



AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on February 15, 2023

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. 2023 work plan
- B. Environmental Resources Expo

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Joint Parks Commission workshop

7. DISCUSSION

- A. Staff updates
 - Rotary Nature Preserve Vegetation Management Plan
 - EPA Climate Grant
 - Nation Mayor's Water Challenge
- B. Commission member updates
 - NE Metro Climate Action Meeting
 - RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshop
- C. Do-outs
- D. April agenda

8. ADJOURNMENT



City of White Bear Lake
Engineering Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Environmental Advisory Commission
From: Connie Taillon, P.E., Environmental Specialist
Date: March 15, 2023
Subject: Action Items for March 15, 2023 EAC Meeting

Agenda item 5A. 2023 Work Plan

The final 2023 work plan is attached.

Action: Begin working on priority projects.

Agenda item 5B. Environmental Resources Expo

The 2023 Environmental Resources Expo is scheduled for July 27, 2023 on the last night of Marketfest.

Action: Review 2022 list of exhibitors in the packet and begin creating the 2023 list.

Agenda item 6A. Joint Parks Commission workshop

The Parks Commission and EAC will hold a joint workshop (date TBD) to discuss partnership opportunities for pollinator/native plantings on City property.

Action: Brainstorm agenda items for the joint workshop



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 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 6:35 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rick Johnston

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 **Luxford** seconded by member **Greenleaf**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried 6:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on January 18, 2023.

The commission members reviewed the draft January 18, 2023 meeting minutes and had the following change: replace 'all of the meeting' with 'most of the meeting' in the first sentence of paragraph two in agenda item 5A work session recap.

It was moved by member **Bolstad** seconded by member **Frye**, to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2023 meeting as amended.

Motion carried, 6:0.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. 2023 work plan

The commission members reviewed the top 4 priority projects on the 2023 work plan which includes reduce recycling contamination education, pollinator plantings, solar on buildings, and buckthorn removal. Chair Schroeher asked how the commission members

would like to proceed with the top 4 priorities. Member Greenleaf would like to work on all of the priorities at the same time.

Member Bolstad asked what the commission can do about solar on buildings. Taillon replied that solar on City buildings will be considered by staff and Council when a roof is due to be replaced or when a new building is built. The commission can work to educate the public on the benefits of solar, and provide resources to residents and businesses such as hosting Solar Power Hours. Chair Schroeher stated that he would like to host Solar Power Hours and invite a solar company to exhibit at the Environmental Resources Expo.

The commission members discussed how to move forward with pollinator planting and buckthorn removal projects. Chair Schroeher will email the Parks Commission Chair to schedule a joint meeting to discuss possible partnerships. Taillon will give the Parks Commission liaison a heads-up about the joint meeting and create an agenda. Member Luxford stated that if a buckthorn removal project is scheduled for this fall, the commission could consider asking for volunteers using a QR code at the Environmental Resources Expo. Commissioner Frye stated that a plan should be created after receiving a commitment from Public Works. He asked if there is funding for sustainability work. Taillon responded that the stormwater fund and park fund have budgets for tree planting and native plant restoration work. There was consideration in the past about setting up a new budget that is funded by the savings from energy efficiency and solar projects.

For the recycling education priority, Commissioner Greenleaf mentioned that previous leadership would offer recycling workshops, and if the commission should consider doing this again. The commission members also considered creating a recycling display at the Environmental Resources Expo. Commission members asked about contamination in curbside recycling. Taillon replied that the current residual (non-recycling) is 12.21% which is more than the 2022 percentage of 12.04% but lower than the 2021 residual of 13.03%. The residual percentage is determined by a composition study completed by Eureka Recycling each year in late fall. Commission member Frye mentioned that outreach should occur 2 to 3 months prior to the composition study.

The commission members discussed priorities mentioned in the joint workshop with the Mayor and City Council. Member Bolstad noted that their priority is water conservation. She asked that the goal and problem statement information in the Google Doc be added to the March packet.

