



## Meeting Minutes

### Sustainability Commission

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Friday, November 8, 2024

8:00 AM

Development Services Room

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#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cassity called the meeting to order at 7:58 AM.

Commissioners Present: Anna Timme, Eric McElroy, Al Pramuk, Christina Christiansen, Brian Stone, Alderman Beverly Burger, Mike Cassity, and Keith Gordon

Commissioners Absent: Jon Brevard

Staff Present: Tia Holden, Kelly Dannenfelser, Joel Aguilera, Dillon Gaster, and Blake Harper

Other: Ned Dannenburg, Randy James, Tom Massey, Mac Nolen, name, Jim McKuren, Gary Graham, and Kristy Graham

**CITIZEN COMMENTS (Open for citizens to be heard on any issue or concern, including those related to items on the agenda. Please submit a Speaker Card at the beginning of the meeting if you would like to address the Commission. If you would like to speak on an agenda item, the Chair will hold your comment until the public comment period associated with the item. As provided by law, the Commission shall make no decisions or consideration of action of citizen comments for items not on the agenda, except to refer the matter to the Planning Director/Staff for administrative consideration, or to a schedule the matter for consideration at a later date. Those addressing the Commission are requested to come to the microphone and identify themselves by name and address for the official record. The Chair may restrict the period for public comment, including the length of the public comment period, the number of individuals who can speak and the length of time each individual may speak. When time allows, the standard individual public comment time is two minutes.)**

Chair Cassity asked for citizen comments. There were none.

**Comments on agenda items may be made in person at city hall or by emailing [planningintake@franklintn.gov](mailto:planningintake@franklintn.gov) before noon on the day of the meeting. Emailed comments will be provided to the Commission and included in the minutes, but not read aloud in their entirety during the meeting.**

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### 1. Consideration Of Approval Of Minutes

Sponsors:

A motion was made by Commissioner McElroy, seconded by Commissioner Timme to approve the Minutes from the September 13, 2024, meeting. The motion carried 8-0.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### 2. Recycling Convenience Centers Update and Prototype

Sponsors:

Randy James, contractor and manager, partnered with Williamson County Recycling Center. Mr. James started by mentioning the progress made towards recycling in Williamson County in the last two years since speaking to the Sustainability Commission. He reviewed Williamson County recycling records and found three recycling sites in the City of Franklin prior to 2009. Two locations, Independence Square and Williamson Square, made up thirty-two percent of what Williamson County collected. This, with Franklin's smaller population, rivaled Nashville's recycling. The system allowed residents to recycle their items into designated bins. Therefore, when the bins were taken to the recycling center, they were already presorted and resulted in roughly 600 tons of recycled material with zero waste. Nashville did not offer designated bins or a presorted system, resulting in nearly thirty percent of waste. The city and county then went their separate ways regarding recycling. The city entered into a blue bag program where residents placed a blue bag full of recycling near their curb for pickup. This was not an effective tactic for recycling center employees since it required them to cut open every bag. The county asked the city to use another system but ultimately resulted in the partnership dissolving. Mr. James stated that through the years, he has noticed recycling locations at shopping centers being very profitable and well utilized. However, it meant liability for shopping center owners. Mr. James then displayed a new design for a recycling system to be used at shopping centers. The new design features a kiosk for residents to sort their materials where they are then broken down, allowing more to be recycled with less wasted space within the recycling bins. Williamson County also recently constructed a recycling center with educational facilities and updated machinery that can handle nearly 10,000 tons of material per month with zero waste.

Mr. James then posed the question of how to change the culture of recycling. It is typically easier for recycling to be thrown in one bin. However, this results in a bin mostly full of air instead of materials. By changing the culture, residents would take their recycling bags to a shopping center kiosk and sort the materials. Then, it would be crushed by the machine, removing the air, and allowing more tons to be recycled. Additionally, it would lower the expense of recycling collection and processing while allotting more space in landfills, since more materials are correctly diverted to recycling. While it may seem easier to roll a recycling bin to the curb, this process does not help the community or country in the long run. Many residents currently feel they have no place to recycle or recycle only sometimes. This new process would allow all residents to participate at convenient shopping center locations. Small businesses would also have an opportunity to easily participate in recycling. There is currently no program for small businesses to recycle in the City. The shopping center, parking lot recycling machines cost around \$30,000. Once the system is shown to work well at one location, more machines can be purchased. Mr. James stated he wants to see an increase in recycling with a decrease in waste.

### **Discussion**

Mr. Harper asked if the company was public or privately owned.

