



City of Denton
MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

Monday, September 9, 2019

1:30pm

City Council Work Session Room

After determining that a quorum of the Committee on the Environment of the Denton City Council was present, the Committee on the Environment thereafter convened into an Open Meeting on Monday, September 9, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. in the Council Work Session Room at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas

Council Members: Chair Council Member Keely Briggs, and Council Member Paul Meltzer Council Member Jesse Davis

Also Attending: Mario Canizares, ACM; Kenneth Banks, General Manager Utilities; Katherine Barnett, Sustainability and Customer Initiatives Manager; Deborah Viera, Assistant Director Environmental Services; David Hunter, Watershed Protection and Pretreatment Manager; Vanessa Ellison, Recycling Education Coordinator; Sarah Luxton, Sustainability Coordinator; James Douglas, Conservation Program Coordinator; Christi Upton, Environmental Compliance Coordinator; Kim Mankin, Utility Administration Manager

REGULAR MEETING

A. COE19-026 - Consider approval of the minutes of August 5, 2019.

Approved as circulated.

B. COE19-028 – Receive a report, hold a discussion regarding the implementation of the Sustainability department’s Green Business Program.

JT Douglas presented this item regarding the Green Business Program.

Douglas started with the recap summary and talked about the program goals, application process and benchmarking, and continued education and engagement.

External outreach includes Social Media, Denton Main Street Association, Texas Woman’s University Center for Women in Business and the Denton Chamber of commerce.

Internal outreach includes Public Communication Office, Library and Economic Development.

Participation to Date: Three businesses with applications submitted and an additional eight are working on applications as well. Of those we have five unique business sectors, several sustainable business practices and expertise in a wide variety of topics.

Baseline Reports were introduced and discussed.

Next steps include: First education opportunity in late October early November for commercial recycling and waste minimization. Increased participation, semi-annual update for each business and program tracking and target setting.

Briggs commented this is an opportunity to reward businesses for looking at different options. Also, for businesses to share what is working for them with other businesses.

Briggs asked if there were any feedback from businesses, Douglas answered he has had inquiries about the benchmarking.

Briggs asked for a list on our Sustainability Website, Douglas answered it will be added.

Davis likes what he has seen and asked staff to keep their ears open regarding new incentives.

There was some discussion.

C. COE19-029 – Receive a report, hold a discussion regarding Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center Master Plan.

Sarah Luxton presented on this item starting with the back ground. Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center is approximately 2,900 acres and is located within Lake Lewisville's upper floodplain.

The City leases the land from the Army Corps of Engineer and has managed the land since 1999.

CCNHC is located at the cross section of the Central Texas Plateau eco-region and the Cross Timbers Region. Land cover includes: deciduous forest, evergreen forest, woody wetlands, emergent herbaceous wetlands, and grasslands. The Elm Fork of the Trinity River runs through Clear Creek along with the Ray Roberts Lake Greenbelt Corridor (on the east bank) which is leased to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for trail operation and maintenance.

Resources:

- 7 miles of Trail throughout the property.
- 6 Native Plant Beds
- 1 Vegetable Garden
- 10 Demonstration Raised Garden Beds
- 1 Greenhouse
- 1 Acre Prairie Restoration Zone
- 3,000 sq. ft Building

Luxton showed a map of the area along with pictures and reported on the area.

There are many organizations that Clear Creek partners with:

- Elm Fork Texas Master Naturalist
- Denton County Master Gardeners
- Denton County Beekeepers Association
- Bee City USA
- Monarch City USA
- Native Plant Society of Texas
- Agrilife Extension Office
- Agrilife Water University
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- UNT Save the Bees
- UNT Eco Reps
- UNT Dye Gardens

Elm Fork Chapter Master Naturalists volunteer each year to complete various class projects they help with various teams including: Denton ISD Team, Trail Team and Greenhouse Team.

Workshops include:

- Sustainability Workshops (over 30 each year)
- DISD Field Trips (around 5,000 visitors each year)
- Volunteer Events (over 60 each year)

Future Plans, with many of them on the Davis Property, include: Trails, pollinator gardens, and prairie restoration. There will be a nature explore area soon; in the future an administration and exhibition hall and classroom education center.

