

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 2, 2012

A meeting of the Environmental Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC) was convened on Thursday, February 2, 2012, at 5:15 p.m., in the Pueblo County Conference Room, 1001 North Santa Fe Avenue. Chair Reynolds called the meeting to order at approximately 5:22 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Susan Finzel-Aldred
Doris Kester
Ted Lopez (Arrived at 5:50 p.m.)
Charles B. Pelto
Marvin Reynolds
Chad Wolgram

Member absent was: Thelma Archuletta (excused).

Staff present was Sandy Blanco.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 3, 2011; APRIL 7, 2011; JUNE 2, 2011; AUGUST 4, 2011, OCTOBER 6, 2011, AND DECEMBER 1, 2011 MEETINGS

The minutes could not be approved due to the lack of a quorum.

CHAIR'S REPORT – MARVIN REYNOLDS

Chair Reynolds reported the election of officers would have to be postponed due to the lack of a quorum. He welcomed Julie Ann Woods, the new Director of the Pueblo County Department of Planning and Development. Since the last EPAC meeting, a Pueblo County Sustainability Meeting was held that Ms. Woods and Ms. Finzel-Aldred attended. They talked about the built environment in Pueblo, which deals with buildings, infrastructure, roads, and the impacts on water, land, air, and transportation. They're looking at how that fits into the Sustainability Plan in Pueblo, and ranked the different categories.

Ms. Woods reported policies were set forth through DOLA and the Department of Local Affairs, noting they set up a series of criteria to use in terms of sustainability. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated EPAC ranked the criteria and public health and safety ranked on its coverage of the geographic area of land use and development. They talked about fire safety for communities in the City and the estimated future growth based on statistics and maps from PACOG up to 2035. The other criteria were transportation, hazard mitigation, and education, noting there are eight different criteria. They talked about how affordable housing, transportation, and health care intersect and where they had gaps. They talked about the age of residents, commercial properties, and where they are in terms of energy efficiency. They didn't rank themselves too low in some areas and talked about Pueblo's success and growth. They did a comparison from the inner metropolitan core to outlying areas like Pueblo West, noting they looked at what makes the community sustainable, walkable, and able to serve the people that live there.

Chair Reynolds stated he's looking at the future and seeing the anticipated population of Pueblo and how transportation and the community can build and grow into those areas. Mr. Pelto questioned if energy was one of the criteria, and Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes.

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR REPORT – SUSAN FINZEL-ALDRED

Ms. Finzel-Aldred reported Christmas tree sales were down, but 300 participants brought in over 400 trees during their collection event in January, 2012. It was held at Vision Recycled Aggregate from January 7, 2012 through January 21, 2012. They received a few donations that covered their expenses and were thankful to Vision Recycled Aggregate, who greeted people during the day. They were also thankful to Black Hills Energy, who covered the cost of the chipping and mulching of the trees, which is gone. A lot of residents use the mulch to protect their vegetation and homes during the cold months, for animal stalls, and to use in their home composting program.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated she's been making arrangements for the Colorado Association for Recycling Summit that will be held in Pueblo in June, 2012. She will also be assisting the County in their preparation of a recycling grant application to the State Health Department that was announced the first week of January, 2012, and due by March 2, 2012. The County is taking the lead in applying for the grant, noting they need to come up with a five to six year plan to provide a processing facility for recyclables in Pueblo County. The Pueblo Recycles Little Citizens Group announced their 8th year of doing the Student Recycle Poster Contest. They're taking art work from Kindergarten through high school that would appear on the recycle poster for Earth Day, noting the grand prize winner would be displayed on a billboard for the month of November, 2012, for America Recycles Day. The applications are due by March 23, 2012, and the winners will be announced at the Earth Day celebration, called the Party for the Planet, at the Pueblo Zoo, on April 21, 2012.

Chair Reynolds asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if she had any other information on Earth Day. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes, noting they're looking for exhibitors. The poster is out and the contact person is Gloria Madrill, the activities Director at the Pueblo Zoo. She's partnering and getting booths together for Government agencies, non-profit organizations, citizens, scout troops, and retailers that have friendly products to sell. There would be live music at the Mundari Hut from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CSU Pueblo is putting together a 5K Earth Day Run on Sunday morning that will start and end at City Park, noting Mark Praterelli is the person in charge of that and his sustainability students are putting it together. The Mineral Palace Park Clean-up and Planting Day would be held on April 21, 2012, with a fundraising concert for the Eco-Village project that night featuring the artist Pato Benton. Ms. Kester announced the Nature Center is also having an Earth Day dinner on April 22, 2012. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated the Nature Center dinners are great, noting they have great guest speakers, award ceremonies, and give out Environmental Leader Awards. Mr. Pelto asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred when the Recycling Summit would be held in June, and Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied June 10, 2012 through June 12, 2012.

WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE – C. PELTO

Mr. Pelto stated there's nothing to report, noting he was ill the day they met last month and they don't meet again until next week.

Ms. Woods reported she has been talking to the Board of County Commissioners about updating the Regional Development Plan for the City and County as a joint plan. There's no money set aside in the budget to update it, but she's been working with City Planning to find out where their interest lies and if they're on board with the update. They're in the beginning stages and will be working on the background and demographic information. Ms. Finzel-Aldred asked Ms. Woods if it was a County project that wasn't going through PACOG. Ms. Woods replied PACOG would definitely be involved. It's her understanding that the County Planning

Commission adopts, the City Planning Commission makes a recommendation to City Council, the Board of County Commissioners doesn't adopt, and PACOG endorses. She needs to figure out the unusual relationships based on what they did in 2002. The plan is already ten years old and needs to be updated. It's a pretty aggressive plan, noting they call it a development plan and not a comprehensive plan or a community plan, which is what she's used to and would definitely want to change. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated EPAC serves PACOG and advises them on environmental issues that come up, noting it would be great if Ms. Woods could be a liaison between PACOG and EPAC. They would have some direction on what to work on. Ms. Woods stated she really doesn't know much about EPAC and is why she was there tonight, noting she just started with the County in October, 2011.

Chair Reynolds stated four or five years ago EPAC worked on the Solid Waste Management Plan, noting they did an extensive amount of research and work. They gave their recommendations to the City, PACOG, and Pueblo County. Ms. Woods asked Chair Reynolds if the plan was adopted, and Chair Reynolds replied no. Ms. Woods questioned the outcome of the plan. Mr. Pelto replied he talked to Mickey Buyer from the City Public Works Department regarding their current efforts to reignite the Solid Waste Management Plan for the City of Pueblo, and he indicated they're moving on with the project and wanted to implement a cohesive and sustainable system to reduce their expenses in the City for street maintenance and other ancillary costs such as code enforcement relating to trash. They talked to the City Manager's office today about broaching the idea to City Council. They waited this long because they wanted the new City Council members to get their feet wet before embarking on such a heavy issue, which had been addressed before. It's the best option since they don't think they can get all the haulers to form a cooperative, noting they would have to do a contract for several years with a single hauler to carry the trash throughout the City. It will probably have to go to a public referendum because they're a home-ruled City and they need to have public support for this type of activity. They're looking at putting the issue on the ballot for the 2012 election cycle so they need to start pushing it hard with City Council, and to get the public to accept the idea they need to have this kind of activity in order to save close to a million dollars a year based on their estimates in terms of road work, code enforcement, judges, and the police department. Ms. Woods asked Mr. Pelto if it was for recycling. Mr. Pelto replied it was for all solid waste including recycling activities. They're still wrestling with the legal department over the techniques that can be used to do this type of activity. They'll have more information by the end of the month, noting they're planning to take it to the City Council Work Session later on in February, 2012, where they can get a better feel for what they need to do. Ms. Woods asked Mr. Pelto what the issue was. Mr. Pelto replied back then, City Council didn't want to pass an ordinance with no teeth to implement the requirement for waste management activities in the City. They would still have four or five trash trucks driving up and down every alley in Pueblo every week hauling away the trash. They could save one-quarter to one-third of a million dollars every year in road maintenance from all the trucks driving around. They submitted a series of courses of action to City Council and chose the one that was least offensive to the waste haulers in the City. One of the courses of action was a single contract for multiple years for a single hauler, and another one was districting the City with the haulers bidding on the particular districts, which the legal department said they couldn't do because of the Colorado Revised Statutes. The other course of action was the City taking over the project, which was the most offensive to the City.