Mr. James responded it is privately owned. His company bid on the agreement for partnership with the Williamson County Recycling Center.

Mrs. Graham asked for a comparison of communities using the old recycling system versus the new system.

Mr. James stated the only comparison they have is between areas with preexisting recycling centers at shopping centers, but they do have a strong comparison between the weight of materials once recycled. He also commented that recycling trucks would drive less miles using the updated system since they will pick up at shopping center locations instead of individual, residential houses.

Mr. Harper questioned if Mr. James was asking for a recommendation from the commission to the Board of Mayor and Alderman.

Mr. James responded he would appreciate the recommendation and would gladly present the program to the Board of Mayor and Alderman.

Alderman Burger stated she has visited the recycling machine prototype. She asked how many parking spaces the entire process uses.

Mr. James responded that the unit fits in one parking space while another space would be used for bins. Six spaces would be dedicated to parking.

Alderman Burger said it is unsustainable to continue using the current recycling process. She noted it would be important for

this presentation to be seen at the BOMA work session as well as by city administrators. The education factor is the biggest hurdle to overcome with this new process and posed the question of what incentive there is for people to use this new proposed method. She said maybe higher rates, education, and other methods would need to be used. The Alderman can help educate residents and get programs at town halls, Zoom, etcetera.

Mr. James said they asked how to get residents to participate by default and found default locations such as grocery stores to be a great solution. The default education program helps inform residents while also bringing schools to visit the recycling sites. He has already selected locations that could easily produce 100 tons per month of recycled materials. The end goal would be for retailers to pay for this recycling system as a way to have more customers.

Commissioner Timme asked if the end goal would also be for residents to no longer have recycling picked up at their homes.

Mr. James said it depends and would be the decision of the city.

Commissioner Timme commented that surely somewhere in the United States a community has already implemented this program. Other municipalities with this program, if they exist, could be used as a learning opportunity.

Mr. James said some places have small, expensive compactors but none are as cost-efficient.

Alderman Burger asked how often trucks would pick up recycling at the parking lot locations.

Mr. James responded that it would depend on how quickly bins fill up. Since the materials would be presorted upon arrival at the recycling facility, it would help the whole process be quicker and more profitable.

Mr. Dannenburg asked if compacting happens at the kiosks.

Mr. James responded that the machine would puncture and crush the materials.

Mr. Dannenburg asked if glass can be recycled and if the kiosks are tended by employees.

Mr. James said yes, glass can be recycled at these kiosks, and they will be tended to. The kiosks will open during work hours of the shopping centers they are located in.

Commissioner McElroy asked if once the cans are full, does a recycling truck get notified?

Mr. James answered that trucks would be on a rotating schedule and come more frequently depending on how full the bins are.

Commissioner Stone said being able to recycle glass would be the largest selling point for residents, since the city does not offer glass recycling. He then asked for the cost savings of this program.

Mr. James said costs would be cut in half per ton. He has gotten positive feedback from grocery stores' willingness to buy into these kiosks.

Commissioner Pramuk asked if glass would be broken and separated at the kiosks. He then asked if cardboard boxes would need to be broken down.

Mr. James said the glass would not need to be separated or broken. Since people will be bringing items in their car to recycle, they will only be able to recycle what breaks down to fit in their car. He concluded by saying seventy-six percent of recycling opportunities are missed at the household level. Most of Franklin's population lives in an apartment or condo, and this new recycling process can highly benefit those individuals.

#### **Motion**

Alderman Burger motioned to recommend this presentation to senior administration and the Board of Mayor and Alderman, with the condition that BOMA and the administrator are invited to see the kiosk prototype, seconded by Commissioner Pramuk.

The motion carried 8-0.

Mr. James said he would start working on a cost analysis.

**3. Fire Station 1 Pollinator Garden Installation**

**Sponsors:**

Kelly Dannenfels. Through a partnership with Atmos Energy and the Streets Department, the first Bee City pollinator garden has been installed at Fire Station 1. One can be viewed from Highway 96 West while the two other garden beds are located at the back of the property.

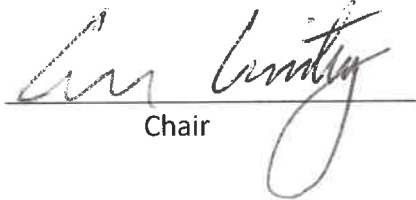
**OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Cassidy asked if there was any further business. There was none.

**ADJOURN**

A motion was made by Commissioner McElroy, seconded by Commissioner Stone, to adjourn. The motion carried 8-0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:59 AM.

  
Chair

  
Date