

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: April 15, 2020	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Rick Johnston, Gary Schroehner (Chair), Robert Winkler	
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT		
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS		
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:46 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and added 7f yard waste discussion. Staff added Recycling Ambassador Program under 7b staff updates. Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to approve the agenda as amended.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Absent
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Aye
Schroehner: Aye
Winkler: Absent

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) February 19, 2020 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the February 19, 2020 draft minutes and had no changes.

Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Commissioner Greenleaf, to approve the February 19, 2020 minutes as presented.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Absent
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Abstain
Schroehner: Aye
Winkler: Absent

Motion carried.

Two commissioners joined the meeting

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Work plan high priority goals

Commission members discussed marketing the adopt a drain program in the spring newsletter and on the City website, and to have staff draft a list of next steps for the downtown area recycling project.

Staff reported that a 'Spotlight on Sustainability' article will be included in the spring newsletter. The article will spotlight a local business that installed rooftop solar. Commission members discussed creating a certificate for businesses and residents who have been spotlighted in the newsletter.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Environmental Resources Expo

Chair Schroeher asked about hanging an Expo banner across 4th Street. Staff stated that it may require Public Works staff and equipment to hang a banner above the street, and with limited setup time that it may not be feasible. Staff will ask Public Works about the logistics.

The commission members discussed tent weight options to secure tents from the wind. Commission members decided to collect milk jugs and fill them with sand or water.

Commissioner Greene is interested in having battery powered lawn equipment at the Expo and creating a fact sheet about the benefits of electric powered lawn equipment. Chair Schroeher offered to display his battery powered lawn equipment. Commissioner Johnston suggested inviting Toro to exhibit their battery powered equipment. Staff mentioned that the Parks Department received a grant to purchase battery powered landscape equipment and will look up what brand of equipment they plan to purchase.

Staff asked if the commission members would like to invite a local bike club to exhibit at the Expo. Commission members discussed and decided not to invite the bike club because their mission is only borderline applicable.

Commission members asked if Marketfest decided on a date to announce if they are cancelling the event. Staff stated that to date, Marketfest has not been postponed or cancelled. Commission members decided to wait until after the May EAC meeting to start contacting exhibitors.

7. DISCUSSION

a) Dog waste issue along Lake Ave

A resident alerted the City about dog waste along the Lake Ave walking path. The resident asked if there is a fine for those who don't pick up their dog's droppings, and also suggested that signs be posted every 4 blocks as to the fine and have a post with plastic bags for those who don't carry them. Staff is bringing this issue to the Environmental Advisory Commission for further consideration and discussion. Commissioner Bolstad stated that she sees a lot of dog walkers on the trail and the vast majority pick up the dog waste. Those that don't may have forgotten to bring a bag with them. She suggested providing more bag stations, possibly at West Park and on the other end of the trail closer to Shady Lane.

Commissioner Greenleaf stated that dog DNA sampling exists and submitting DNA could be part of the City's dog license application requirement.

Commission members also discussed providing more trash cans along the trail, installing cameras, and re-educating the public by placing an article in the White Bear Press and the City Newsletter.

b) Staff updates

- Goose Lake alum treatment

Staff reported that the VLAWMO Board approved accepting the Clean Water Grant to fund the Goose Lake alum treatment project. Commissioner Johnston added that Council Member Jones, as a representative of the VLAWMO board, gave his full endorsement of the project for numerous reasons: alum treatment is the most cost effective method to restore the ecological health of the lake; watershed based options are far more costly and much less effective; restoring the water quality of Goose Lake also benefits downstream waterbodies; and it is VLAWMO's mission to protect and restore water quality. Staff will provide updates as the project moves forward.

- Pollinator plantings

Staff reported that Parks staff met recently to review the meeting notes of the joint Parks and Environmental commission meeting and to discuss next steps. The group identified Lakewood Park and Rotary Park as priority areas for restoration efforts within the next couple of years. Staff plans to ultimately create a longer-term restoration plan.

- Event changes

Staff reported that the City spring cleanup day is cancelled, and that many other programs and events are postponed: curb-side yard waste, clearstream loan program, Mayor's water challenge, Trash to Treasure, and Xcel Energy Home Energy Squad visits.

- Recycling Ambassador Program

Staff reported that Ramsey County is conducting a listening session on the recycling ambassador program and household hazardous waste program. The listening session will consist of a broad overview of the existing programs and the opportunity to give feedback. Upon completion of the session, all participants will receive a \$25 gift card in the mail as compensation for their time. The online listening session is April 16 from 2-3:30pm and again at 5:30-7pm. Staff provided a link to the meeting if any commission members are interested in attending.

c) Commission member updates

- 2020 Environmental Commission Conference

Chair Schroeher gave an update on the conference held on April 4th. The conference was changed to a web-based format and focused on Climate Action Plans. Representatives from Redwing, St Louis Park, MPCA and CEE spoke on climate change and what is being done at the state and City levels. The event organizers hope to have an in-person event in the fall.

d) Do-outs

New do-out items for April 15, 2020 include:

- Staff to update Adopt a Drain page on the City's website
- Staff to draft a list of next steps for downtown recycling container project
- All to save milk jugs to use for tent weights at the Environmental Resources Expo
- Staff to ask Public Works about hanging an Expo banner across 4th Street
- Staff to look up brand of battery powered City lawn equipment

e) May agenda

The next meeting will be held at City Hall on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 6:30pm.

f) Yard waste

Commissioner Johnston stated that he contacted the trash hauler call center to check on the status of curbside yard waste pickup. They said they didn't know and to hold the yard waste and they would eventually pick it all up. He reported that a neighbor had recently called them and had been told to throw the yard waste in the trash.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Greene, to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeder: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.