

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: May 19, 2021	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Gary Schroeber (Chair); Robert Winkler	
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT	Rick Johnston Valeria Diaz, Sage Durdle	
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS	Ashley Kennedy and Kim Haroldson, Zero Waste Advocates	
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and added 'No Mow 'May' presentation by representatives of Zero Waste Advocates under item 4. Visitors and Presentations. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to approve the agenda as amended.

Roll call vote:

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

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) April 21, 2021 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the April 21, 2021 draft minutes and no changes. Commissioner Greene moved, seconded by Commissioner Winkler, to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2021 meeting as presented.

Roll call vote:

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

Motion carried.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

Ashley Kennedy and Kim Haroldson from Zero Waste Advocates were in attendance to present on the 'No Mow May' campaign that was started in the UK in 2010. No Mow May is a voluntary program that asks land owners to not mow their lawns in the month of May. The purpose of the campaign is to bring awareness to protecting pollinators by providing habitat and reducing pesticide use. Appleton Wisconsin was the first U.S. City to adopt No Mow May in 2020. Since then, 9 additional Wisconsin Cities and 2 Minnesota Cities (Rochester and West St. Paul) have adopted No Mow May. Ashley suggested as a next step to consider revising the City's current weed ordinance to state that lawns should be mowed starting June 1st instead of May 15th, or adopting a policy that supports promoting No Mow May to residents and businesses. She stated that West St. Paul has No Mow May signs on their website that property owners can print, or the City could consider providing signs for interested land owners.

Commissioner Bolstad mentioned that she did not mow for a few weeks this spring and some areas of her lawn were so thick that it couldn't be mowed with their electric lawn mower. Commissioner Winkler stated that he opted in to the No Mow May campaign this spring for his back yard only. He will report back on how tall the grass grew in that month. Commissioner Greene stated that this is a great idea and that the EAC should promote this campaign at the Environmental Expo.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) 2021 budget

Taillon noted that she will order the two feather flags and a rain barrel for the Expo.

b) 2021 Work Plan

- Plastic bag ban

Bonnie stated that she will draft a statement of need for discussion at the June EAC meeting.

- Downtown area recycling

Taillon reported that she is waiting to hear back from the County regarding a grant application.

Commissioners asked about upcoming pollinator initiatives. Taillon reported that staff will be looking at a potential shoreline restoration at Matoska Park in 2022 and will hopefully be constructing a curb cut raingarden as part of the Lakewood Hills parking lot rehabilitation project this fall that will include pollinator plantings. Other future restoration/pollinator habitat is being considered in the woodland areas.

c) 2021 Expo exhibitors

Taillon stated that a local funeral home contacted her about exhibiting at the Environmental Resources Expo to promote green cremation. While supportive of the concept, the commission members agreed to continue only inviting non-profit organizations to exhibit at the Expo. Staff will contact the funeral home to let them know the commission members decision. Commission members discussed continuing to invite exhibitors to the Expo. Commission members decided to replace the August meeting with the Expo, similar to past years. Taillon will add this change to the work plan.

6. NEW BUSINESS

None

7. DISCUSSION

a) Staff updates

- Matoska Park riprap project

Taillon noted that the Matoska Park riprap project is now complete and the dog beach will open back up once the grass becomes established.

- Curb cut raingarden program
Taillon stated that the street renovation raingarden program is being offered again this year, but only one potential site was found to be suitable for a curb cut raingarden.
- Surface Water Management Plan
Taillon announced that the Surface Water Management Plan will be brought to Council for adoption at their May 25th meeting. She will email the commission members a link to the plan.
- Pollinator planting at Lakewood Hills Park
Taillon stated that she reported on future Lakewood Hills Park pollinator plantings as part of the 2021 work plan discussion.

b) Commission member updates

Chair Schroeher and Commissioner Bolstad provided an update on the East Goose Lake City Council presentation and stated that Barr did a great job presenting. Chair Schroeher noted that no decisions were being proposed at the meeting and that the presentation was just for educational purposes. Taillon mentioned that the PowerPoint and presentation video can be found on the East Goose web hub. She will email the commission members a link to the web hub.

c) Do-outs

New do-out items for May 19, 2021 include:

- Staff to consider revising the ordinance or EAC to draft a policy for 'No Mow May'
- Staff to contact funeral home re: Environmental Expo
- Staff to revise the workplan to show the Expo, and no scheduled meeting in August
- Commissioners and staff to continue inviting exhibitors to the Expo
- Staff to email Surface Water Management Plan and Goose Lake web hub links to commissioners

d) June agenda

Include single use bag fee and Environmental Resource Expo on the June agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Commissioner Greenleaf to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye
Greene: Aye
Greenleaf: Aye
Johnston: Absent
Schroeher: Aye
Winkler: Aye
Diaz: Absent
Durdle: Absent
Motion carried.