There was discussion regarding the future plans and funding.

D. COE19-031 – Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff direction regarding the 2018 Greenhouse Gas Inventory and the emission reduction targets.

JT Douglas gave the presentation on this item.

Greenhouse Gas Background:

- Greenhouse Effect
- Common Greenhouse Gases
- Natural and Anthropogenic Sources

GHG inventory summary was started in 2006 and was updated every few years. In 2015 the inventory summary started annually. Douglas talked about the community protocols through ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability. A graph was shown for Community Emissions by year in Metric Tons of CO₂e, this was discussed.

2018 Municipal Inventory was reported and discussed. Municipal emissions include the Denton Energy Center, Fleet Emissions (at their lowest since the baseline year of 2006) and increase in natural gas emissions due to population and weather change.

2018 Community Inventory was shown as well. Due to increased purchase in wind energy and a decrease in coal derived energy emission from electricity use decreased. Transportation emissions increased due to population increase.

Contribution analysis introduction

ICLEI derived a tool for analyzing year to year changes in GHG emissions. This uses weather normalization techniques that was previously unaccounted for). It also incorporates population, efficiency, and use in an attempt to fully account for changes occurring year to year.

There were several graphs that showed the Metric Tons CO₂e, there was a discussion.

Community emission reduction targets were talked about with four options. These options ranged from no reduction to 80 percent reduction. Option 3 is 50 percent reduction by 2045, which is our current goal.

Strategies for reduction was discussed with goals.

Davis added he understands option 3 is about where we are now and can set a goal for better. He would like to make a strong commitment to Option 4 (80 percent reduction by 2050) but before he does, he would like to see better modeling and recommendations.

Meltzer believes it would be appropriate to set a goal per capita and what the quantitative benefits would be.

Douglas added and showed a table where Denton is already leading in this field.

Douglas stated staff would run the forecasting tool with 80 percent goal in for more strategies and combinations of strategies.

The committee would like to set a goal of 80 percent reduction.

There was a lot of discussion and questions regarding this item.

Ed Soph, 1620 Victoria Drive, filled out a 'request to speak' card and talked about this item. He complimented Katherine Barnett and her team for progressing this item so far. Soph talked with DME about adding the dashboard to their website. Many people do not know the symbols for chemicals, so he asked for them to be spelled out. He also hopes that battery storage will still be looked at for the Denton Energy Center. Soph asked for ideas and information to be shared to help reduce home emissions.

E. COE19-033 – Receive a report, hold a discussion regarding National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat Program.

Sarah Luxton gave the presentation and started with the background.

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is one of America's largest environmentally focused non-profits that concentrates on the conservation of resources in order to support wildlife.

In 1997 the NWF created a Community Wildlife Habitat Program which partners with communities small and large to promote the creation of wildlife habitats. Currently there are approximately 200 communities participating nationwide.

The objective is to complement our Bee City USA and Monarch City USA program we are proposing to begin working towards becoming a certified community through the National Wildlife Foundation.

Key points

The NWF program is a community wide initiative. The first step is to register our community; however, community members must register habitats individually as well. The program is based on population and Denton will need 400 points to qualify.

There are already 71 NWF registered wildlife habitats located in the City of Denton (65 homes, 4 common areas, 2 schools). We would be starting the program with 87 points and incorporating outreach and education, as well as encouraging additional individual certifications, to eventually obtain the other 313 points. Each habitat must meet the following qualifications: food, water, cover, places to raise young and sustainable practices.

There is a \$100 one-time registration fee for communities. On average, it takes communities two years to meet the certification requirements once they have applied. During the process, NWF will provide outreach material and support.

Once a community is certified, there will be outreach and education requirements; however, these are items the department is already providing.

Future Plans

Incorporate NWF Community Wildlife Habitat Program into our existing programs and seek municipal certification.

The committee asked a few questions then stated they are interested in this going forward.

F. COE19-023 – Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff direction for a resolution to adopt the Denton County Greenbelt plan.

David Hunter talked about this item and stated the presentation will cover the overview of the North Texas watershed. The history of Upper Trinity Conservation Trust and Denton County Greenbelt Plan. The future opportunities and challenges and lastly questions and recommendations.

