



# City of Farmers Branch

## Minutes

### Sustainability Committee

Fire Station #2  
13333 Alpha Link  
Farmers Branch, TX, 75244

Wednesday, February 8,  
2023

6:30 PM

Fire Station #2

#### Meeting held at 6:30 PM

**Presiding:** Joseph Riegel (Chairperson)

**Present:** Loren Rives (Secretary)  
Suzette Vaquera  
Shelby Anders  
Val Clark  
Price Trosin

**Absent:** Soren Thomsen (Vice Chair)  
Al Mahesh  
Lisa Massey

**Staff:** Alex Pharmakis, Sustainability Manager  
Robert Diaz, Deputy Director of Sustainability and  
Public Health

#### A. CALL TO ORDER

Joseph Riegel called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, 2023.

#### B. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No comments received.

#### C. AGENDA ITEMS

##### C.1 Consider approving minutes for the January 11, 2023 meeting; and take appropriate action

Price Trosin made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Shelby Anders. All in favor. Motion carried.

**C.2 Receive a staff update on sustainability initiatives**

- Water Conservation Rebate program launched on February 7<sup>th</sup>
- Signups for the Solar Switch program will be accepted until February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Estimated average savings through program is around \$6,700
- Signups for the Power Switch program will be accepted until February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Fleet EV charging grants have been submitted for chargers at City Hall and the Justice Center
- Staff met with local homebuilders to discuss the EV charging and solar ready ordinances and get their feedback
- The Sustainable Procurement Policy was approved by the City Manager's Office
  - Staff will work with Purchasing department on the rollout and staff education
- Board and Commission Banquet is February 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.
- Joseph Riegel will be giving the Sustainability Committee's biannual update to City Council at the Study Session on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

**C.3 Receive a presentation on the implementation of the Sustainability Plan**

Alex Pharmakis provided an update on the Sustainability Plan that was adopted by Council in February of 2022.

Key accomplishments include:

- Launch of Water Conservation Rebate Pilot program
- LED lighting retrofit at the Justice Center (\$75,000 grant received)
- Council approval of landfill Solar Farm
- Approval of Solar Switch program
- Expansion of solar array at the Library
- New solar installation at Natatorium
- Power Switch (three programs/year)
- Tree Giveaway Pilot program
- Installation of public and fleet EV chargers
- Funding approved for smart water meters
- Grease now accepted at the Citizen Collection Center (recycled into biodiesel)
- Hand dryers installed at City Hall
- Water bottle filling stations installed at the Rec Center, City Hall and Library
- Sustainable Procurement Policy adopted

**C.4 Discuss upcoming sustainability initiatives for 2023**

Alex Pharmakis gave a presentation on planned 2023 sustainability initiatives.

Areas of focus for 2023 include:

- Continuing with permitting for the Solar Farm
- Providing another Solar Switch auction
- Offering three Power Switch programs
- Adopting EV Charging and Solar Ready ordinances
- Facilitating and evaluating the Water Conservation Rebate pilot
- Hosting another Tree Giveaway event
- Providing recommendations to reduce light pollution
- Creating an Active Transportation Plan

The Committee discussed additional objectives to encourage composting.

**C.5 Receive subcommittee updates**

- **Built and Natural Environment**
- **Communications**
- **Earth Day Runner's Race**
- **Water Conservation**

Built and Natural Environment

- The subcommittee plans to meet to reassess their work and look at how their work fits into plans for the upcoming year. The subcommittee asked about grow zones and ways to encourage more sustainable and native plants.

Communications

- No updates

Earth Day Runner's Race

- Will look at potential race routes for a 2024 event

Water Conservation

- Will review initial metrics on the rebate pilot program.

**C.6 Receive an update from Committee members on activities attended**

- Joseph Riegel has attended multiple City Council meetings
- Shelby Anders noted that the insurance industry is identifying impacts of climate change

**C.7 Discuss agenda items for future Sustainability Committee meetings**

Committee members suggested the following items for future consideration:

- An update on the Westside Art Trail
- Light Out Proclamation

**D. ADJOURNMENT**

Shelby Anders made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Price Trosin. All were in favor. Motion approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary