



City of Farmers Branch

Minutes

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

Sustainability Committee

Wednesday, March 12,
2025

6:30 PM

Fire Station #2

Meeting held at 6:30 PM

Presiding: Loren Rives, Chairperson

Present: Price Trosin (Vice-Chair)
Al Mahesh
Val Clark
Lisa Massey
Jasper Morse

Absent: Ted Spradley (Secretary)
Suzette Vaquera

Staff: Alex Pharmakis, Sustainability Manager

A. CALL TO ORDER

Loren Rives called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm on March 12, 2025.

B. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No comments received.

C. AGENDA ITEMS

C.1 Consider approval of minutes from the February 12, 2025 meeting; and take appropriate action

Price Trosin motioned to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Lisa Massey.
Motion passed unanimously

C.2 Receive a presentation from the City's Stormwater Engineer on stormwater management

Eric Mueller, Stormwater Engineer with the City of Farmers Branch provided the following information. Much of Eric's work is focused on floodplain, drainage, and water quality.

- The city participates with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which allows residents to be eligible for flood insurance.
- The city funds its work through the stormwater utility which bills based on impervious surface area. These funds pay for stormwater detention, street drainage, and other infrastructure projects.
- The City also works to maintain compliance with the Clean Water Act through its stormwater permits. The Clean Water Act has requirements on illicit discharges, construction sites, and public education
- The city's ordinances allow for property owners along Farmers Branch creek to let vegetation grow in order to prevent erosion. Eric is also considering grow zones along Rawhide creek to limit erosion and improve water quality. Eric also mentioned the high costs of dredging creeks as sediment fills them.

Al Mahesh asked if the City received funding from the federal government. Eric Mueller stated that the city did receive federal funding. Members discussed stormwater velocity and erosion and noted that there are financial savings for the city to utilize green infrastructure instead of paying for erosion control projects. Other questions were asked regarding bioswales and if the city had sufficient stormwater outlets. Eric mentioned the role that bioswales can play and cited the Master Drainage Plan and Valley View Lane stormwater upgrades to address issues.

C.3 Consider recommending the City Council issue a sustainability related proclamation; and take appropriate action

In 2023 and 2024, the City Council issued a proclamation for the 'Lights Out, Texas' campaign at the request of the Sustainability Committee. Alex Pharmakis asked the committee if they would be interested in requesting this item again or if they would like to change the scope for another sustainability related proclamation such as Earth Day.

Members discussed benefits of the different topics for the proclamations. Jasper Morse asked if any metrics were available from Lights Out, Texas. Due to timing, the consensus from the discussion was towards the Lights Out, Texas program. The group mentioned having discussions later in 2025 to discuss future proclamations.

Lisa Massey made a motion to provide a recommendation from the Sustainability Committee that the Council issue a proclamation for Lights Out, Texas. The motion was seconded by Val Clark. Motion passed unanimously.

C.4 Receive staff updates on sustainability initiatives

Alex Pharmakis provided the following updates:

- SolSmart Designation: If the City Council approves minor changes to the Code of Ordinances the city will be eligible for the gold level designation. These changes will be sent to the City Council with the Planning Department's other updates to the code in the summer. If changes are not made, the City will be eligible for the silver designation.
- Staff is continuing work on the LEED for Cities certification and the greenhouse gas inventory. Farmers Branch was accepted into the 2025 LEED for Cities cohort with other cities throughout the country. The cohort will provide assistance for the city to meet requirements.
- Active Transportation plan: The document should be ready in early April and the Sustainability Committee will have opportunity to review the plan. It is expected to be presented to the City Council in June.
- The city took ownership of the second electric vehicle purchased through the Department of Energy's EECBG grant program. Staff submitted all documentation for reimbursement.
- The City did not receive funding for the Urban Heat Measurement Grants.
- The City is waiting to hear whether it will receive grant funding from TXDOT for trails or from TCEQ for the purchase of additional electric vehicles.
- Water Rebates:
 - 114 toilet replacements approved.
 - 13 irrigation checkup applications approved.
- The Power Switch program's deadline to accept offers is March 26
- The Solar Switch program is currently accepting signups
- For Earth Day, signs will be placed at City Hall and Alex Pharmakis will table at the library to provide outreach for residents.
- The shredding and electronics recycling event will be held on March 22
- Gateway to the Globe will be held on March 29
- The City of Dallas is hosting the North Texas Climate Symposium on April 23 if any members are interested in attending.
- The next Sustainability Committee meeting will be April 9.

C.5 Receive subcommittee updates

- **Built and Natural Environment**
- **Communications**
- **Water Conservation**

Built and Natural Environment: No updates

Communications: Mentioned information for tabling events and items that could be used to promote events.

Water Conservation: No updates

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

Lisa Massey: City of Denton hosted a landscape presentation and attended the Native Plan Society of Texas meeting.

Loren Rives: Attended the Earth Wind and Fire Conference at Dallas College-Brookhaven.

C.7 Discuss agenda items for future Sustainability Committee meetings

The following items were suggested for future meetings.

- Changing the date/time of future meetings
- Hosting a speaker from Code Enforcement to provide information on how to incorporate natural landscapes within the rules of the city ordinance
- Sustainability in commercial buildings

D. ADJOURNMENT

Al Mahesh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Lisa Massey. Motion approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Chair

Secretary