

City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

MINUTES

Date: December 15, 2021	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT	Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Gary Schroeder (Chair)	
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT	Rick Johnston, Robert Winkler	
STAFF PRESENT	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
VISITORS	Nick Voss, Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization; Joe Crowe, resident.	
NOTETAKER	Connie Taillon	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:42pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, vote 4/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) November 17, 2021 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the November 17, 2021 draft minutes and had no changes: Commissioner Bolstad moved, seconded by Chair Schroeder, to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2021 meeting as presented. Motion carried, vote 4/0.

4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS

Joe Crowe, a resident of White Bear Lake, was in attendance to learn more about the Environmental Advisory Commission projects and their interest in reducing plastic use. He is an active member of the Northeast Metro Climate Action Group and Wild Ones native plant organization, and has a prairie meadow in his front yard. Chair Schroeder mentioned that the Environmental Advisory Commission created an interactive pollinator map on the City's website and invited him to add his prairie garden to the map.

Nick Voss was in attendance to gather feedback on a series of draft MS4 education materials on the topics of smart salting, illegal dumping, and pet waste. Nick ask the commission members to review the material and provide comments. Commissioner Greene asked where concrete wastewater should be disposed. Taillon stated that construction site wash areas must be contained, but does not know where to dispose of concrete wastewater. Commission members discussed making pool discharge requirements consistent with City code, adding rain sensors and planting low mow fescues to the water conservation list, and consider creating a list of 'smart salting' private applicators. Commission members also discussed ways to educate dog owners about proper waste disposal, and suggested that proper dog waste disposal information be sent out with dog license renewal letters. Nick invited commission members to contact him with any other comments or customization suggestions to the educational materials in the next two weeks. Commission members thanks Nick for the opportunity to provide feedback.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) 2021 budget

Commission members discussed purchasing native plant seeds with the remaining 2021 budget of \$168.98.

Commissioner Greenleaf requested that Taillon order the same plant species as last year. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to use the remaining 2021 budget of \$168.98 to purchase packs of pollinator seeds to be given away at the 2022 Environmental Resources Expo. Motion carried, vote 4/0.

b) 2021 work plan

Taillon noted that she had recently attended the Ramsey County Recycling Coordinators quarterly meeting where County staff announced that they have ended their grant program for recycling containers. The City representatives at the partner meeting expressed interest in having the County renew the grant program to help cover the cost to repair or replace old public recycling containers. County staff said that they will consider reinstating the public space recycling container grant being there is continued interest from the partner City's. Taillon will provide an update to the commission members when the County makes a decision.

c) 2022 draft work plan

Chair Schroeher stated that he created a spreadsheet with a list of 2022 work plan goals. He asked the commission members to review the list and pick the top 5 goals to share at the January meeting. Taillon suggested also reviewing the GreenStep Cities 29 Best Practices list for ideas. Taillon will email the spreadsheet and GreenStep Cities website link to commission members.

Joe mentioned that the Climate Action Group is interested in reducing plastics. The Commission members also stated that this one of the priorities that they are considering in 2022.

Chair Schroeher stated that a representative from Prairie City is scheduled to present at the February Environmental Advisory Commission meeting. He suggested that they invite a Parks Commission Member to attend the presentation.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Officer elections

Commissioner Bolstad nominated Commissioner Johnston as vice president. She offered to contact him to ask his permission to be nominated at the January meeting. Chair Schroeher offered to continue on as Chair for 2022. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to nominate Chair Schroeher to continue as the chair of the Environmental Advisory Commission for 2022. Motion carried, vote 3/0. Chair Schroeher abstained.

7. DISCUSSION

a) Staff updates

- Environmental updates memo to Council

Taillon provided a brief summary of the Environmental Updates memo that was included in the December 8, 2021 Council packet. VLAWMO received a second grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to fund the enhancement of native plant species at the 4th and Otter woodland site. The raingarden and shoreline maintenance contract wrapped up in November. The maintenance was expanded this year to include buckthorn and other invasives species removal along an additional 250 feet of shoreline on Heiner's pond.

- Priebe Lake outlet replacement

Taillon announced that the Rice Creek Watershed District Priebe Lake outlet project is out for public comment with the Department of Natural Resources. The project is anticipated to start in late winter or early spring if all goes well.

b) Commission member updates

Commission members discussed spotlighting Joe Crowe in a future 'Spotlight on Sustainability' newsletter article.

c) Do-outs

New do-out items for December 15, 2021 include:

- Taillon to research where to properly dispose of concrete wash water
- Commissioner Greenleaf to update PowerPoint to Council and bring to the January EAC meeting.
- Taillon to email 2022 list of potential work plan initiatives and link to the GreenStep Cities 29 best practices.
- Commission members to pick top five initiatives from the spreadsheet list and present at the January meeting.

d) January agenda

Include the Vadnais Heights Park, Recreation, and Trails Commission members under visitors and presentations. Add officer elections and 2022 draft work plan discussion under unfinished business.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm. Motion carried, vote 4/0.