

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: February 17, 2021	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	Valeria Diaz, Sage Durdle	
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS	Paul Bolstad, Professor UMN, Depts of Forest Resources and Geography Keely Cervantes, Conservation Minnesota	
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Aye
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Aye
Schroeher: Aye
Winkler: Aye
Diaz: Absent
Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) January 20, 2021 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the January 20, 2021 draft minutes and had no changes. Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Greenleaf, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2021 meeting as presented.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Aye
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Aye
Schroeher: Aye
Winkler: Aye
Diaz: Absent
Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

Paul Bolstad from the UMN Depts of Forest Resources and Geography was in attendance to discuss air quality monitoring. Mr. Bolstad presented information about the hazards of poor air quality, noting that deaths due to poor air quality are far greater than realized, with up to 200,000 deaths per year in the U.S. He stated that fine particulate matter is attributed to poor air quality, with diesel exhaust being the largest source.

Mr. Bolstad asked the commission members if they would consider increasing awareness of fine particulate pollution and installing air sensors in the White Bear Lake area, specifically near freeways where the exposure to fine particulates is higher. He explained that up to five sensors are available to install at no cost. The hockey-puck sized sensors should be placed under an eave and require a power source and a Wi-Fi connection, as these sensors are connected to a worldwide web-based network. Mr. Bolstad offered to work with the Environmental Advisory Commission to install the sensors. Commission members discussed possible locations on City buildings near highways, such as City Hall, Public Works, and the Sports Center. Taillon will investigate these options and report back at the March meeting. Chair Schroeher and Commissioner Greenleaf offered to install sensors on their own homes.

Keeley Cervantes from Conservation Minnesota was in attendance to announce that the rulemaking process for clean car standards concludes in the middle of March. She stated that the general public can comment on the rule making process, and asked if the Environmental Advisory Commission would be interested in writing an op-ed in the White Bear Press and also signing on with a letter of support. The commission members stated that they will read over the information that Keeler provided, but most likely the support will come from individual members instead of the commission.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) 2021 Work Plan

- Downtown area recycling

Taillon introduced a rendering of the proposed trash and recycling containers for the downtown area. Taillon noted that she plans to submit the renderings to the County for a review of the recycling logos and to ask about possible grant funding. She will provide an update at the March meeting. Commission members discussed recycling labeling and stated that the labels should be simple with clear instructions, and to limit the types of recycling to bottles and cans only.

- Plastic bag ban

Commissioner Greenleaf presented her research on plastic bag bans in Minnesota and provided examples of feedback from businesses on the proposed bans. She mentioned that the first step in the process may be to talk with the local businesses. She also plans to talk with the City of Minneapolis about their process. Chair Schroeher volunteered to contact the county to get their thoughts. Commission members discussed creating a display for the Environmental Resources expo that would show how many bags a family of 4 uses every year.

b) 2021 budget

Taillon stated that the feather flags will be ordered soon, leaving approximately \$200 left in the budget for 2021.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) 2021 Marketfest exhibitors

Tabled until the March 17, 2020 meeting

b) EAC website description

Commission members reviewed the draft Environmental Advisory Commission website description that was drafted by Commissioner Johnston and had no changes. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Greene, to accept the language crafted by Commissioner Johnston and to have staff add the language on the Environmental Advisory Commission page of the City's website.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroehler: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Diaz: Absent

Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.

7. DISCUSSION

a) Staff updates

- Adopt-a-Drain annual report for WBL

Staff presented the 2020 adopt a drain annual report for White Bear Lake. There are 69 participants, with 24 new participants in 2020. Chair Schroehler stated that he would like to see more participants.

b) Commission member updates

Commissioner Johnston noted that Chair Schroehler presented the Zero Waste Policy to City Council, and that the Policy was approved. He and Commissioner Greenleaf were also in attendance.

Taillon noted that Commissioner Winkler was showcased on the VLAWMO website. Commissioner Winkler mentioned that Nick from VLAWMO interviewed him about the adopt a drain program. Taillon will email the commission members a link to the article.

c) Do-outs

New do-out items for February 17, 2021 include:

- Staff to research installing air sensor on City Hall, Sports Center or Public Works
- Staff to forward recycling container design to Ramsey County for review
- Staff to email VLAWMO link which showcases Commissioner Winkler to all commission members
- Commission members to read information from Keely and consider signing on to letter of support for cleaner car standards
- Commission members to consider creating a plastic bag display for the Expo showing how many plastic bags a family of 4 uses per year.

d) March agenda

Include plastic bag ban, Environmental Resource Expo, and downtown area recycling on the March agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Aye

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeder: Aye

Winkler: Aye

Diaz: Absent

Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.