission handbook and protocols, NRC goals and areas of interest that have been reviewed in recent years, and current NRC subcommittees including water, energy, solid waste, hazardous materials and GHG.

F. Subcommittee Updates –

None

6. Commission and Staff Communications

- a) Long Range Calendar—due to the number and time required for other topics, the IPM Annual Report scheduled for the February meeting will be postponed to March or later. In preparation for next month's meeting, each commissioner will review the current goals/workplan and subcommittee structure and send input in advance of the meeting.
- b) Upcoming meeting items/events—Commissioners requested the opportunity to tour the wastewater treatment plant and the water intake facility, if possible.

7. Adjourn: 10:05 p.m.