

Sustainability Committee

David Doebler, Chair – Appointed by Commissioner Micky Steinberg
Jeremy Waks, Vice Chair - Appointed by Mayor Dan Gelber
Sarah Kott, Member - Appointed by Commissioner David Richardson
Mohammed Islam, Member - Appointed by Commissioner Mark Samuelian
Luiz Rodrigues, Member - Appointed by Commissioner Michael Góngora
Mike Gibaldi, Member - Appointed by Commissioner Ricky Arriola
Jason Koslowe – Appointed by Commissioner Stephen Meiner

DATE: December 22, 2020

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Sustainability Committee

A meeting of the Sustainability Committee has been scheduled for December 22, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. The meeting was held through Zoom.

Attendees were as follows: Dave Doebler, Mike Gibaldi, Sara Kott, Jason Koslowe, Luiz Rodrigues, Jeremy Waks, and Mohammed Islam

Members of the public were also in attendance.

City Staff: Elizabeth Wheaton, Environment & Sustainability Director; Bradford Kaine, Sanitation Director; Nelson Perez, City Engineer; Stanley Payne, Stormwater Superintendent; Rodolfo De La Torre, Infrastructure Division Director; Yanira Pineda, Senior Sustainability Coordinator; and Alyssia Berthoumieux, Sustainability Specialist.

MINUTES

1. Committee Responsibilities

- a) **Review of November 24, 2020 Minutes** – Dave Doebler, chair, asked to include a description of what the Fill a Bag program entails. **MOTION:** Motion to amend the November 24, 2020 minutes with description of Fill a Bag program. Motion made by Mike Gibaldi, seconded by Jeremy Waks.

2. Sustainability Committee Work Plan

- a. **New Businesses**
 - i. **Stormwater Strategies** – Nelson Perez, City Engineer, provided a history of how stormwater has traditionally flowed in Miami Beach towards Biscayne Bay and explained that gravity stormwater outfalls were appropriate for a less urbanized Miami Beach but not feasible during high tides. He explained that pressurized stormwater outfalls handle tidal flooding and rainwater better. Mr. Nelson further explained the earlier generation of the stormwater pump system included bar screens, pollution control, and an aeration chamber. He added the next generation strategy with a water treatment system would include five stages of treatment and injection wells with outfalls. Stanley Payne, Stormwater Superintendent, explained the City vacuums every king tide and flooding event. He noted the City removed 350 tons of debris out of the system over the last year and maintained the entire stormwater system annually. The City estimates that it cleaned 150% of system every year. Mr. Doebler asked about how debris was being captured in older systems. Mr. Payne explained systems in the northern area of the city are cleaned more frequently to increase capacity. Mr. Doebler asked about systems that could

help to keep debris at street level. Mr. Payne described a pilot program that was implemented on Ocean Drive but debris blocked the street inlet which did not allow water to drain. Rudy De La Torre, Infrastructure Division Director, added that it made it difficult during rain events because it clogged the inlet, so it was better to catch the debris on the other side. Luiz Rodrigues, member, asked about the smallest size of debris the system could capture and what percentage of debris passes through the stormwater system and flows into the bay. Mr. Payne answered that debris the size of cigarette butts could be captured and explained that the amount of debris flowing to the bay decreased dramatically. In the beginning, about 50-60% flowed into the bay but has been improved to less than 10%. Elizabeth Wheaton, Environment and Sustainability Director asked the committee for suggestions on how the City could improve communications about its stormwater management system. Mr. Doebler proposed having field trips to visually see cleaning of stormwater systems, when the public could meet again. Mike Gibaldi, member, asked about the possibility of creating an adopt-a-storm drain program. Ms. Wheaton added the Sustainability Committee had previously passed a motion to not move forward with a volunteer program and added the committee could revisit the idea.

- ii. Committee Accomplishments – Yanira Pineda, Senior Sustainability Coordinator, showcased the Sustainability Committee’s accomplishments and thanked Dave Doebler for his work as the Chair of the Sustainability Committee.

b. **Old Business**

- i. **Volunteer Beach Cleanup Program** – Ms. Wheaton provided an update on the development of the solo beach cleanup program. She stated she asked Boucher Brothers about possible locations for posts and proposed a virtual ribbon cutting event to kick off the program.
- ii. **Waste Hauler Services**
 - a) Garbage services – Bradford Kaine, Sanitation Director, presented the item and opened the floor for any questions. Mohammed Islam, member, asked about the waste hauler services and fees and if the City had regulatory control over the service fees. Mr. Kaine explained how the contracts were structured in Miami Beach and that the City does not control the prices of waste hauling services. Mr. Doebler suggested that during the next negotiations, the City could consider including more consumer protections.
 - b) Unified Waste Hauler Messaging – Ms. Pineda provided an update on the changes the waste haulers have completed to unify and clearly identify bins. The changes included changing the lids on the recycling bins to yellow and adding clear, multilingual messaging indicating which bins were for recycling and which ones were for landfill.
- iii. **Pollinator Gardens** – Ms. Pineda introduced the item. She presented a grant opportunity to fund pollinator gardens. She presented the page created for educational resources on pollinators on the City’s website and the website for the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge which has an interactive map of pollinator gardens. Mr. Doebler asked if the City could implement a program like the Commemorative Tree program specifically for pollinator plants. Ms. Wheaton explained that such a program would need to be approved by the Commission because the Commemorative Tree program was specific to trees, but they would meet with Parks and Greenspace to discuss ideas on how to support new pollinator gardens and bring to upcoming Sustainability Committee meetings.

3. **Public Comment and Announcements**

4. **Next Meeting**

- a. January 26, 2021
- b. Agenda Planning