



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chair Schroeher called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Frye, Chris Greene, Rick Johnston (Vice Chair), Jeff Luxford, Gary Schroeher (Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bonnie Greenleaf

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 **Bolstad** seconded by member **Greene**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 5:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on March 20, 2024.

The commission members reviewed the draft March 20, 2024 meeting minutes and had the following change: Item 5B, second paragraph, replace 'Sheryl' with "Member Bolstad".

It was moved by member **Luxford** seconded by member **Bolstad**, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2024 meeting minutes as amended.

Motion carried, 5:0.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Buckthorn removal event

Chair Schroeher reported that he and Taillon met with Pat and Paul from Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) and Sadie from the City's Parks Department on April 10th at Lakeview Park to brainstorm ideas for a buckthorn removal event this fall. The group walked around Hanlo's Pond to determine a location for the event. Paul suggested starting at a relatively cleared area near the park bench on the

north side of Hanlo's Pond and work east and west from that point. RWMWD is open to helping out with a one to two hour buckthorn removal event in late October. They discussed possible volunteer organizations including Frisbee golf groups. They suggested reaching out to that group through a QR code on the tee boxes that links to a volunteer page. Taillon mentioned that the City would not allow volunteers to use power equipment such as chainsaws. RWMWD suggested that the City cut down the larger buckthorn trees with a chainsaw either before or after the volunteer event. The larger trees could be marked during the volunteer event for removal by the City the following week. Chair Schroeher also noted that the group walked a portion of the wooded area on the east side of the park to discuss opportunities for buckthorn removal at that location. Invasive Japanese Knotweed was found in the wooded area during the walk, and RWMWD reported this infestation to the County through their website.

Member Luxford suggested scheduling an alternative date for the buckthorn event in case of rain.

Member Frye arrived at 7:51 PM

B. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

The commission members provided an update on their exhibitor invites. Six organizations and two electric vehicles responded with their interest in attending the Expo.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Marketfest low/zero waste event

Chair Schroeher will follow up with the Marketfest Coordinator on her correspondence with food vendors regarding their feedback on zero waste. Member Bolstad noted that she can be on the zero waste subcommittee starting in May to begin planning.

Member Frye stated that Marketfest may not need as many trash stations as they currently have. He suggest reducing the number of trash stations but adding more containers at each station. Taillon suggested observing Marketfest this year to see how the trash stations are being used. Chair Schroeher noted that Mill City Farmers Market has volunteers next to each trash station. The stations are placed by each entry and exit point.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Staff updates

- SWPPP public hearing and presentation

Taillon announced that she will be presenting on the City's 2023 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP) activities at the public hearing on May 14th at 7pm if any of the commission members are interested in attending. She will email a reminder one week prior to the public hearing.

- DNR tree grant

Taillon stated that the City was awarded a Shade Tree Bonding Grant from the DNR for the removal of 375 boulevard ash trees and for the replacement of these trees plus an additional 10%. The tree removals will be completed this year.

B. Commission member updates

- 2024 Environmental Commission Conference

Chair Schroeher noted that this year the conference will be in Burnsville on Wednesday night, May 1st, to tour an Oak Savanna habitat.

Chair Schroeher noted that he went for a walk in his neighborhood the other day and was surprised at how many plastic bags are in the recycling carts. He asked how to get the word out. Taillon mentioned that the City adds information on the do's and don'ts of recycling in the newsletter and periodically on social media. Member Luxford asked if part of the EAC budget could be used to create post-it notes or flyers. Taillon noted that Republic Services may tag recycling carts that they see contains hazardous chemicals, trash or other contamination in the carts.

Members Frye and Greene discussed electric equipment and if Public Works is open to replacing gas powered equipment with electric. Taillon mentioned that they are interested in looking into the option when equipment is ready for replacement. Member Luxford offered to survey other Public Works departments on their use of electric equipment. He will draft survey language prior to the May meeting. It was mentioned that the MPCA may offer grants for electric equipment. Taillon will research available grants.

Chair Schroeher mentioned that the County Road E and Bellaire Avenue row home project was in the White Bear Press. The article stated an August timeframe for the start of construction and that a grant was awarded for demolition and that an additional grant was applied for to complete environmental work. Member Johnston noted that the project received a MN Employment and Economic Development Redevelopment grant. The grant application has to go through the City, which is why it was on the City Council agenda.

C. Do-outs

New do-out items for March 20, 2024 include:

- Commission members to begin planning the buckthorn removal event.
- Chair Schroeher to follow up with the Marketfest Coordinator on her correspondence with food vendors regarding their feedback on zero waste.
- Taillon to email a reminder 1 week prior to the SWPPP Public Hearing.
- Member Luxford to draft an electric equipment survey
- Taillon to research MPCA electric lawn equipment grant

D. May agenda

Commission members asked Taillon to add the buckthorn removal event on the agenda every month until the event, and to add the 2024 Environmental Resources Expo, Marketfest low/zero waste subcommittee, and Trash to Treasure fall event to the May 15, 2024 agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Frye** seconded by member **Greene** to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Motion carried, 6:0