

# City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

## MINUTES

Date: May 20, 2020	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Rick Johnston, Gary Schroeher (Chair), Robert Winkler	
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT		
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS	Beth Markhart, Lawns to Legumes Coach	
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm.

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes. Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Commissioner Greene, to approve the agenda as presented.

#### Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Absent

Schroeher: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### a) April 15, 2020 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the April 15, 2020 draft minutes, and Rick Johnston in an email added language to item 7f. Yard Waste to state that the trash hauler call center "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". Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Chair Schroeher, to approve the April 15, 2020 minutes as amended.

#### Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Absent

Schroeher: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.

*Commissioner joined the meeting*

**4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS**

Beth Markhart – Lawns to Legumes program. Beth introduced herself and described the Lawns to Legumes Program. The program is a state initiative that funds individual and community level grants to convert lawns to pollinator friendly native plant gardens, bee lawns, native woodlands, or prairies. The program is funded through this year, and the program hopes to provide funding into next year. Beth lives in the City of White Bear Lake and she was asked to be a Lawns to Legumes coach. In this role, she provides support for grant recipients and helps to guide their project and answer questions. Commission members asked what the EAC can do, and if they can apply for a grant. Beth stated that the EAC can help market the program and also identify a neighborhood that might want to apply for a community grant. The next round of community grant funds will be available this fall. A 25% grant match is required. Beth offered to support the City through the community grant process. Chair Schroeher mentioned that he would like to see a pollinator demonstration project in the City. Commissioner Greenleaf suggested the fire station at County Road E as one possible location. She also suggested that staff discuss this program with the Parks Commission.

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) Environmental Resources Expo – July 30th

Staff stated that the Marketfest coordinator set aside the July 30<sup>th</sup> Marketfest for the Environmental Resource Expo. Commission members discussed whether or not to hold the Expo at Marketfest this year due to Covid-19 risks to exhibitors and the public. Commissioner Greene requested that staff ask the organizer if the Expo space will be useful for other vendors. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnston, to delay the Expo until 2021 and to direct staff to contact the Marketfest coordinator.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeher: Aye

Winkler: Abstain

Motion carried.

Commission members discussed contacting last year’s exhibitors about the cancellation and to invite them to the 2021 Expo. In lieu of the Expo, a regular monthly meeting will be scheduled on July 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

b) Work plan high priority goals

- Expo exhibit upgrades: tent weights, banner, battery powered lawn equipment displays  
The commission members discussed exhibit upgrades for the 2021 Expo, and decided to revisit this goal in the fall.
- Downtown area recycling containers  
Staff has an email in to the County asking if they still offer a public space recycling container grant.
- Pollinator plantings on City property  
Staff reported that budget discussions will begin in the next month for 2021. Staff will consider adding a restoration project to the 2021 budget for discussion. Earlier this spring, Parks staff identified Lakewood Park as a priority area for a woodland and prairie restoration.

- Zero waste City events

Staff reported that with no City events planned for this year, compostable products have not been ordered yet.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**7. DISCUSSION**

a) Staff updates

- Pollinator pathways map

Staff reported that the pollinator pathway survey is on the website. The survey allows White Bear Lake property owners to add information about their pollinator gardens. The survey will be linked to an interactive map showing the location of the gardens. A link to the map will be added to the website in the next couple of weeks. Staff also reported that VLAWMO scheduled a resilient yards workshop on June 11<sup>th</sup>, and will email a link to the event.

- Raingarden program

Staff stated that three properties are moving forward with a curb cut raingarden as part of the 2020 street rehabilitation projects. 16 properties were interested in a raingarden, but only three were a good fit.

b) Commission member updates

Commission member Bolstad reported that Cub and Festival have temporarily postponed their plastic bag recycling program. Kowalski's still accepts plastic bags for recycling.

Commissioner Bolstad stated that she hasn't heard back from the High School Environmental Club about a student delegate. She will reach out to club again to see if there is still interest.

c) Do-outs

New do-out items for May 20, 2020 include:

- Staff to contact Park Commission liaison to discuss the Lawns to Legumes program
- Staff to contact Marketfest coordinator to cancel the Expo for 2020 and ask if this provides more space for Marketfest vendors
- Commission members and staff to contact respective Expo exhibitors to let them know about cancellation and to welcome them to consider exhibiting in 2021
- Schedule a July EAC meeting
- Staff to schedule meeting with Public Works to discuss downtown recycling containers
- Staff to purchase compostable products for City events
- Staff to email link to VLAWMO's resilient yards workshop

d) June agenda

The next meeting will be held via Webex on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 6:30pm.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeder: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.