

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: February 19, 2020	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Gary Schroeher (Chair), Robert Winkler	
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT	Rick Johnston	
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS		
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and added 7g. Paperless commission packets discussion, and East Metro Meeting under 7d. Commission member updates. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Winkler, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried, vote 5/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) January 15, 2020 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the January 15, 2020 draft minutes and had no changes. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to approve the January 15, 2020 minutes as presented. Motion carried, vote 5/0.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

Ashley Oстераas, Zan Associates and Mariah Quick, Health Educator, Ramsey County were in attendance to present the new Ramsey County Recycling Ambassador program and to solicit feedback to help shape the program. Mariah will be in charge of the program. Recycling ambassadors serve as a volunteer resource for recycling and solid waste by engaging with community events, promoting wise waste management, and supporting the county's goals and strategic direction. To become a recycling ambassador, participants will be required to attend classes to learn about topics such as home composting, food scraps recycling, recycling processes, household hazardous waste, repair and reuse, yard waste, and waste reduction. Mariah ask the commission members what other topics might be of interest. Commission members discussed other topics such as what can't be recycled and why, and to include a tour of a recycling facility. Mariah asked what would be the ideal class length and location. Commission members responded that 6, 3-hour sessions would be appropriate, with some flexibility to attend a video class if necessary. Class locations could include community centers or Ramsey County libraries. Consider access to public transportation when choosing a location. When asked what might motivate people to participate in the program, commission members suggested a gift certificate, tee shirt, or recognition at a County Commission meeting. Mariah and Ashley stated that they hope to start offering the program this year, depending on if they can gather enough feedback.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Goose Lake alum treatment

Staff reported that the Goose Lake Alum Treatment grant will be considered for approval at a special meeting of the VLAWMO Board of Managers, with the date of the meeting yet to be determined. The commission members discussed whether or not to provide support for acceptance of the grant.

Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Commissioner Greenleaf, that Commissioner Johnston send a letter in support of VLAWMO accepting the Goose Lake alum treatment grant, addressed to Council Member Jones, and copy Council Member Walsh. Motion carried, vote 5/0.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) CSM efficient energy use action items

Staff created a draft list of efficient energy use action items for City operations, private sector, and alliances and partnerships. The list was compiled from existing local Climate Action Plans. A technical advisory committee made up of City staff and a representative from Trane reviewed the action items and provided comments. The draft list of action items will be presented to the CSM steering committee for review next month. Staff asked the commission to review the action items and provide comments to staff or Chair Schroeder prior to the March CSM Steering Committee.

Chair Schroeder discussed the Shoreview water tracking app and suggested adding this project to the CSM action item list.

7. DISCUSSION

a) Minneapolis plastic bag ban

Commissioner Greenleaf provided information on the City of Minneapolis plastic bag ban. The City bans retail establishments from providing plastic bags to customers. Paper bags and compostable bags are allowed; however, retail establishments providing bags must charge at least 5 cents per bag. Commissioner Greenleaf would like the City of White Bear Lake to consider a similar ban or fee. She offered to continue researching plastic bag bans and will summarize her findings in a memo.

b) Spring newsletter

Staff asked the commission members for newsletter article ideas. Chair Schroeder wrote an article about pollinator pathways that he would like included in the newsletter. Other ideas discussed include a 'spotlight on sustainability' article showcasing a local sustainable business, and promoting the adopt a drain program.

c) Staff updates

- Watershed Based Implementation Funding grant program

Staff attended a watershed-based funding program meeting as part of the Mississippi East watershed, one of ten Twin Cities major watersheds. As an alternative to competitive grant-based funding, BWSR will allocate funds to each of the ten watersheds. The purpose of the meeting was to create a subcommittee that will meet over the next year to determine how to prioritize projects within the watershed for funding. Two volunteers will represent cities in the decision-making process. White Bear Lake will be an alternate subcommittee member.

- 4th and Otter iron enhanced sand filter project

Staff provided a brief update on the 4th and Otter Iron Enhanced sand filter project. A contractor has been selected and construction is planned for this spring.

d) Commission member updates

- Environmental Commissions Gathering for Ramsey & Anoka County Cities

Commissioner Bolstad reported on the Environmental Commission gathering hosted by Alliance for Sustainability. Representatives from White Bear Lake, Mahtomedi, Shoreview, North Oaks, Stillwater, Eagan, Forest Lake, and others were in attendance. There were breakout sessions on transportation/land use, energy supply, and buildings. One goal of the meeting was to determine opportunities for collaboration.

- Metro Environmental Commission gathering
Chair Schroeher stated that the Metro Environmental Commission gathering will be held on April 18, 2020. He will send out a notice about the event.
- HES Inter-City Contest
The Home Energy Squad is hosting an inter-city contest to see who can sign up the most home energy audits. Commission members are interested participating in the contest and suggested promoting the contest in the spring newsletter.

e) Do-outs

Bonnie reported that refrigerator and freezer coated cardboard packaging and dryer sheets are not compostable and therefore are not accepted at the food scraps collection sites. These items should be thrown in the trash. She also reported that staples are to be removed from tea bags before composting.

New do-out items for February 19, 2020 include:

- Commission member Greenleaf will research Minneapolis bag ban
- Commission members to review energy efficient action items and email any feedback to staff or Chair Schroeher by mid-March
- Staff to include the following articles in the spring newsletter: pollinator write-up from Chair Schroeher, 'spotlight on sustainability' showcasing a local sustainable business, adopt a drain program, and HES contest.
- Staff to add water use tracking app to CSM action items

f) March agenda

The next meeting will be held at City Hall on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 6:30pm.

g) Paperless commission packets

Commissioner Bolstad proposed that the Environmental Advisory Commission go paperless, starting with the March meeting packet. She asked staff to send a reminder for commission members to bring a laptop to the March meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Green moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. Motion carried, vote 5/0.