



Delaware County Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 14th @ 6 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting - Chester City Hall
1 E. 4th Street, Chester, PA 19013



Attendees:

Commission Members		Other County Staff and Special Guests
PUBLIC MEMBERS (5 for Quorum)		
X	Steve Clark (V)	Barbara O'Malley, Delaware County Executive Director
X	David Director	Lesley Klawitter, Delaware County Recycling Coordinator (V)
X	Carol Martsolf	Justin Tibbels, Special Assistant to the Mayor and Constituent Affairs Manager for the City of Chester
X	Julie Prey	Andrew Hayman, City of Chester Director of Public Works
	Jaclyn Rhoads	Melba Rothwell, City of Chester Recycling Coordinator
X	Michael Schneller	Portia West, City of Chester Councilwoman
	Grace Venit	
	Joi Washington	Six Members of the Public were also in attendance. (V)
GOVERNMENT MEMBERS (4 for Quorum)		
X	John Bosch (A)	
X	Gina Burritt	
	Jonathan Coret	
X	Sue DePompeo (A)	

Commission Members		Other County Staff and Special Guests
	Laura Goodrich-Cairns	
X	Anne Stauffer	
X	Karen Wilwol	
X	Becca Yurkovich	

*(V) indicates virtual participation

1. Welcome, Roll Call, and Interactive Question – Carol Martsolf

- a. The meeting began at 6:00 PM. Carol took attendance and a quorum was present.
- b. Carol then asked meeting participants to share one thing they did today for the environment:
 - i. Carpooled
 - ii. Drove an EV
 - iii. Used Reusable Water Bottles or Mugs
 - iv. Composting/Leaving the Leaves on Your Yard

2. Instructions for Public Comment - Carol Martsolf

- a. Throughout the meeting, we will provide the opportunity for residents and guests to provide feedback. Guests may submit written comments to the email SustainDelco@co.delaware.pa.us. Guests may also provide comment in the chat window of the Zoom meeting or they may raise their hand and will have the opportunity to speak. In-person participants should just raise their hand.
- b. **Public Comment (SustainDelco@co.delaware.pa.us and from Zoom chat) - No public comment.**

3. Review and Approval of October Meeting Minutes - Carol Martsolf

- a. The Commission reviewed the minutes from the October Meeting.
 - i. Motion to approve October Meeting Minutes: David Director
 - ii. Second: Steve Clark
 - iii. Outcome: Unanimous

4. Old Business

a. Nomination for Sustainability Commission Secretary

- i. Steve Clark volunteered to serve in the role of Secretary.
 1. Motion to formally nominate Steve Clark as the Secretary of the Sustainability Commission:
David Director
 2. Second: Anne Stauffer
 3. Outcome: Unanimous

5. Presentation and Discussion - Sustainability Efforts in Chester City - Justin Tibbels, MPA, Melba Rothwell, and Andrew Hayman

- a. Justin Tibbels recognized that sustainability issues are near and dear to the city, with trash, dumping, and air quality being among some of the top concerns of residents. One initiative the city was happy to share was the introduction of their Block Captain Program which will help empower residents to take care of their local streets. This should kick off at the end of the month. Justin also highlighted a US EPA Community Change Grant that the city applied for which would help with planting and caring for trees and enhancing the park and trail system in the city.
- b. Andrew Hayman then provided a presentation on the depth of illegal dumping in the City recognizing it as a tremendous challenge.
 - i. In the first 6 months of 2024, the City had spent more than \$200,000 in tipping fees from the clean up of illegal dump sites.
 - ii. Andrew then reviewed potential causes of illegal dumping, some of the challenges, and what the city is doing to curb this issue.
- c. Melba Rothwell then provided an overview of the City's recycling program.
 - i. The city is trying providing bilingual educational materials, offered leaf recycling, and is currently working on an Act 101 Section 904 Grant through the state to receive money back for the city's recycling performance.

6. Public Comment (SustainDelco@co.delaware.pa.us and from Zoom chat)

- a. *Commission Member David Director asked how much of a difference it would make if there was public trash drop off at*

the County Transfer Stations?

