

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2020

Item No. 1 being:

ROLL CALL

The Environmental Control Advisory Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session at the City of Norman, in the Executive Conference Room, Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street on January 15, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. Notice and Agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT Amanda Nairn (Chair)
 Matthew Rom (Vice-Chair)
 Traci Baker
 James Harp
 Dane Heins
 Robert Vollmar

MEMBERS ABSENT Courtney DeKalb-Myers
 Andrew Sartain

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT Debbie Smith, Environmental Services Manager
 Chris Mattingly, Capital Projects Engineer
 Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager
 Michele Loudenback, Stormwater Program Specialist
 Bret Scovill, Sanitation Manager

Item No. 2 being:

INTRODUCE GUESTS

Jerry Gates, City of Norman
Tom McCurdy, OGE

Item No. 3 being:

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2019 MEETING

Vollmar made a motion to approve the December 18, 2019 minutes. Rom seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS Amanda Nairn (Chair)
 Matthew Rom (Vice-Chair)
 Traci Baker
 James Harp
 Dane Heins
 Robert Vollmar

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item No. 4 being:

NOMINATE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2020

Nairn nominated Rom to be Chair for 2020. Harp seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS Amanda Nairn
Traci Baker
James Harp
Dane Heins
Robert Vollmar

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0. Rom abstained.

Harp nominated Nairn to be Vice Chair for 2020. Rom seconded. There being no further nominations, a vote was taken with the following result (Nairn abstained):

YEAS Matthew Rom
Traci Baker
James Harp
Dane Heins
Robert Vollmar

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0. Nairn abstained.

Item No. 5 being:

RECYCLING DISCUSSION WITH BRET SCOVILL, SANITATION MANAGER

Scovill explains how people who agree with recycling aren't his target market. The people who disagree and don't like recycling are the ones he likes to go and talk to. To convince them that "we" need to do some things differently. Although we are doing great and we know how to recycle, it is not the fix. When RCRA was introduced the federal government came out and said that we need to do something different. They said that we need to reduce the waste stream and recycle, they didn't say we need to recycle and reduce the waste stream. Since this thing started we have been steadily increasing the waste stream. We have become more of a throwaway society. Nairn asks, when Norman added recycling, or today when we say we have over 90% participation rate, have we reduced waste stream at all or are we (Norman) taking less to the land fill? Scovill says no were not but part of that is growth. He thinks as a percentage that we've done well and remained consistent. He doesn't know that we have reduced. He's only been here 5 years but in his tenure the percentage has stayed about the same. Last year recycling remained

the same, we didn't increase recycling but solid waste dropped considerably. We went from 100,000 tons to 87,000 tons. We can't figure out if maybe it was because of the rainy weather or what it was. We were hoping that it would remain consistent in the following year and it did not, it jumped back up to 101,000 tons. Recycling is consistent. Rom sent an email wanting to know what the conversion rates were so Scovill broke them down and passed them out. There is a 1% margin of error because statistics change. These results are from 2019. Commercial front load pickup is 2.31%. Residential is about 25%, yard waste is 100%, public and private yard waste (commercial) is 100% which we need to look into changing. The estimated retail manufacture or big box stores that outsource which we don't know about is 3%. We need to look into possibly charging for the public and private yard waste as we are having the city of Moore customers dropping off their items. This creates too much volume. We have gone from 16,000 to 30,000 tons. We do not have a good infrastructure to monitor who comes in but Scovill is working on that. We will probably charge every commercial person that comes in to slow down the flow. Plus, the landfills prices went up to about \$60 per ton. Homeowners will not be charged, only commercial. Because of the composting we are able to claim 30.24% diversion rate which is about the national average. This is by weight what we are keeping out of the landfill, not that we are sending less to landfill. Scovill got a posting from Battliner Recyclables to tell everyone where the dilemma is. Scovill starts off by saying we need to RECYCLE LESS. In 2015 cardboard was at \$75 per ton. Today's report is \$10 per ton. Mixed paper was \$30 per ton, today \$0 per ton. Plastics was \$70 per ton, today \$30 per ton. The dilemma there is that it takes 94,000 plastic bottles to make a ton. Aluminum was \$750 per ton, today \$550 per ton. Plastic is the problem. Nairn asks if we were to start providing commercial recycling to businesses in town would that create a better diversion rate. Scovill asks Nairn, If year to date we've lost \$14,578 in recycling why do I want to recycle more. Nairn asks Scovill what would be the biggest impact to change people's behavior locally. Scovill said work with Bryce Holland, Multimedia Specialist to focus on eliminating plastics. Nairn suggests a larger campaign to explain that the city can no longer accept these items per rules and regulations. That this is a worldwide problem, something that no city has control over. The most important decision you make about recycling happens at the register. Ultimately the city is not to blame for any of this, it is the consumer themselves. Nairn suggests making an infographic for recycling and expresses her concern that we are not charging the customers enough for recycling. Scovill said that 4 years ago it cost 3 times as much to recycle a ton of garbage as it does to landfill it. Scovill explains that we are paying less per ton making us the only municipality in the United States that he knows of that had a decrease in the disposal rate year over year. We have gone 10 years without a rate increase and we are hoping and trying our best to go another 5 years. We just need to keep watching our pennies. Scovill explains that they have some reserve now to possibly rebuild the infrastructure so it will still be there 25 years from now. Scovill explains that due to glass recycling the manufacture may have to start charging for it. Scovill figures that if the manufacture can keep him at \$10 a ton or less then he would break even. It was asked why isn't there a better market for glass. Scovill explains that 20-25 years ago we had 16 or 17 glass manufacturers in Oklahoma, now there are only 3 which is not enough to sustain what the consumers are generating. If we would stop using the plastics and start using glass, we would create a bigger demand to eventually move the infrastructure back in. Smith says that we need to have more reusable containers. Being that some people pinch every penny, we would have to appease the wealthy as well as the indigent. Scovill says that an alternative would be to have the government mandate to convert wraps and packaging to the clear plastic that breaks down.

