

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: June 17, 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	None	
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS	None	
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Aye
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Aye
Schroeher: Aye
Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) May 20, 2020 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the May 20, 2020 draft minutes. Chair Schroeher revised item 7b Commission Member Updates to state that Kowalski's still accepts plastic bags for recycling. Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnston, to approve the May 20, 2020 minutes as amended.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Aye
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Aye
Schroeher: Aye
Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Work plan high priority goals

- Expo exhibit upgrades
Commission members discussed postponing the expo upgrade discussion until later this year. Chair Schroeder asked if anyone has contacted their respective exhibitors to let them know that the Expo will not be held this year. Most exhibitors have not been contacted yet. Commission members decided to leave it up to each member whether or not they wanted to contact the exhibitors.
- Downtown area recycling containers
Taillon mentioned that she is waiting to hear back from Ramsey County about any available grants to cover the cost of recycling bins in the Downtown area.
- Pollinator plantings on City property
Commission members discussed next steps for pollinator plantings on City property. Taillon will add a line item in budget for pollinator planting projects, and consider funding a pollinator project in Lakewood Park in 2021.
- Zero waste City events
Commission members discussed converting City events, such as the volunteer appreciation dinner, to zero waste by using compostable products. Taillon stated that she will look into creating a 2021 budget item for purchasing compostable products for City use. Commission members discussed the WEAC budget and asked staff to include a budget discussion at the July meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS

None

7. DISCUSSION

a) Staff updates

- Cty E and Bellaire testing
Taillon stated that they are waiting for a report from the MPCA and will have more information at the July meeting.
- Marketfest
Taillon reported that Marketfest has been cancelled for the year due to the pandemic. The parade and fireworks have been postponed to August.
- 4th and Otter IESF
Taillon presented a photo of the completed iron enhanced sand filter at 4th and Otter. VLAWMO will create an educational sign for the site and continue to restore the wooded area adjacent to the filter.
- Pollinator pathways map
Taillon reported that the pollinator pathways interactive map on the City's website is complete. A link to map is located on the City's website under services, natural resources, pollinators. Residents can enter information about their pollinator gardens the website and the map will automatically be populated. In response to the newsletter article, many residents have been adding their pollinator gardens to the map.
- Home Energy Squad contest
Taillon mentioned that the City is part of a contest to see which City can get the most residents to sign up for a home energy squad visit in 2020. Staff plans to market the contest on the City's website, social media and local paper.

b) Commission member updates

- Plastics article (Chair Schroeher)
Chair Schroeher shared an article in the Sunday paper on micro plastics and reducing plastic use. The article stated that researchers are conducting air samples in remote areas and finding microplastics in dust particles. Commissioner Greene mentioned that his colleagues at the MN Department of Health are studying the toxicology of microplastics. Commissioner Greenleaf stated that she is still interested in moving forward with a plastic bag ban, and will report about the Minneapolis bag ban at a future meeting. Commissioner Greene stated that so much of this issue is about individual consumer choice.

- Goose Lake Alum Treatment (Commissioner Johnston)
Commissioner Johnston gave a summary of the May 27, 2020 VLAWMO Board meeting discussion on the Goose Lake alum treatment project. The Board was presented with two options. Option 1 would be to accept the clean water grant, and Option 2 would be to authorize staff to pursue an adaptive management approach. Accepting the grant would allow for more outside revenue for project implementation in years 2020- 22 and would potentially allow for project implementation earlier; however, option 1 does not allow VLAWMO the ability to respond to possible future financial and scientific uncertainties throughout the fifteen-year assurance period, and the related amount of short to long term term costs borne solely by VLAWMO without the ability to adapt or manage project costs. Option 2 allows for an adaptive management process which is used by many watershed districts in managing shallow lakes. This will allow for management flexibility throughout the life of the whole lake management program and will allow the Board to manage cost as it implements and would not require the Board lock in to a contractually obligated mandate as defined in the BWSR assurance document for 15 years. The Board voted to approve pursuing option 2. The tentative timeline for option 2 is to conduct stakeholder engagement in late 2020, implement bullhead harvest in 2021 and an alum treatment in 2022, then monitor and evaluate the results in 2022-2023 and reassess and adaptively management based on those results.

- Student delegate (Commissioner Bolstad)
Commissioner Bolstad contacted the high school environmental club faculty leader about having a student delegate serve on the commission. The faculty leader will reach out to the three students who will be seniors this year to gage interest. Commission members decided to wait until fall to have the students submit an application to the Mayor. The commission members also agreed that the student must live in White Bear Lake. Commissioner Bolstad will contact the faculty leader to discuss next steps. Commission members will brainstorming ideas for the student delegate at the July EAC meeting.

c) Do-outs

New do-out items for June 17, 2020 include:

- Commissioner Bolstad to contact the high school environmental club and have students interested in being a student delegate on the EAC to fill out an application in the fall. The student must be a resident of White Bear Lake.
- Staff to add the EAC budget, home energy squad contest, and student delegate duties on the July agenda.
- Staff to add a line item in the 2021 City budget for compostable products and pollinator planting at Lakewood Park for discussion purposes.

d) July agenda

Include a discussion regarding duties of a student delegate, home energy squad contest, and EAC budget on the July agenda. The next meeting will be held via WebEx on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 6:30pm.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnston to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeder: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.