

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: July 15, 2020	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Rick Johnston, Gary Schroeber (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 6:34 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes. Taillon added household hazardous waste mobile site to item 7c. Staff updates. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnston, to approve the agenda as amended.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeber: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) June 17, 2020 regular meeting

Commission members postponed approval of the June 17, 2020 minutes until the August meeting to allow for more time to review.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Work plan high priority goals

Commission members discussed fall newsletter articles, and asked staff to include articles about the food scraps drop-off site, interactive pollinator map, spotlight on sustainability, adopt-a-drain program, and the fall cleanup.

Commissioner members asked if the fall cleanup is cancelled. Taillon stated that it is still scheduled for the first Saturday in October.

Commissioner Johnston mentioned that the food scraps dumpster is leaking onto the ground and asked if

someone could look into cleaning it up and to find possible solutions to the problem. Taillon stated that she will work with the County and Public Works to clean up the site and brainstorm possible solutions.

Taillon noted that she received a grant application from the County for the downtown recycling bins. She will schedule a meeting with the Parks Department to discuss next steps.

Chair Schroeder discussed locations for pollinator plantings, including behind the YMCA and at Varney. He also mentioned that more pollinator gardens have been added to the interactive pollinator map.

b) Zero waste events – *Action item*

Commission members discussed recommending a City policy to minimize waste by prioritizing recyclable and compostable products for City events and City buildings, and to work with event coordinators for Marketfest and other events to become zero waste. Commission members will draft a motion for discussion and vote at the August meeting. Taillon offered to email an example motion as a starting point.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) EAC budget

The commission members brainstormed ideas for upgrading the 2021 Expo exhibit, including four feather flag banners to advertise the Expo. Chair Schroeder offered to research pricing and report back at the August meeting. Commission members also discussed purchasing a rain barrel, LED lights, or Home Energy Squad visit in 2020 for a giveaway at the Expo or separate event.

7. DISCUSSION

a) Student delegate duties

Commissioner Bolstad stated that she emailed the faculty advisor to let her know that so far none of the students in the Environmental Club have expressed interest in joining the commission as a student delegate. She also mentioned in the email that any interested student could wait until fall to join.

The commission members discussed specific roles of the student delegate. Commissioner Greenleaf stated that past student delegates have been voting members and have served as chair. Commission members agreed that the student delegate share the work of the Environmental Commission with the school, and vice versa to get a sense of what the Environmental Advisory Commission could do to help students.

b) Home energy squad contest

Taillon noted that the Center for Energy and Environment reported the current standings of cities participating in the Home Energy Squad (HES) challenge on their website. Since June, 19 WBL residents have signed up for a HES visit, putting White Bear lake in 9th place out of 16 cities based on per capita visits. Staff plans to announce the challenge in the City newsletter and White Bear Press this fall.

c) Staff updates

- Cty E and Bellaire testing

Taillon provided an update on the MPCA testing schedule. The vapor intrusion testing is complete to the north, with results below regulatory criteria. Testing is not completed to the east, south, and west. Right-of-way sampling will be completed in 2020-2021 to determine if more sampling is required to the south. The MPCA hopes to complete all of the sampling in 2021, depending on if or when access is granted on private property.

- Construction updates

Taillon stated that phase 1 of the Walser Polar Chevrolet shoreline restoration and iron enhanced sand filter has been seeded and planted. Phase 2, which is the eastern two-thirds of the site, will be final graded and planted possibly later this year.

Taillon also noted that the County Road F raingarden retrofit project is now complete. The rainguardians have been installed and the raingardens mulched.

- Household hazardous waste mobile site

Taillon noted that the Ramsey County household hazardous waste mobile site will be at the WBL High School-North Campus on Fridays and Saturdays through the end of July. The mobile site is located in the west parking lot on 12th street off of Bald Eagle.

d) Commission member updates

Commission members discussed enhancing their role as an advisory committee to City Council. One possibly opportunity is to be more involved in the development review variance process, similar to a Planning Commission. Other ideas discussed included a more aggressive role regarding ordinances, such as banning plastic bags and solar requirements. Chair Schroeher offered to research the roles of other Environmental Commissions and report back at a future meeting.

Commission members mentioned that Chair Schroeher and Commissioner Greene's term was up on June 30, 2020. Both commissioner's expressed interest in extending their term for another three years. Staff will contact the Mayor and update the roster.

Commissioner Greenleaf noted that the WBL Methodist Church switched to Republic Services and added organics recycling.

e) Do-outs

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

- Staff to include the following articles in the fall newsletter: food scraps drop-off site, pollinator map, spotlight on sustainability, adopt-a-drain program
- Staff to contact County and Public Works a regarding the leaking food scraps dumpster
- Staff to email draft motion to commissioners recommending a policy for City sponsored events to be zero waste
- Chair Schroeher to research expo banners and report back on cost at the August meeting
- Chair Schroeher to research the roles of other Environmental Commissions
- Staff to extend term for Chair Schroeher and Commissioner Greene through June 30, 2023

f) August agenda

Include EAC budget, zero waste events, and 2022 work plan on the August agenda. The next meeting will be held via WebEx on Wednesday, August 19, 2020 at 6:30pm.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Greene to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeher: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Motion carried.