Denton is located in the Upper Trinity River Watershed, Elm Fork of the Trinity Sub-Basin. Hunter showed a map.

Drivers for Watershed Management

- Growth in Lewisville Lake Watershed
- Growth in Denton County
- Rapid Development in 380 corridor
- Conditions in Lake Lewisville

Looking to the future, over one million is expected in Denton County by 2030. Protection of natural assets are important for future economic growth and quality of life.

What does this mean for our Waterways in Denton.

- Significant challenges to face ... this area is developing rapidly.
- Cost of prevention (TSS and TP controls) compared to remediation (lake dredging and WWTP upgrades)
Preventive measures are cost-effective.
- Need for evaluation of smaller area with more detail
- Partnering and collaboration with other stakeholders at a watershed scale is a must!

Upper Trinity Regional Water District

- Created in 1989 by the State of Texas
- Authorized to provide water, wastewater, solid waste, and stormwater (watershed protection) services – wholesale basis
- Boundaries include all of Denton County plus limited portions of Collin and Dallas Counties
- Works with Denton in water supply planning and management

Hunter showed a map of our waterways. There are thousands of miles of streams and creeks with three major water supply reservoirs. Hundreds of miles of hike/bike trails.

There was a Water Quality corridor Management Model done in 2007. Upper Trinity contracted the University of North Texas to develop a resource preservation model. Priorities were placed on natural resources in watershed for preservation. There were several maps shown from this model.

Upper Trinity Conservation Trust

- Established in 2010

-501(c)3 Non-Profit Land Trust

- Preserve Riparian Areas and other Key Watershed Features
- Focuses on Lakes Lewisville, Ray Roberts and Grapevine Conservation Easements
- Landowner Outreach and Education

Hunter then talked about the Denton County Greenbelt Plan

- Guide preservation of greenbelts and related natural areas
- Identify strategic areas for establishing greenbelt corridors
- Advocate a common vision for multi-use greenbelts
- Provide a toolbox of implementation strategies

Briggs asked when this was adopted by Denton. Hunter answered the original study will called the water quality management study developed by UNT, contracted by Upper Trinity was 2007. A few years later the Upper Trinity Conservation Trust was established. Hunter believed Denton County accepted this in 2016 with several smaller cities adopting since then. The City of Denton was also looking at adoption in that timeframe but had some staffing issues, so staff is getting ready.

City of Denton

- Code of Ordinances
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Restricts Development in Fully Developed Floodplain + 18”
- Riparian Buffers (100-200’ wide)
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure (iSWM Silver)

Watershed Partners Programs was shown with the names of the founding partners.

The entities who have adopted the Denton County Greenbelt Plan include:

- City of Aubrey
- City of Corinth
- Town of Double Oak
- Town of Flower Mound
- Town of Hickory Creek
- City of Justin
- Lake Cities MUA
- Lantana
- City of Lewisville
- City of Pilot Point
- City of Sanger

Recommend adoption of the Denton County Greenbelt Plan

Adoption may create additional funding opportunities

- Denton has been a participating member of UTCT and was instrumental in development of DCGP.
- Denton already has code requirements in place to facilitate protection of greenbelts and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- Partnering with regional stakeholders is part of the City’s stormwater permit requirements.

Meltzer asked what requirements are there that would be more stringent than what we already do, Hunter answered none. We are already about two steps higher than anyone.

The Committee is in favor of this Plan.

G. COE19-030 – Assistant City Manager Update:

1. Simply Sustainability Plan
2. Sustainability, Recycling, and Learn 2 Conserve events
3. Update – Remaining Cross Timbers Upland Habitat
4. Matrix

CONCLUDING ITEMS

Under Section 551.042 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, respond to inquiries from the Committee on the Environment or the public with specific factual information or recitation of policy, or accept a proposal to place the matter on the agenda for an upcoming meeting AND Under Section 551.0415 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, provide reports about items of community interest regarding which no action will be taken, to include: expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; information regarding holiday schedules; an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen; a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body; information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality; or an announcement involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

Adjournment: 3:18

Approved: 10/7/19

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Keely Briggs, Chair

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Kim Mankin