

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Environmental Board**

6:30 PM  
June 14, 2023

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.  
NW, Issaquah

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Board members:*

Jaimie Finch – Chair  
Nancy Davidson  
Anne Newcomb  
Prajakta Ghatpande  
Tom Anderson  
Alix Lee-Tigner  
Ashwin Kannan\*  
Joy Lewis  
Janet Wall

*Administration/Staff:*

Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability  
Manager  
David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator  
Tisha Gieser, City Clerk  
John Larson-Friend, Transportation Program  
Coordinator

Dixie Bair, Alternate

\*Youth/young adult members.

Don McQuilliams – Vice Chair (excused absence)  
Ashwin Manoharan\* (unexcused absence)

**CALL TO ORDER**

JAIME FINCH called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Chair introduced the minutes, which were included in the agenda materials. The minutes were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

- a) Minutes of May 10, 2023

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

At the end of the Board Meeting, JONATHAN SMITH provided public comment inviting the Environmental Board members to participate in monthly litter cleanup events. The next event is held on July 1<sup>st</sup> and these events are listed on Next Door and on Facebook. VYNNE MCKINSTRY offered to share additional information with board members.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- a) **Welcome New Board Members (I)**  
*Presented by:*  
*Jamie Finch, Board Chair*

FINCH welcomed new board members Dixie Bair and Alix Lee-Tigner and all attendees introduced themselves.

- b) **Open Government Training (I)**  
*Presented by:*

*Tisha Gieser, City Clerk*

GIESER summarized information about the Open Public Meetings Act and the Public Records Act. Information addressed included meeting requirements, public access, emailing, and public records. GIESER answered questions related to responding to e-mails and attending large events such as Salmon Days.

**c) King County Metro Shuttle Program (I)**

*Presented by:*

*John Larson-Friend, Transportation Coordinator*

*Meredith Sampson, King County Metro*

LARSON-FRIEND presented on the Metro Flex On-Demand Service in partnership with King County. SAMPSON shared the details about how the Metro Flex system works and the possible program in Issaquah. SAMPSON highlighted that the proposed Issaquah program would expand the current Sammamish zone to include Issaquah with one additional vehicle. Users would be able to travel between any two sites within the service area whether it be a transit center, a business, or a trailhead. SAMPSON clarified that 5 passengers are able to fit in each van. In response to a question on funding, SAMPSON noted that the Metro Flex program expansion in Issaquah would be funded by the City. Clarification was given around how the Metro Flex algorithm would address peak service demands.

**d) Climate Vulnerability Assessment Draft Policies (D)**

*Presented by:*

*Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability Manager*

VYNNE MCKINSTRY began by giving an overview of the Environmental Board's involvement and role in reviewing the policies from the Climate Vulnerability Assessment as well as the policies that will be included in the new Environment section of the Comprehensive Plan in the upcoming update. VYNNE MCKINSTRY discussed the background of the Climate Vulnerability Assessment and the findings, actions, and policies that came out of the assessment. The City of Issaquah is not currently required to create an Environment section of the Comprehensive Plan from House Bill 1181; however, the City has committed to pursuing this update regardless. After providing background information, VYNNE MCKINSTRY introduced the draft Climate Policies for high level discussion by the Board.

Board Members made overview comments including that the board would like to have significantly more time to dive into the climate and environment policies that will be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, Board Members DAVIDSON, FINCH, and LEWIS discussed the difficulty of reviewing climate policies separately from environmental policies. Board Members referenced earlier comments and experiences with the Title 18 process and the CIP process and noted that it would be helpful to take a holistic look at a topic, such as tree policy, from a climate and environmental standpoint.

VYNNE MCKINSTRY opened the floor for comments about the climate policies relating to the built environment and transportation. Board Member DAVIDSON noted that additional policies should be developed that focus on single family housing considering the prevalence of this type of housing in Issaquah. Board Members LEWIS and FINCH agreed with Board Member DAVIDSON and encouraged staff to consider additional comprehensive plan policies that will help Issaquah reach goals laid out in the Climate Action Plan, including building electrification, fleet electrification, missing middle housing, and purchasing policies.

Board Member DAVIDSON encouraged staff to consider additional policies that would address the use of single occupancy vehicles and traffic in Issaquah. Options could include bike and scooter sharing and policies that have staff think through how we build transit infrastructure such as encouraging traffic circles. Board Member NEWCOMB suggested encouraging telework with local business to help the City meet climate goals and reduce congestion. Board member LEWIS also noted that we could add policies that support complete neighborhoods that have all the services people need so that they are less frequently required to drive to services such as grocery stores. Board Member NEWCOMB also noted that the City

should consider the use of our public buildings to ensure that we are using the space to its full capacity or exploring options to surplus buildings we do not need.

VYNNE MCKINSTRY introduced the climate policies related to green space, tree canopy and sensitive ecosystems. Board Member LEWIS highlighted that the topic of defining trees and our policies around trees in specific circumstances (such as if a solar system is being installed) can be very complicated and therefore Issaquah should have strong policies and recommendations in place to support trees. Additionally, Board Member LEWIS recommended that staff and the Environmental Board discuss additional development standards such as reducing the prevalence of lawns. Board Member NEWCOMB expressed appreciation for the integration of fire preventiveness policies throughout the Comprehensive Plan policies brought to the board.

Board Member LEE-TIGNER, supported by Board Member LEWIS, noted that the policies could be improved by additional emphasis on wetland and riparian areas as resilient systems. Recommendations included working with private landowners to improve habitat on their land and improving community partnerships to protect and enhance wetlands and riparian areas. Board Member NEWCOMB noted appreciation for the color-coded system; however, noted that staff should take another look at whether heatwaves and warmer temperatures will have a serious impact on water resources. Board Member LEWIS suggested that additional water policies should be added such as monitoring groundwater recharge areas. She noted that policies could address water consumption which will help ensure that water resources are less strained in the future. Additionally, Board Member LEWIS highlighted that the risk to the sewer system should be classified as more at risk in the CVA based on her work with the water department. Policies to strengthen wetland and water resource protections could help secure funding that is necessary for wetland studies.

VYNNE MCKINSTRY introduced the final section for the June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting related to public health climate policies. Board Member BAIR encouraged the adoption of more policies specifically related to education as many of these policies are related to the actions of community members. Board Member LEWIS agreed and noted that this could be an opportunity to increase the amount of community engagement. Options could include adding more neighborhood liaisons or considering other ways to get community members involved in their local government. Board Member GHATPANDE suggested carbon or sustainability incentives to increase community engagements and reach more businesses and residents. Board Member FINCH appreciated the prevalence of recycling and compost policies highlighted in the climate policies to integrate.

VYNNE MCKINSTRY noted that staff will take the feedback provided by board members and identify a plan for engagement with the board moving forward.

## **REPORTS**

- a) LEED for Cities Certification

VYNNE MCKINSTRY noted that Issaquah received LEED Gold certifications within the LEED for Cities program. Board members will receive an invitation to the LEED celebration event on July 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a) Updated Board Schedule

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 PM.