Item No. 6 being:

UPDATE ON US MAYORS' CLIMATE PROTECTION (MCP) AGREEMENT

The document was sent out. Currently in the process of going through and seeing what has been accomplished. The recommendation was to initially give the Mayor in March but we need to contact her and try to push it to May or June, once we know the new council is fully elected and seated.

Item No. 7 being:

DISCUSS INFOGRAPHICS FOR RECYCLING BIN IN THE CITY MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Rom said that Heins had put together some information. Rom asked Heins what diversion rates should we use. It was suggested to round to the 30%. Nairn says that she worries that it is confusing. Nairn said that she thought that the diversion rate of 30% meant that there was 30% less stuff going to the landfill. Rom said that it was 30% less of total materials leaving the city. Nairn said that it needs to either be explained or called something else. We want to figure out why the trash is increasing. The final decision was to start with the population and trash output numbers (how much trash do we produce per year). It was determined that we would use the contour of the results to create an argument throughout the info graphics. There was a concern with using the population whether or not we could figure out the commercial growth accurately enough. Lastly we need to get Heins some high quality photos to work with.

Item No. 8 being:

DISCUSS POTENTIAL ART BARREL PROGRAM

We would have to order by March 29th in order to get them here in time for the event. There were 2 options discussed. The first one being the small barrels which are for the wrapping for the Earth Day giveaway (\$50 each). The second option being the totes for the schools (\$75 for plain and \$125 for primered). Barrels will be available to the schools for their art program if they wanted to decorate and give them out or whatever they decide to do with them. Nairn felt that this was a discussion that Andrew needed to be involved in since he has contacts at all the schools. It was said that he has already talked to them and has 5 or 6 schools that would take them now. Whether we pay for them or not would be up for further discussion. Nairn said that we would need someone to do a site visit because not all schools have a down spout. A site visit would need to happen before we commit. Also need to ask ourselves would it be worth it. We would need to discuss liabilities with the schools. If they could be installed and that they would need to be in a convenient location for the garden. We could possibly, depending on our budget, offer a grant program for 5. We would let them know that we have 5 that they could apply for. Figure out what their reasons are for wanting it, who's going to maintain it. Nairn said we should ask several questions and obtain a serious commitment but worries that we wouldn't be ready by March. It was also discussed that if it doesn't work for this year then there is always next year.

Item No. 9 being:

DISCUSS SOCIAL MEDIA TOPICS

Vollmar said that there were some graphics already up that he felt were good and that the video was well produced. Felt that the education material was also good. Although people complained that the video said "Don't recycle glass" but then showed the drop station. He focused specifically on the idea the need for recycling. Came up with a marketing strategy,

Curb The Demand. He felt like people associated recycling with curbside. Rom said that the headline was great and that he loves the content and that the only thing he would change is sign related. Rom would get him a different logo to use. He wanted to increase the size of the line copy. Use ECAB logo type without the badge/graphic element beneath it. It was discussed that the badge was not necessary. Once complete, send to Smith and she can send it through the chains. Poster contest gifts were also discussed and Smith has that information. Rom made a motion to approve with the above mentioned changes. Nairn Seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS Matthew Rom
 Amanda Nairn
 Traci Baker
 James Harp
 Dane Heins
 Robert Vollmar

