

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD**

**MINUTES OF  
July 21, 2021**

Item No. 1 being:

**ROLL CALL**

The Environmental Control Advisory Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a Special Session at the City of Norman, in the Executive Conference Room, Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street on July 21, 2021 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     Dane Heins (Chair)  
                                 Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair)  
                                 Deborah Cretsinger  
                                 Jim Griffith  
                                 Sara Bondy  
                                 Lainey Phillips

MEMBERS ABSENT     Traci Gold  
                                 Robert Vollmar

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT     Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager  
                                 Jerry Gates, Environmental Services Asst. Manager  
                                 Michele Loudenback, Stormwater Program Specialist  
                                 Rachel Croft, Utilities Staff Engineer  
                                 Kevin Mink, OCCD

Item No. 2 being:

**INTRODUCE NEW MEMBERS & GUESTS**

Kevin Mink, Oklahoma County Conservation District

Item No. 3 being:

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF June 16, 2021 MEETING**

Griffith made a motion to approve the June 16, 2021 minutes. Bondy seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS     Dane Heins (Chair)  
                 Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair)  
                 Deborah Cretsinger  
                 Sara Bondy  
                 Lainey Phillips

Jim Griffith

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item No. 4 being:

**PRESENTATION ON YARD BY YARD BY KEVIN MINK, OCCD**

Mink introduces himself and explains that he wears a lot of hats. He said that the goal was to promote urban conservation and OKC was the place to get it going. Typically, they achieve their mission by educating people and typically do things like soil health days and plant ID health shops. Then COVID happened and he noticed that there was a boom in the home gardening. He started off by videoing himself to show people how to do their own composting and making their own raised beds. They got together with a bunch of local experts to see what practices they would want to see on a certification checklist. The first big thing is maintaining a pesticide free yard. Then they break out into categories like improving soil health; composting, mulch mowing and raising the mower height. Next is water; having rain barrels then expanding into food; encouraging people to grow their own food. Lastly is habitat; pollinator gardens. People will submit their applications and OCCD will follow up and ask for a tour to confirm that they are doing what they say they are doing. They use this for additional outreach as well and give them a sign to put in their yard. They also give them seeds for their yard and seeds to share with people. He opens the floor for questions. Cretsinger asked if ECAB wants to move forward with it what would Mink need ECAB to do. Mink said that the big thing that they struggle with is getting the word out. Griffith asked where the site is for the list of projects that they use. Mink said that everything that they do goes on their YouTube page which people can get to from the main website, okconservation.org. Any post that they do goes on the Facebook as well. Gates asked what the number one recommendation is for substitutes or alternatives to pesticides and/or herbicides is. Mink said that when people call and tell him that they have weeds he will ask them what exactly do they not like about it and he tries to educate them about the plants that are considered "weeds". De-Kalb Myers asked if they have had any push back from any homeowners that want to do it but they live in an HOA edition. Mink said that HOA's are a notorious obstacle. Mink said that he would love to get this going here and that it is very simple, ECAB advertises and he will certify. He said that if they want someone in Norman who is trained on this and can respond and certify yards they can do it. Phillips asked if you have to check all the boxes, are some optional or are they all required? Can you still get certified or is spraying your yard and you're out? He explains that step one is maintaining a pesticide free yard and the other stuff is considered secondary. So their main concern is pesticide free yards. DeKalb-Myers asked what the biggest complaint that they get with code enforcements. Mink said height or neighbors complaining about another neighbors composting. He wrote to a city manager once about one of his yards getting cited and he hasn't heard from that person since. Gates asked if there was an unlimited number of folks that get the certification? Mink said yes. Griffith asked if it would be something that he would consider, presenting this to a neighborhood? Griffith explains that he lives in a cul-de-sac and thought that presenting to everyone in the cul-de-sac would be a good idea. Mink said absolutely.

Heins said that he thinks it is great and asks if everyone else feels the same. Cretsinger said she is ready to fill out the form and get her sign/certification. Heins explains that the biggest hurdle in the past with the sustainable yard of the month was getting people to fill out the form and submit an entry. He said that it will probably be the same way with this program but with this at least they will have a partner. Everyone agreed. Cretsinger said that she would even be willing to take on the training to be the certifier here in Norman but asked how we would promote it. Heins

said that in the past they used Facebook and that maybe they include a campaign for this like they are doing with the composting. Myers said that she can also help with promotion in her position.

Cretsinger made a motion to approve the participation, support and/or promotion of Yard-by-Yard. Griffith seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS     Dane Heins (Chair)  
           Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair)  
           Deborah Cretsinger  
           Sara Bondy  
           Lainey Phillips  
           Jim Griffith

NAYS     None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item No. 5 being:

#### **DISCUSS PUBLIC EDUCATION GRAPHICS AND MATERIALS FOR DISTRIBUTION**

Heins said that they have all pretty much approved the graphics. the material was passed out for review. Croft said that they are thinking about getting a green section for the central library where we can promote ECAB as well as Stormwater and other agencies. City clerk is fine with putting posters up on the doors. Heins said that they can get it going as soon as it is approved.

DeKalb-Myers made a motion to approve the material for distribution, Bondy seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS     Dane Heins (Chair)  
           Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair)  
           Deborah Cretsinger  
           Sara Bondy  
           Lainey Phillips  
           Jim Griffith

NAYS     None

The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

Item No. 6 being:

#### **MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION**

Bondy asked about the previous year's campaign for Recycling. Heins said that he doesn't have an update on that. Bondy asked if there was anything she could do to help. Heins said yes but he doesn't know what that is yet. He is sure that if we had a campaign he would have it somewhere in his emails so he will look and see what has been done. Myers said that there was a social media campaign they did with what type of plastics were recyclable. Phillips asked if