Commission members discussed wanting to be part of project reviews, and asked to see a copy of the winning proposal for the downtown project. Taillon will work with staff to provide. Member Frye stated that potential projects should include an environmental review.

B. Environmental Resources Expo – July 27, 2023

For the sake of time, the commission members asked Taillon to include this item on the March agenda.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Spring newsletter articles

Taillon asked the commission members if there are specific topics for articles that they would like included in the spring newsletter. She listed environmental topics from past spring newsletters such as the spring cleanup day, yard waste, illicit discharge education, Mayors water challenge, food scraps drop off site, adopt a drain, and spotlight on sustainability. The commission members asked Taillon to include these topics in the 2023 spring newsletter and also include a ‘what can and can’t be recycled’ article with the slogan ‘when in doubt, throw it out’ to try reduce the amount of residual/trash in curbside recycling.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Staff updates

- Northeast Metro Climate Action February program

Taillon noted that the Northeast Metro Climate Action February program speaker is Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, who will be talking about Ramsey County’s Climate Action Plan. The in person and virtual meeting is scheduled for 6:30pm on Tuesday February 28th and is open to the public.

- RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshops

Taillon stated that Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) recently received a community resilience planning grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to understand how to reduce the risk of impacts due to changes in precipitation patterns. One part of this process is a series of workshops to identify community vulnerabilities and strengths, and actions to improve resilience. RCWD is collaborating with Freshwater to develop and host these workshops. Two workshops have been scheduled for February 28th and March 22nd at the Shoreview Community Center from 3 to 7pm. Taillon asked if one member of the commission would like to attend. Chair Schroeder stated that he will plan to attend the March 22nd workshop. Member Luxford will check to see if he can attend the February 28th workshop. Taillon will email the invite to all commission members.

- Rotary Park field trips

Taillon mentioned that Rotary Club and the City are partnering with Birch Lake Elementary School to host field trips at Rotary Nature Preserve for students on May 24th and 25th. Nick from VLAWMO will have a macroinvertebrate station where students can learn about the animals they observe in the wetland, and Taillon will have a native plant planting station where students will learn about and plant their own native plant in the park.

B. Commission member updates

Chair Schroeder reported that he attended the January 24, 2023 City Council meeting to

learn about 2023 legislative priorities. He noted that Heather Gustafson, state representative was in attendance. One of the topics discussed was the water ban. Representative Gustafson mentioned that she and Karin Housley will work with legislators to determine what can be done about the water issue. Councilmember Jones mentioned the downtown renovation project tentatively scheduled in 2024 and 2025.

Chair Schroeher mentioned that he attended the League of Minnesota Voters Q & A session. He asked about a non-reusable bag ban, but it was not one of their priorities. He then asked about the Extended Producer Responsibility strategy but they were not aware of this.

Chair Schroeher noted that the Metro Environmental Commissions meeting is coming up in May and the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District Waterfest is scheduled for June 3rd at Lake Phalen Park.

C. Do-outs

New do-out items for February 15, 2023 include:

- Chair Schroeher to email the Parks Commission chair to set up a joint meeting.
- Include an article about what can and can't be recycled in the spring newsletter.
- Include information from the Google work plan document for the 2023 priority topics in the March agenda.
- Taillon to research downtown proposal.
- Taillon to email RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshop invites to all members.
- Commission members to choose one or two members to attend the RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshop after receiving the formal invite.

D. March agenda

Commission members discussed the March agenda items and asked Taillon to include the joint Parks Commission agenda, 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 **Bolstad** seconded by member **Greenleaf** to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Motion carried, 6:0

Environmental Advisory Commission 2023 Work Plan

Month	Recurrent Agenda Items	Activities/Events /Speakers
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • Priority goal(s) planning 	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring newsletter articles • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals • National Mayor’s Water Challenge • Discuss upcoming annual SWPPP meeting 	
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	Environmental Resource Expo, July 27
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall newsletter articles • 2024 Work Plan 	
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Work Plan • Volunteer Recognition Dinner slide show ideas 	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Work Plan • Commission Officer Election – Chair, Vice-Chair • Joint workshop planning 	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Work Plan • Joint workshop planning 	
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve 2024 Work Plan • Joint workshop planning 	Holiday Treats