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item No. 10 being:

DISCUSS BIG EVENT

In the past we have done door hangers which we received bad publicity for because they blew all over the place. Park cleanups, which we need to request volunteers for. It was asked if there was a reason why we only do parks. The response was that, we have tried cleaning up a neighborhood park and they did not want the help. We have to consider the liability and safety of our volunteers and not making people angry because we're on their private property, which is why we mainly do parks. We have sent the Mayor to the park in the past to manage the volunteers and they never showed up. They signed in and never showed up. It was suggested that maybe we should consider a smaller, super impactful project where we only need approx. 25-50 volunteers. Maybe we could even do a couple smaller, super impactful projects this way. Smith mentioned that the Rain Park may not be an option. It was said that we just haven't been able to talk to the city manager to make sure that is something that can be approved. Make sure we have the design for it. Make sure we have the materials for it. Make sure it will still serve its purpose should we alter the design. Make sure were not causing any adverse effects. It was said that next year might be better. We will do more research into making it all work before committing. The deadline to request volunteers from the university is the end of February. It was discussed that a portion of the detention pond over by building A could be turned into a rain garden. In the past we talked about passing out reusable bags at store fronts. If we did this, we wouldn't need that many volunteers since it is difficult finding people to manage the volunteers. Nairn suggested marking storm drains and that we could possibly do both. We could make certain staff responsible for a certain area and radius. This would take approximately 15 minutes roughly. We could split up the responsibilities among the volunteers. It was stated that the bags would address the recycling initiate as well. It was suggested that instead of standing at store fronts we could ask the managers to hand them out instead of using the plastic bags. The above mentioned options give us more flexibility. We would need to request approx. 3-5 staff per team so about 50 total for the drain project. We would need to figure out how many businesses would be interested in the bags then figure out how many volunteers to request once we know. We will discuss this further next month.

Item no. 11 being:

APPROVE POSTER CONTEST RULES

Still need to talk to Stash. Smith has the list of schools. We emailed them out last year. We will need to get it approved through the schools. We only received from two schools last year. It was said that we should probably hand deliver them. They are due March 9th so we need to get it out now. Smith will get it approved and signed through the district and either email it out or get us copies. We will walk into the front offices, let them know that we are a part of ECAB. Explain to them that we have a children's poster contest and ask if they would be willing to post it in their teachers break room. This contest is for Elementary age only. The list was passed around so people could sign up for the schools. Smith will get the list sent out after the meeting including the signatures so that others can sign up as well. Rom made a motion to approve. Nairn Seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS Matthew Rom
 Amanda Nairn
 Traci Baker
 James Harp
 Dane Heins
 Robert Vollmar

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item no. 12 being:

DISCUSS EARTH MONTH

We are working on quite a few events for Earth MONTH. It starts March 25th. The kickoff event that the mayor will be at is probably going to be a park clean up at Andrews, Reeves or Griffin. Somewhere that is centralized and has good gathering space. It was discussed that we would have an artist that actually works with found items. Discussed having a scavengers hunt for the items that they can look for during their cleanup and collect in a different bag. Then they can create their art with their found items at the kids' event. The closing event is going to be the showing of The Lorax. Smith passed around the draft calendar of the events. We are working with the Pioneer Library System, Norman Arts Council, Public Arts Board and the Cleveland County Extension. Courtney is helping with that and has some great ideas, one being a sustainable gardening type activity. They have already started their fundraiser. The big event is going to be part of it. The 19th is the Earth Day Festival and a parade will be associated with that. We are looking at some sort of event the next weekend at Lake Thunderbird. Green Recreation Weekend – Mountain biking, Kayaking Sailing. A type of cleanup event with another type of event with the state park system. The concluding of that on May 1st. Ready for 100 is having a renewable energy fair on April 2nd, we will put that on our calendar. The wild care baby shower is April 25th from 2-5. The master gardeners spring garden and plant sale is the 18th. It doesn't have to be an event that we specifically planned, it is any environmentally influenced event in the month of April. We will put them on the comprehensive calendar and advertise for them. If you have an event in mind and you want to plan it, we would love to hear about it but we can't plan everything ourselves.

We are also going to have a parade for the 50th anniversary. It will be at the Earth Day festival not on Earth Day itself we are going to have an event at the library with environmental groups, kind of like an expo. We are trying to pack April full of cool activities. We are open to names for this topic.

Item no. 13 being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

No Discussion

Item No. 14 being:

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

Item No. 15 being:

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m

Passed and approved this 19 day of February 2020.


Chair, Matthew Rom