



**MINUTES  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023  
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE**

Chair Schroeher called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist

**VISITORS PRESENT:** None

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had the following change: move item 7A. work session to item 5A, and the 2023 work plan to item 5B.

It was moved by member **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Luxford**, to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion carried 7:0.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on December 21, 2022

In response to Taillon's question on the draft meeting minutes if Member Greene or Member Frye seconded the agenda approval in item 2, Member Greene stated that he seconded approval of the agenda as presented. Taillon will change the December 21, 2022 minutes accordingly.

It was moved by member **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Frye**, to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2022 meeting as amended.

Motion carried, 7:0.

**4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Work session recap

Member Greenleaf congratulated Chair Schroeher for a great job presenting at the joint

work session. Member Frye mentioned that he was pleased that the Mayor wants to hold a joint workshop again next year, but was hoping for a higher attendance at this workshop.

Chair Schroeher summarized the feedback from the Mayor and Council for member Johnston who was not able to attend the joint workshop. He said that the Mayor directed the commission to contact the City Manager for any requests in support of environmental legislation. The Mayor is not interested in proposing a charge for single use bags at the City level, but is very supportive of water conservation efforts. Chair Schroeher stated that Councilmember Walsh mentioned Dillon's ditch as a possible location for pollinator plantings. There was also discussion at the workshop about adding pollinator plantings on the sloped areas in Bossard Park. The Mayor responded favorably when Taillon offered to draft a natural resources plan in partnership with the Parks Commission, which would assist City Council in prioritizing and budgeting restoration projects.

Chair Schroeher reported that he stayed for most of the workshop and that the Parks Commission and Planning Commission sessions did not have formal presentations and instead were more conversational. He mentioned that the Parks Commission had a booth at Marketfest and used QR codes for all of the parks. He thought this was a good idea and that the Environmental Advisory Commission should consider creating QR codes for recycling information for use at the Environmental Resources Expo. Member Bolstad suggested that the Environmental Advisory Commission consider planning for more informal conversation at the joint workshop in 2024, and to keep the formal presentation for the volunteer dinner.

The members brainstormed topics for the next joint work session. Member Frye suggested bringing a project idea and asking for feedback on the project and funding options, and also asking for feedback on what environmental topics the Mayor and Council think the community is interested in.

Member Bolstad suggested that Chair Schroeher write a thank you letter to the Mayor and Council. Chair Schroeher will draft a letter and email it to the commission members for review and comment.

#### B. 2023 Work Plan

The commission members reviewed the work plan priority ratings. Member Luxford suggested that they choose two or three priorities to work on in 2023. Member Frye suggested taking the top three priorities from the priority ratings spreadsheet and work on those until they reach a point where they are able to start another project. The top three priorities from the priority ratings spreadsheet are: reduce recycling contamination education, pollinator plantings, and solar on buildings. The commission members also agreed to include buckthorn removal on the list of priorities in 2023. The downtown recycling project will remain on the priority list for staff to complete in 2023

if funding becomes available. The downtown tree priority will also be considered during downtown revitalization project planning.

Member Bolstad asked Taillon if City Council would be supportive of the No Mow May initiative this year. Taillon stated that they do not plan to support the initiative again this year because it is in conflict with City code. Taillon mentioned that this initiative mainly encourages the growth and spread of dandelions. Because dandelions can be considered a nuisance, their spread to other properties could result in additional pesticide use. In addition, based on email correspondence with Zero Waste Advocates, dandelions support the non-native honeybee but lack the proper nutrients to support our native bees.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Environmental Resources Expo – July 27, 2023

Taillon stated that the Marketfest coordinator scheduled the Environmental Resources Expo on the last night of Marketfest again, which falls on July 27<sup>th</sup>. The commission members discussed planning for the event and asked Taillon to include the Expo on the February agenda.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### A. Staff updates

#### - RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshops

Taillon stated that Rice Creek Watershed District received a grant from the MPCA to understand how to reduce the risk of climate impacts due to changes in precipitation patterns. One part of the process is a series of workshops to identify community vulnerabilities and strengths, actions to improve resilience, priorities, and an implementation timeline. Workshops have now been scheduled and will take place on February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 3pm to 7pm at the Shoreview Community Center. Taillon asked who she should invite. Chair Schroeher asked Taillon to send the invitation to all commission members and they will choose one or two members to attend.

#### - Oak Knoll Pond Spent Lime public meeting

Taillon mentioned that a public meeting is scheduled on February 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:30pm to 7:30pm in the City Hall Council Chambers to go over the results of the Spent Lime Feasibility Study and to gather feedback from landowners around the pond regarding their interest in the project. The meeting will be posted in the White Bear Press, and invite postcards will be sent to resident who live around the pond.

### B. Commission member updates

Chair Schroeher announced that the Metro Environmental Commissions meeting is coming up in May.

Chair Schroeher mentioned that he will be attending a “meet your local Legislators” event on Saturday from 10:15am to noon at the White Bear Lake Library. He plans to ask

their thoughts on a 'bring your own bag' ordinance.

C. Do-outs

New do-out items for January 18, 2023 include:

- Chair Schroeder to draft a thank you letter to the Mayor and City Council and email to commission members for review.
- Taillon to send the RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshop invite to all commission members. Commission members will choose one to two members to attend.

D. February agenda

Commission members discussed the February agenda items and asked Taillon to include the 2023 work plan and Environmental Resources Expo on the agenda.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Greene** seconded by member **Frye** to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Motion carried, 7:0