High Priority Goals for 2023

- ‘Reduce recycling contamination’ education grant availability
- Pollinator plantings
- Solar on buildings
- Buckthorn removal

Ongoing initiatives

- Recycling containers: waiting for County
- Downtown Revitalization Project
 - EV chargers
 - Boulevard trees
- Zero Waste Events
- Promote electric lawn equipment

Joint work session notes – Jan 2023

Mayor comments:

- Water conservation a priority
- Not interested in a local single use bag ban/charge
- Helpful to create a plan assigning priorities and costs to pollinator/native plantings in collaboration with Parks Commission

Councilmember Walsh comments:

- He was at a National Night out near Dillion Ditch and was wondering if we could look into pollinator plantings at that location.
- What about pollinator plantings at Bossard Park on the sloped areas.

Review GreenStep Cities website: <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/best-practices>

Climate Smart Municipalities topics for Steering Committee

- Community solar and solar panels on City buildings
- Charge for plastic bags
- Single use plastics
- Climate change resolution
- Partner with Xcel Energy for Projects
- Air quality-lawn equipment (City and private)
- Energy focus, specifically renewables

Ramsey County Solid Waste Master Plan topics

- Curbside collection of bulky items for recycling
- Inclusion of small businesses in City recycling service
- Textile recycling (curbside, special collection, or drop-off) – required by 2019

MS4 Permit topics

- Salt management education
- Dog waste
- Other stormwater topics

2023 EAC GOALS							
COMMISSIONER	Priority Votes	GOAL	PROBLEM STATEMENT	DESIRED OUTCOME	STEPS	WHY WORTHY	GreenSteps Cities BP Action #
Gary	3	Pollinator Plantings	· How to increase pollinator planting in White Bear Lake. Pollinators help plants that bring us food and other resources. By carrying pollen from one plant to another, pollinators fertilize plants and allow them to make fruit or seeds. Pollinator health is critical to our food system and the diversity of life across the world.	· Double the acreage of pollinator plantings in WBL over the next 5 years.	o Work with parks department to remove grass areas and increase pollinator planting on city property o Educate the public to increase pollinator plantings on private property.	Pollinator health is critical to our environment	BP-18
	4	Reduce Recycling Contamination Education	Eureka Recycling has a limit of 13% contamination in WBLs recycling material. Residents continue to contaminate the recycling stream with batteries, metal and other materials that cannot be recycled. WBL has come close to exceeding the 13% limit.	Reduce contamination to below 10%.	o Education during marketfest o Education in Quarterly Newsletters/ next door app/social media o Education seminar o Door hangers o Stickers on recycling bins	Prevent the city from potential fines if contamination rates are exceeded	BP-24
	3	Electric Lawn Equipment	· 2 cycle gasoline engines found in many small engines are a main contributor to poor air quality.	Reduce use of city and residential power lawn equipment to improve air quality by switching to electric lawn equipment	Replace broken/older city gas powered lawn equipment with electric equipment until 100% switch. Cash incentives to citizens to replace gas powered lawn equipment Education in Quarterly Newsletters	Reduce air pollution	BP-26
	1	Water Conservation Promotion	During periods of drought White Bear Lake is subject extreme fluctuations in water elevations	o Stable lake levels	Water sensors on lawn watering equipment Promote rain barrels Promote reseeding lawns with drought resistant fescue grass Reduce lawn sizes by increasing pollinator gardens	Reducing city water use helps aquifer during drought conditions	BP-2
	2	Buckthorn Removal Event With RWMWD	A Buckthorn infestation is present around the shoreline of Hanlo's pond.	o Removal of the Buckthorn	Work with the Ramsey Washington Watershed district to remove the buckthorn	Invasive species restrict native plant growth	BP18

Rick	2	Downtown Recycling	The current downtown recycling effort is ineffective. EAC has discussed this, but has not presented formal written recommendations to the Council or City staff.	Effective recycling program for the public in the downtown area. This does not necessarily mean it will be the most convenient. I recommend that we also engage the parks commission in extending the written recommendations to the City parks.	Develop written recommendations in the form of a General Administration City Policy and Procedure and seek sign-off by the City Manager.	Component of an effective waste management plan for the City facilities. Consistent with components of Green Step Cities Best Practice No.22 Sustainable Consumption and Waste. WBL has not recorded and items for this BP.	
	1	sustainable purchasing	This was originally presented to EAC as a question as to whether public works or other city offices received pallets (or smaller quantities) of bulk supplies that were shrink-wrapped; and if so, was that material being recycled at Merrick, which provides this service. I think the broader question is whether the City has a Sustainable Purchasing Policy that is consistent with GreenStep Cities Best Practice Action #15, items 1-8.	The City does indeed have an Environmental Preferable Purchasing Policy, last updated in 2014. I recommend we propose an update to the Policy that incorporates as many of the GreenStep Best Practice #15 items as possible.	Review current policy and compare it to GreenStep Best Practice #15 and develop a list of additional items to propose to Council/City Manager to include in revised Policy.	Encourage and increase purchasing that reflects a commitment to sustainability in all aspects of City purchasing.	
Bonnie	1	Plastic Bag Ordinance		Pass an ordinance similar to Duluth and Minneapolis. OR have the City Council pass a resolution supporting a state-wide ordinance.	First step would be to educate the public and the City Council, then pass a commission resolution to take to City Council.	White Bear Lake has been a leader in making changes for the good and it is important that we provide visibility and education on reducing single use bags.	
	3	Rebates for Water Efficient Appliances		Request additional grant funds for water efficient appliances.	Staff request additional funding from Met Council. More advertising of the availability of this rebate.	In the Jan 2017 packet, it was reported that the more efficient appliances were saving 5.5M gallons per year. We should continue to encourage more water efficient appliances in the community, especially given current lake levels.	

Chris Green	2	Zero Waste Events	Events held on city property or at city facilities often generate waste in the form of disposable plates, cups, paper products, and utensils. Most of this waste ends up in local landfills.	Increased use of compostable or reusable (washable) food service products, with the goal of making all City-run events zero waste; Other users of City facilities increase use of zero-waste principles for their events	Create a set of standard practices for city events (specify use of compostable /reusable products, composting food waste, etc.); Have the City Council adopt these practices (either as a rule or as a goal?) (Does it take a Council vote to change City's policy on City-run events?); Promote zero-waste practices to any person or group using city facilities for events	This is an opportunity for the City to take the lead in promoting waste reduction. The City can implement zero-waste events and encourage others to do the same.	Environmental Management Category, BP15, Sustainable Purchasing, #7: Lower the environmental footprint of meetings and events in the city. Also BP22, Sustainable Consumption and Waste, #2: Address concerns over consumer products and packaging; c. recycling/composting options.
	1	No Mow May	Pollinator habitat has been under threat in Minnesota due to reduction in natural spaces. Refraining from lawn mowing in May can help promote pollinator growth. However, city ordinances on grass height may prevent people from voluntarily participating in "No Mow May."	Waive the City's grass height ordinance during May <i>only</i> ; Increase "No Mow May" awareness and participation	Work with City Council to identify and remove any impediments to No Mow May; Promote No Mow May as a way to help local pollinators	No Mow May is an easy way for city residents to help pollinators thrive in the WBL area. It costs nothing (and in fact saves money and time as you can skip a couple of early season mowings.)	Land Use Category, BP10, Design for Natural Resource Conservation, #7: Support and protect wildlife through habitat rehabilitation, preservation, recognition programs. (also possible: #23, local air quality, might fit by reducing mowing emissions)
Sheryl	3	Solar on Buildings	We need to reduce use of carbon emitting energy. One way to do this is to increase use of solar energy	Solar panels on some municipal and perhaps non-municipal buildings	When there's new construction on city buildings, consider including solar panels		GreenSteps #26
	1	Increase Green Space Tree Plantings	There are sites in downtown WBL that are designated for trees, but there are no trees in those spots. Lost opportunity for beautification and increased livability	Increase trees plantings in all sites designed for trees in downtown area. Trees add to the beauty of the urban landscape as well as providing shade/cooling	Mapped locations of empty sites. Plan to incorporate into design for Downtown Revitalization. Plan to utilize Silva Cells (or CU-structured Soil) to support urban trees and accomodate utilities.	Improve quality of life for citizens and shoppers. provide shade, beauty and, improved air quality. Letter from Carter Johnson to Connie T (7/28/22) requesting replacement of trees in downtown tree spots for the sake of local businesses	Environmental Management Category: BPs 15 - 23. #16-4 : 4. Maximize tree planting along your main downtown street or throughout the city.

