



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2022
6:30 P.M. VIRTUAL MEETING**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chair Schroeher called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Frye, Bonnie Greenleaf, Chris Greene, Rick Johnston, Jeff Luxford, Gary Schroeher (Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sheryl Bolstad

STAFF PRESENT: Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist

VISITORS PRESENT: None

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes.

It was moved by member **Johnson** seconded by member **Greene**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried 6:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on November 16, 2022

The commission members reviewed the October 19, 2022 meeting minutes and had the following change: on page 2, second paragraph, first sentence, change the word 'Gosse' to Goose'

It was moved by member **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Luxford**, to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2022 meeting as amended.

Motion carried, 5:0. Member Johnston abstained.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Joint work session presentation

The commission members reviewed and finalized the joint work session PowerPoint presentation. Commissioner Johnston suggested adding the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) bill to the presentation. He also asked if he could attend the

meeting virtually. Taillon stated that she will check on the option to attend virtually and get back to him.

B. 2023 Work Plan

Chair Schroeder stated that he prefers to table this discussion until after the work session with Council, and asked Taillon to include the 2023 work plan on the January agenda. Member Frye noted that he will send his top 5 work plan priorities to Taillon prior to the January meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS

None

7. DISCUSSION

A. Spotlight on Sustainability newsletter article

Taillon mentioned that staff hopes to include a Spotlight on Sustainability article in the spring newsletter. She recently partnered with Ramsey County and Waste Wise to market the BizRecycling program to businesses and multi units in White Bear Lake, and asked the commission members' thoughts on spotlighting a business that received a BizRecycling grant. She mentioned the businesses that received a BizRecycling grant. Members discussed the White Bear Lake United Methodist Church and the White Bear Lake Area Food Shelf as two of their preferred options. Member Frye suggested spotlighting a business that composts food waste. After further discussion, the members directed Taillon to spotlight the food shelf in the spring newsletter.

B. Staff updates

- BizRecycling promotion

Taillon noted again that she recently partnered with Ramsey County and Waste Wise to market the BizRecycling program to businesses and multi units in White Bear Lake. A letter was recently mailed to businesses and multi-units from the City promoting the BizRecycling program. Completion of this activity qualifies the City for an incentive grant from Ramsey County.

- Rotary nature preserve seeding

Taillon reported that she and Sadie from the Parks Department completed a winter seeding of the phase 1 prairie at Rotary Nature Preserve on December 16th.

- Public space recycling container grant

Taillon reported that Ramsey County was unsuccessful in obtaining grant money for the purchase of public space recycling containers in 2022. The County will continue to research funding options in 2023. Member Johnston hopes that the commission members have an opportunity for input on the style of containers.

C. Commission member updates

Chair Schroeder announced that Conservation MN is looking for steering committee members for the annual Environmental Commission meeting. He will forward the date of the 2023 meeting once it is set.

Chair Schroeher reported that he and Taillon were asked to be interviewed by White Bear Magazine for a story on the pollinator pathways map that will be published this spring.

Chair Schroeher also mentioned that the fluorescent bulbs at the Petro Wash station on County Road E and Bellaire have not yet been removed. Taillon noted that the Building Departments previously contacted the owner and asked them to either remove the bulbs or cover them. Chair Schroeher stated that they did add a chain across the Bellaire entrance. Taillon will follow-up with the Building Department.

Member Johnston reported that he has reviewed the MPCA web site for information on the property at the southwest corner of Bellaire Avenue and County Road E. It appears that as part of a real estate transaction an environmental consultant was retained to conduct Phase I and Phase II Environment Site Assessments (ESA) of the property. Based on that work a petroleum leak was reported to MPCA on April 22, 2019 (assigned leak site no. LS 00020942). The web site also reports that a previous consultant had been retained for the site in 1992, but does not indicate the nature of the work or results.

The site was entered into the MPCA Petroleum Brownfields Program (PBP) and Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup (VIC) Program on April 15, 2019 (assigned site file no. BF0001123). The Phase I and Phase II ESAs were reviewed and that site file was closed January 2, 2020. The Leak Site file no. 00020942 was closed February 26, 2021. There was no report of submittal or review of a Response Action Plan (RAP) and the web site indicates there are no Institutional Controls (IC) on the property; based on that it is inferred that the site was deemed suitable for its intended commercial/industrial use without cleanup.

Member Johnson stated that closure of the files does not necessarily mean the site is clean, only that under current use or commercial/industrial use proposed at the time, the site conditions do not present a risk to human health or the environment. The fact that a Leak Site was opened indicates that there were petroleum contaminants present and entry into the VIC Program indicates presence of non-petroleum contaminants. The MPCA has different standards for commercial/industrial use of property and higher risk uses such as residential, schools, daycare, etc. It is theoretically possible that there might be contaminant vapors present in the soil on the site and surrounding property that meet commercial/industrial standards but not higher risk uses, and could present a risk to adjacent residences. Off-site issues would not be the responsibility of the subject site current owner, having received liability releases through VIC and PBP. Off-site issues would be responsibility of previous site owner/operators or MPCA, if previous owners were unavailable or unwilling to perform investigation/cleanup. It is Member Johnston's understanding that the MPCA had previously attempted to gain access to one or more off-site properties without success.

Member Johnston will follow up with MPCA to ascertain current status and availability

of files for review.

Member Greenleaf stated that she approached the volunteer group at her church about opportunities to promote the Adopt-a-Drain program in the Goose Lake subwatershed, but they don't know if it is a good fit for them. She will meet with the associate pastor and provide an update.

D. Do-outs

New do-out items for December 21, 2022 include:

- Members to attend the January 17, 2022 joint Council workshop
- Member Frye to email top 5 priorities for 2023 to Taillon
- Member Johnston to follow up with MPCA regarding County Road E and Bellaire
- Member Greenleaf to discuss volunteer Adopt-a-Drain promotion opportunities with the church associate pastor.
- Taillon to showcase WBL Food Shelf in spring Spotlight on Sustainability article
- Taillon to follow-up on the exposed florescent bulbs at Petro Wash
- Taillon to send reminder to bring treats in January

E. January agenda

Commission members discussed the January agenda items and asked Taillon to add a recap of the joint work session and the 2023 work plan to the agenda, and to send a reminder to bring holiday treats to the January meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Johnston** seconded by member **Frye** to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Motion carried, 6:0