



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Tuesday, January 3, 2017
6:00 PM

Pre-Council

Conference Room
1A/1B
Columbia City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

Councilperson Ruffin called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Present: 4 - Ruffin, Trapp, Thomas, and Skala

Absent: 3 - Nausea, Peters, and Treece

STAR Communities Certification and Sustainability Office Update

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Sustainability Manager Barbara Buffaloe explained that she would be reviewing the STAR Communities update as well as have the Educators provide an update for projects they are working on.

Ms. Buffaloe explained that STAR Communities is a sustainability benchmarking system that scores communities on over 700 points. We received 302.5 points out of 720, awarding us a three-star certification level. Categories, scores and areas of improvement are as follows:

Built Environment (scored 31.4 points): Where improvement could be found is in "Complete and Compact Communities" and "Transportation Choices". In each category there are more points given for realized outcomes and since we do not have enough "complete and compact communities" to be evaluated, we missed out on these points. A bright spot is that in the next evaluation Columbia should have more neighborhood plans via community development and the continued implementation of Columbia Imagined - which has an emphasis on sustainable development.

Climate & Energy (32.2 points): We scored the best in "Greenhouse gas mitigation" and "Resource efficient buildings". A lot of those were accredited to Columbia's outreach and education and our track record for adopting the latest buildings codes. Where we could see these scores go higher would be by demonstrating an 80% reduction in community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We have reached out to peer cities on how they are achieving this and it's typically a combination of measuring where you are (GHG inventory), what's your "carbon budget", and what's your goal - which is often done by pledging a goal like the US Mayors National Climate Action Agenda or the Compact of Mayors.

Economy and Jobs (scored 47 points): We were able to demonstrate an increased number of businesses established, an increase in sales, and an increase in the percentage of residents employed. We also showed an increase in the real median household income over time. We still have work to do to demonstrate that 80% of

household incomes in the jurisdiction meet or exceed the living wage standard. In the next evaluation period we will be tasked with demonstrating that income equality in the region and locally is decreasing over time.

Education, Arts & Community (scored 32.9 points): This category is evaluating Columbia's sustainability on measures that the City doesn't necessarily have control over. One goal of importance is "Community cohesion". This one is directly linked with the City strategic plan social equity goal of strengthening neighborhoods. A lot of our efforts through the office of neighborhood services should make this score increase.

Equity & Empowerment (scored 26.8 points): We scored high in civic engagement which measures voter turnout and volunteerism. There is needed improvements with our efforts in "Environmental Justice" that can be addressed by similar goals in climate adaptation by identifying and prioritizing environmental justice sites and having a plan for improving. We expect to see improvements in "equitable services and access" as a result of our strategic plan priority neighborhood efforts. Improvements in human services is also expected as a result of our community indicators project and the strong work coming out of Steve Hollis' division.

Health & Safety (scored 74 points): We achieved full credit under "Safe Communities" because the violent crime rate is below the category threshold and school violence is also low. We also scored well with our focus on active living - especially for adults. The Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services departments top performing ranking and recent accreditation also helped us score well. Where we expect improvements due to alignment with our strategic plan is in "Food access and nutrition". We could use assistance in conducting an assessment of the local food system and the evaluation of if a Food Policy Council is needed. There's also a lot of room for improvement in "Natural & Human Hazards". Like discussed earlier with climate adaptation, having a vulnerability assessment is needed and something that we could incorporate into our existing hazard mitigation plan process.

Natural Systems (scored 50 points): This was our second highest performing category with 50 points achieved - with the most success attributed to the existence and distribution of our parks. We have alignment with our strategic plans infrastructure goal and the emphasis on green infrastructure. This team hopes to see improvement on monitoring and programs to increase participation of these efforts on private lands. Improvements are needed with "Invasive species". We expect improvements with "Water in the environment". The recent efforts with our multiple water integrated resource plans should hopefully result in improvements, as long as water quality remains a funded priority. As we continue to grow, we see a need for more facilities management that oversees all operations of our facilities - from energy use to water quality improvements.

Ms. Buffalo explained that she would like guidance from Council on what goals and areas of focus they would like her team to work on as they seek another round of certification in 2020.

Eric Hempel, Energy Educator, provided a brief history of energy education and their tasks. He provided some statistics of the events, outreach efforts and activities the Educators do with customers and community partners. He discussed the energy usage of city facilities and the intent to decrease usage through evaluation, efficiency standards, training and education at city facilities. He reviewed some priority projects relating to the strategic plan, water resource plan, and rental housing issues. He also addressed the solar market in Columbia noting that we are a "SolSmart Gold" city and that we are one of 22 cities selected to receive training and assistance from the Department of Energy.

He explained that the rate of commercial and residential interconnections is also on a steadily increasing rate.

Ben Kreitner, Waste Minimization Coordinator, overviewed the waste diversion programs including: apartment recycling, commercial food waste, curbside collection, household hazardous waste and others. The commercial recycling program has been the greatest success with increased recycling rates from approximately 4% to 14% over 6 years. He reviewed rates of residential recycling noting the increase on recycling when we started recycling more plastics. He discussed some of the weaknesses in our programs relating to curbside collections, drop-sites and apartment recycling. There is room for improvement in apartment recycling programs as those numbers seem to remain rather steady or drop, even when the other categories have seen spikes of improvement. Mr. Kreitner explained how the apartment recycling program operates. He overviewed some future projects including the expansion of recycling services and participation; as well as adopt a Recycle Bowl Competition with Columbia Public Schools.

Danielle Fox, Community Conservationist, reviewed the Natural Systems score of 50 points and explained the need for a conservation strategy. She briefly outlined the steps for this to include the formation of an Interdepartmental Conservation Committee (Fall 2017) and a Steering Committee (Fall 2018). She reviewed current efforts to manage existing natural parks, education efforts, improved communication, and various ways for the City of Columbia to "Be a leader" in this field. She provided a few examples of ways the city could lead, such as the Mayors for Monarchs pledge.

Mike Heimos, Stormwater Educator, discussed the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit and explained the 6 minimum control measures for the permit. He noted that under this permit; the University of Missouri, Boone County, and City of COlumbia, are seen as one entity titled "Show-Me Stormwater Management". He overviewed the public education and outreach efforts he provides to customers and noted some of the events he has booths set up for. He discussed public involvement and participation noting the clean up efforts that are conducted by volunteer teams. Illicit discharge detection and elimination is handled through response and reporting methods. Construction site run-off control and post-construction management is also being addressed by various controlled methods and education. Pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations is looked at to ensure we follow best management practices and that all staff is aware of policies and practices for their sites.

Ms. Buffaloe thanked everyone for their time and reminded Council that she would like to hear from them on what goals they would like to see accomplished in 2020.

II. ALL OTHER ITEMS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO DISCUSS

None.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:02 pm.