Environmental Resources Expo: July 28, 2022 5:00pm to 9:30pm

Organization	Need table & canopy?	2019 attendance	2021 status	2022 status	Contact Name/Organization
Tesla owner/Electric Vehicle Group Contact	no		yes - 3 vehicles	yes - 3 cars	
Electric Lawn Equipment Demo	yes	NA		yes	Gary and Sheryl to bring electric lawn
Scouts - Troup 494	no - volunteer group		sign up available	yes - 3 scouts, 2 adults	
Ramsey County Master Gardeners	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Tamarack Nature Center	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Ramsey County Recycling Ambassador	yes			yes - prize wheel	
RWMWD	no -tent yes-table		new invite for 2021	yes	
Pollinator Friendly Alliance	yes	yes	yes	yes	
WBLCD	yes	yes	did noy contact	yes	
NE Metro Climate Action	yes	yes	yes - has a tent. Email map to katewinsor@com	yes	
Zero Waste Task Force - Sierra Club	yes	yes	yes	yes	
VLAWMO	yes	yes	yes - has a tent	yes	
Ramsey County - Otter Lake Road Project	yes: 2 tables & 2 tents			yes - next to VLAWMO	
WBL City, EAC, Ramsey County Envir Health	yes	yes	yes - need 2 spaces, 2 tables, 1 tent	yes	
AV vehicle	no		table and 2 chairs, no tent	yes	
Xcel - sponsor of Expo	no - tent and table			yes	

Total tents needed	12
---------------------------	----

--

Current Do-Outs

Commission Members

- Gary to email the Parks Commission chair to set up a joint meeting.
- Choose one to two members to attend the RCWD Climate Resiliency Workshop after receiving the formal invite.
- Consider helping Nick Voss deliver signs and door hangers in the Goose Lake subwatershed.
- Bonnie to talk with associate pastor at her church about helping with Goose Lake subwatershed activities. Contact Nick Voss at VLAWMO to coordinate any volunteer activities.
- Enter work plan information into Google work plan document (problem statement, list possible results, and define steps to achieve the results for each goal assigned to each member in the work plan list).
- Review GreenStep Cities best practices and tailor 2022/2023 work plan items with this program
- Add GSC numbers to Google doc.
- Gary offered to lead the 'reduce recycling contamination' work plan item.
- Gary to organize a potential buckthorn removal event with RWMWD and YMCA at the YMCA and Lakewood Hills Park.
- Gary to contact Jake from Specialized Technologies to speak at a future EAC meeting.
- Rick to follow-up with the MPCA re: County E and Bellaire

Staff

- Follow up on the exposed florescent bulbs at Petro Wash
- Include information from the Google work plan document for the 2023 priority topics.
- Include an article about what can and can't be recycled in the spring newsletter.
- Look into recycling cart stickers
- Ask about starting a fall Trash to Treasure day
- Order XL EAC tee shirts
- Invite Parks Foreman to future meeting
- Update from the MPCA on the status of testing at County E and Bellaire
- Email air quality sensor info to Public Works
- Schedule tour of R&E facility at a date TBD – add to 2022 work plan
- Add water use tracking app to CSM action items
- Show the WBAHS winning video at a future meeting
- Add AIS ID information to the website and update adopt a drain page
- Watershed district map (large scale with aerial photo)