



## **SUMMARY**

Climate Protection Action Committee  
Monthly Appointee Meeting  
Friday, June 5, 2026 9 a.m.  
Hybrid meeting: In-person & Teams

Appointees Present: Cameron Cohran, Joyce Rose-Harris, Ben Marosites, Bob Petrulis, Julie Seel, Dennis Wiehl.

Appointees Absent (both excused): Gretchen Lambert, Dave Voyles

Guests and Staff: Mary Pat Baldauf, Kappy Hubbard, Priscilla Preston, Clint Shealy, Samantha Yager

Chairman Cameron Cohran called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Dennis Wiehl made a motion that the May meeting summary be approved. Bob Petrulis seconded it, and the motion was approved.

Assistant City Manager Clint Shealy provided the following updates:

- He thanked Cameron for his presentation to the Health, Social and Environmental Committee meeting in late May. He said that the report was well-received by attendees.
- Regarding an update on the energy audit piece, internal Program Manager David Marcus will be updating the HSEA Committee at their Tuesday, June 23 meeting at 11 a.m. in the Myor's Conference Room. He said this will be an interesting update for the Committee and CPAC as well.
- He noted that the solar farm at the Wastewater Treatment Plant will be moving to Council agenda for approval on Tuesday, June 9. The total contract value is about \$ eight and a half million, partly driven by location and having to elevate the equipment and solar panels out of the flood plain. The Inflation Reduction Act tax benefits will provide \$3.5 millions savings; the CPRG grant will kick in during construction to pay 60% of the balance. In the end, Clint explained, we'll pay a little over \$two million for the solar farm and will get a significantly good return on investment.
- For canal improvements, we're about a year away from substantial completion of construction. The project is on schedule to finish in July 2027, and we will be

testing equipment in May and June of next year. That is an important piece of recovering and restoring balance.

- On replacing the headgates, workplans must first be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for approval. The contract has been awarded, but it will take a few months of work to mobilize to begin construction.
- A package for the canal embankment repair is sitting in Procurement's hands. It will be released to the public in June and we'll start receiving bids in August.
- The design project to replace hydroelectric plant generators with more efficient turbines and electrical gear is separate from the embankment recovery to save money on contractors. It will bid in about a year, but the work will happen concurrently with the embankment repair.

Next up, CPAC updates. Reportbacks included the Bee City tabling at Columbia Green's Festival of Gardens and the HSEA Committee meeting. Joyce reported that the festival was well-attended and that the Bee City table received a lot of interest. Cameron reported that he presented on CPAC's activities of the past year, then Bob walked through the Smart Growth subcommittee's list of 10 Smart Growth principles they support for the City of Columbia.

The distribution list for Speaking Sustainability was increased by 15% during the Earth Day Climate Action Fair. In June, 986 people received the newsletter, and there was a 49% open rate, which will increase as the month progressed. The link open rate was 10%; the most popular link was the Ag and Art Tour. Mary Pat has cleaned up the distribution list, removing about 100 non-working addresses, but reported that as a rule, as one reader unsubscribes, three new ones join.

Jory was unable to attend this morning's meeting, but sent an update that the Climate Conversations Mini Grant is being re-released and is on the website.

With Dave's absence, there was no official Urban Farming subcommittee report. Mary Pat reported there will be a Bee City table at the Richland County Planning and Development Block Party on Thursday, June 25 at the Garners Ferry Adult Center. Mary Pat is recruiting volunteers to assist with the table staffing and asked interested members to contact her. Joyce indicated an interest in attending.

For the Smart Growth subcommittee, Dennis summarized a Free Times article about South Carolina's growing population and explained how that interfaced with the subcommittee's work. A brief discussion followed. Bob suggested that this would be a good topic for the next working committee meeting, which occurs in August.

#### Staff Updates:

Sustainability Facilitator Mary Pat Baldauf referred the group to a handout that she distributed yesterday and highlighted World Environment Day and an invasive plant cleanup on a vacant lot on West Buchanan Street this afternoon at 5:30 p.m. She also reported that there will be a Bee City table at the Richland County Planning and Development Block Party on Thursday, June 25 at the Garners Ferry Adult Center. She is recruiting volunteers to assist and asked interested members to contact her. Joyce indicated an interest in attending.

Public Works Director Robert Anderson said that “young Samantha,” the Public Works intern, started her new job on Tuesday and reported that Public Works prepared her well on “becoming an adult.” He also announced that Solid Waste Superintendent Samantha Yager has been appointed by the Governor to serve on the SC Department of Commerce’s Recycling Market Development Adviosry Council and that he looks forward to having her present updates at the CPAC appointee meetings.

Samantha Yager gave an update on a RMDAC meeting she attended yesterday, a Regional Roundtable with local governments and industry partners. There was discussion on how businesses want to share usable waste products instead of disposing of them, but that the liability for donations hindered them. The group discussed ways the guidelines could be loosened to encourage exchanges between industries.

In new business/old business, local Climate Matters chair Bob Petrusis shared a new resource from Climate Matters, Climate Trace, an open-source technology tools that tracks greenhouse gas emissions with unprecedented detail and speed. Bob demonstrated how the tool operates and encouraged everyone to explore it more at <https://climatetrace.org/>

Cameron then reminded members that the City has a local climate action plan, which is a good resource for items the City identified at the beginning of the climate action planning process. He encouraged members to review the plan, located at [https://cpac.columbiasc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/CURRENT\\_Action-Plan.pdf](https://cpac.columbiasc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/CURRENT_Action-Plan.pdf).

Cameron announced the next two meetings:

CPAC Working Meeting, Friday, June 26, 9 a.m.

CPAC Appointee Meeting, Friday, July 10, 9 to 10:30 a.m. (*Featuring speakers from the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, The Sustainability Institute and Clean Energy Fund of the Carolinas.*)

Hearing no other announcements, Cameron asked if anyone had a motion to adjourn. Dennis made the official motion, seconded by Bob. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.