Mr. Wolgram stated they're still looking at districting. Mr. Pelto stated that's one course of action, but Public Works thinks the one that's going to work, because of legal issues, is the single hauler multiple year contract. Ms. Woods questioned what would happen to the other three haulers that didn't get the contract. Mr. Pelto replied there are six or seven haulers that

are viable in the City, noting they would form a cooperative or consortium and work with each other. If they're not willing to sit and talk at the same table it's going to be difficult for them to work together. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated they're still working out some of the details in the plan and gathering some information. They're taking the plan to the legal department about districting. It's just for residential waste and doesn't cover commercial or industrial waste, or waste diversion. The City-County Health Department was given some time to look it over and give comment, noting it's a slow process. Ms. Woods asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if the goal was to reduce the number of trash trucks that were driving down the City streets, and Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied that was one of their objectives. The other is to improve and make waste collection more efficient for the residents, to improve the look of the City for the citizens, reduce illegal dumping, and to introduce recycling and diversion activities with large item pick-up three times a year for each household. Ms. Woods asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if the recommendation came from EPAC. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes, noting it was presented to PACOG in 2008, who wanted to present it to the City and County, and now in 2012 there's some action. Ms. Woods stated there's action on the City's side. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated the County is taking a different approach about the grant application and the possible MRF, noting they addressed the solid waste issue but there are other things related to water and air quality they can work on.

Chair Reynolds asked Ms. Woods if she would inform EPAC on any issues they could work on for PACOG. Ms. Woods asked Chair Reynolds if EPAC had involvement in the 208 Water Quality Plan that PACOG adopted, and Chair Reynolds replied no. Ms. Woods questioned if that was something they think they should be or want to be involved in. Mr. Pelto replied yes, noting he would like to be involved with that. Mr. Lopez stated no, noting from experience it's too technical. Ms. Woods stated it's too technical for her and is why they hired a consultant. Chair Reynolds stated it would be nice to know when that review is taking place. Mr. Pelto stated a few years ago they were involved in a discussion about waste water treatment for Pueblo West. Mr. Lopez stated there were discussions between the Pueblo West Metropolitan District, the Board of Water Works, and PACOG. EPAC submitted some comments at the last minute on the proposal to redirect potential treated wastewater back into the Wildhorse Creek drainage. Chair Reynolds stated the location was close to the marina at the Pueblo Reservoir. Ms. Woods asked Chair Reynolds how they get their information or if it came from PACOG. Chair Reynolds replied the solid waste question came directly from PACOG, but he wasn't sure about the Pueblo West wastewater issue. Mr. Lopez guessed it came from the City-County Health Department at the request of Pueblo West to bring it through EPAC. There was a time-frame on the decision that had to be made, noting they got it two weeks before their regular meeting and convened a special meeting to get some input from Pueblo West. A week or two later there was a regular meeting where they took a vote. Ms. Woods asked Mr. Lopez if they voted on their position or their recommendation to PACOG. Mr. Lopez replied they would have to go back and look at the minutes, noting he doesn't remember what the vote was. Chair Reynolds stated they didn't have a quorum to take a vote so he drafted a letter that expressed each person's vote and the reasons for their decision. Ms. Woods questioned what they did after that. Mr. Pelto stated the letter was presented to PACOG at their next meeting, noting they shot down the idea due to bad public relations on the part of Pueblo West.

Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated one thing that's been a reoccurring challenge is getting members appointed to EPAC. There's an application process that goes before PACOG who appoints them. They've lost members due to the lack of activity and have trouble keeping a quorum. There's a guideline of what the members represent from business industry, government agencies, and the community at large. Ms. Woods asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if she sits on PACOG as a staff member. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied she's an ex-officio member. Ms. Woods asked Ms. Finzel-Aldred if she can vote. Ms. Finzel-Aldred replied yes, as the Environmental

Coordinator doing education in the community on recycling and solid waste. Mr. Wolgram is also with the City-County Health Department, and her supervisor, noting he has a lot of environmental expertise. Mr. Wolgram stated he works with environmental issues, solid waste, water quality, air quality, hazardous material, and septic systems. Ms. Finzel-Aldred stated they had somebody from the City Storm Water Department serve before, and CSU Extension is represented. Ms. Woods questioned if EPAC worked with the Pueblo Chemical Depot. Mr. Lopez replied there's a separate citizen's advisory committee for that. Ms. Woods questioned if EPAC dealt mostly with stormwater, solid waste, recycling, water and air quality, and anything environmental, and if that was a fair assessment. Chair Reynolds replied yes, noting that was a pretty fair assessment.