- i. Andrew Hayman noted that he didn't think it would help the illegal dumping in the city too much as many of the folks doing illegal dumping are from outside of the community who are dumping to save a quick buck.
- b. ***Commission Member Michael Schneller asked if it would be possible to use some of the fine money to reward community members that reported illegal dumping that led to arrests to incentivize reporting.***
 - i. Justin Tibbels noted that the city is looking into this as an option.
 - ii. Councilwoman Portia Wood also noted that a lot of the convictions of illegal dumpers is dependent on the placement of cameras, which can be very tricky. She further noted that a lot of residents are afraid to report.
- c. ***It was then asked if many of the dumpers are repeat offenders.***
 - i. Andrew Hayman said it is hard to say, but he would guess that a lot of them are repeat offenders.
- d. ***Commission Member Sue DePompeo asked if the fine structure is escalating, having larger fines for repeat offenders?***
 - i. Andrew shared that he believes the ordinance fines offenders by item, not by dumping incidence.
 - ii. ***As a follow up to this question, Commission Member Karen Wilwol asked if the city is tracking information about dump sites to see any trends in materials, offenders, or more.***
 1. Andrew Hayman recognized that the city is tracking information on reported dumpsites, but the database is not all encompassing due to the tremendous number of dump sites.
- e. Comments from Members of the Public:
 - i. ***Community Member Abby Feinstein stated that the illegal dumping seems to be part of a bigger issue of insufficient waste disposal. She further recognized that dumping is a symptom of the problem.***
 1. Andrew respectfully disagreed noting that it is unfair that a lower income community such as Chester has to accept the waste from wealthier

surrounding communities. He also noted that while they can do better in the community, it is a regional issue.

ii. Community Member John Butler

1. Asked if Chester is getting their recycling tonnage numbers from the state? He also noted that Subaru Stadium, the Casino, and the School District should be reporting their numbers, so it can be incorporated into the performance grant.

- a. Melba stated that she was not sure about the Casino or the Stadium, and that she is actively working with the School District to get their recycling numbers.

iii. Community Member Peter Rykard

1. Peter asked if the city could share an update on the Chester Creek trail project in Crozer Park?

- a. Councilwoman Portia West said that she did not have a specific update but the project is still very much in the works.
- b. Justin added that the city is working to connect the many existing trails that traverse the city.

7. Sustainability Plan Overview and Office of Sustainability Update - Becca Yurkovich

a. Sustainability Plan Overview

- i. Becca Yurkovich provided a brief presentation sharing Sustain Delco: A Sustainability Plan for Delaware County. Specifically, she touched on each of the six focus areas, looking at the goals of the plan, as well as progress that has been made in each area by the County and the Community since the plan's adoption in 2023.

b. Zero Waste Plan Update

- i. Becca showed the updated plan sections for the Zero Waste Plan and shared which sections are currently underway. Commission Member David Director shared his process for paring down the section of the plan on current conditions.
- ii. Becca then asked the group about aligning case studies

with hierarchy levels or the “roadmap categories”.

- iii. Becca also shared many grant applications the department is currently working on, highlighted outcomes from the annual Campaign Sign Recycling Event, as well as updated on additional projects such as the Climate Vulnerability Map, Recycling in the Government Center, and the Tree Canopy Study.

- 1. Questions

- a. ***Karen Wilwol asked who was completing the Tree Canopy Study.***

- i. Becca noted that SavATree Consulting Group and the University of Vermont Mapping Lab were completing the report.

- b. Members of the Public also asked questions about the timeline for the Sustainability Plan, how Zero Waste Plan case studies would be used, and made the recommendation of advertising for the Campaign Sign Recycling Event at all polling places.

8. Review Action Items from Last Meeting

- a. **Discussion of Meeting Schedule for Next Year**

- i. Commission members recognized that it is difficult to get quorum at all meetings. Suggestions for potentially hosting meetings at 4:00 or 4:30 PM to accommodate at the end of the work day was recommended. Other recommendations were also issued. It was decided that a scheduling poll would go out to all members to allow for further discussion during the December meeting. It was recognized that there is value for in-person meetings.

- b. **Vacancies**

- i. Becca shared that the Commission currently has two openings for representatives from environmental justice communities.

9. New Business – Carol Martsof

- a. **Karen Wilwol** shared that the Conservation District and the Parks and Recreation Departments are hosting a native meadow seeding on Sunday, November 24th at Rose Tree

Park. All are invited to attend.

- b. **Karen** also shared that the Conservation District is looking to change the composition of their board to remove one farm director position and convert the space to another member of the general public. She noted that this change would still allow and encourage farmer participation, but it would allow for others, who may not meet the state's definition of farmer, to fill the role, as well.
- c. **Anne Stauffer** noted that there are also two vacancies on the Delaware County Parks and Recreation Board.

8. Set Action Items for Next Meeting - Carol Martsolf

- a. Becca to send Scheduling Poll for 2025 Meeting Preferences
- b. Commission to advertise and share vacancy information
- c. All should look to attend the Native Meadow Planting hosted by the Delaware County Conservation District, Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department, and the Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards being held in Rose Tree Park on Sunday, November 24th

9. Public Comment (SustainDelco@co.delaware.pa.us and from Zoom chat) - No public comment.

10 . Adjourn - 7:35 PM

- a. Motion: David Director
- b. Second: Julie Prey
- c. Outcome: Unanimous