Chair Reynolds stated last year there were public hearings about a proposed energy park southwest of Pueblo. Ms. Woods asked Chair Reynolds if the public hearings went before the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners, and Chair Reynolds replied yes. Mr. Lopez stated one reason why there's such a small membership on EPAC is because they haven't been able to accomplish anything in the 17 years that he's been on it. In going back to the early 90's, the main focus was solid waste and trying to get a recycling program established. EPAC was successful in getting funding for the Environmental Coordinator through the Governor's Office of Energy Conservation, and developing the Solid Waste Management Plan. It was a lot of effort by a volunteer group of people that had a lot of energy at the time. The Solid Waste Management Plan should have been a guideline and take off point to move further down the road but it hasn't happened. There's no real support from the City or County in terms of recognizing what EPAC has done in the past or their potential. There were 21 to 23 members at the time, but people got burned out and realized that nothing was happening. When he was on City Council and the cement plant was an issue there was a lot of controversy in the community. The State Health Department suggested to City Council they form a public forum or group, and he suggested they go through EPAC, and that's what happened. EPAC was coordinating the public hearings. He's always trying to get solid waste issues referred to EPAC. There's a lot of effort in the community and people do their own things with no coordination. Ms. Woods stated there are a lot of environmental groups and people with similar interests or knowledge that are doing different things, noting it would make sense to try and merge some groups together. Mr. Lopez stated if the City were to go forward with a plan to include the County, there should be a department or function separate from the local government so it's one central area. He asked Ms. Woods where she came from, and Ms. Woods replied Aspen. Mr. Lopez stated Aspen has a pretty good recycling program. Ms. Woods stated it's really good, noting she had bins for newspapers and mixed recyclables, and when she moved to Pueblo there wasn't a place for the recyclables. Mr. Lopez stated consultants did studies and concluded the groups need to work together and they don't. It's recognized by outside people, noting when he was on City Council, people knew about Pueblo so the culture needs to be changed. Ms. Woods stated PACOG is pretty progressive and has been in place for a long time as opposed to other Regional Governments where they have multiple counties. There's some coordination and cooperation, which is encouraging. Mr. Lopez stated on major projects they're pretty good but if something new is proposed they have different reactions that aren't necessarily positive and they can't get people to compromise and work together. Ms. Woods stated she's here to help in terms of her role, noting she's the Land Use Administrator of PACOG. She considers herself environmentally cognizant and a true believer in sustainability, noting it's an important part of their future and thinks she can be more cognizant of EPAC and their role. She wants to talk to the County Commissioners to find out why people aren't showing up and what needs to happen to make it a more effective committee. They can't even get the minutes approved so something needs to change and it's just a matter of getting the focus together again. She's hoping the Comprehensive Plan project would do that

and they could get more groups together to talk about what's important for the City, County, and the region. Mr. Lopez asked Ms. Woods if it was the Comprehensive Development Plan that was done ten or twelve years ago. Ms. Woods replied it was done in 2002 and is ten years old. Mr. Lopez stated those studies were well done and presented good information, but created some resistance and went up on the shelf. Ms. Woods stated there's a real problem with the plan, noting she's been a planner her whole life, graduated from planning school, and has been in the planning business for over 30 years. She read the plan, noting it has great policies and direction, but there's no action. To implement a plan, they need to state what the actions are in order to achieve the plan, and that part was missing. She talked to several people and asked why that part of the plan was missing, and the response was since there wasn't going to be a consensus around the various actions, they adopted the plan.

Mr. Peltó asked Ms. Woods if she had plans to visit with the 2020 Commission. Ms. Woods replied she hadn't met with them yet. Mr. Peltó stated they would be meeting a week from today at 7:00 a.m., in this room. Ms. Kester stated they would be meeting at CSU Pueblo instead. Ms. Woods asked if somebody would send her an email with the information, and Ms. Kester replied she would send it to her. Ms. Woods asked the members to inform her of other groups she should be aware of. She has to figure out where all the pieces and parts fit so they can start working with the City on the plan without wasting a lot of time.

SOLID WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE – T. LOPEZ

Mr. Lopez stated there was nothing to report. He volunteered to chair this subcommittee a year ago, noting he hasn't had any communications, e-mails, or any notice of meetings, so in a sense it's a waste of time.

Ms. Kester stated they don't know what to do to get members on EPAC. There are several groups who say they're interested in the environment but when they are asked to volunteer they say they don't have the time.

AGENDA APRIL 5, 2012

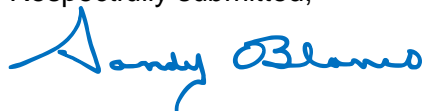
The next regularly scheduled EPAC meeting is Thursday, April 5, 2012.

Chair Reynolds asked Ms. Woods if she had any idea when the Conference Room would no longer be available. Ms. Woods replied no, noting she heard a rumor it would be this year but had no specific date. They need to find out so they would know where their meetings are going to be held.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before EPAC, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandy Blanco
EPAC Recording Secretary