



AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024
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 December 20, 2023

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Joint work session recap
- B. 2024 Draft Work Plan
- C. Joint meeting with Park Advisory Commission

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

7. DISCUSSION

- A. Staff updates
- B. Commission member updates
- C. Do-outs
- D. February agenda

8. ADJOURNMENT



City of White Bear Lake
Engineering Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Environmental Advisory Commission
From: Connie Taillon, P.E., Environmental Specialist
Date: January 12, 2024
Subject: **Action Items for January 17, 2024 EAC Meeting**

Agenda item 5A. Joint work session recap

The joint workshop with City Council and commissions was held on January 16, 2024. At the December EAC meeting, the commission members requested that this agenda item be included on the January 2024 agenda.

Action: Recap the joint workshop at the January EAC meeting (what went well, areas for improvement, etc.). Summarize feedback from the Mayor and City Council and determine any next steps based on this feedback.

Agenda item 5B. 2024 Draft Work Plan

The draft 2024 work plan is included in the January agenda packet.

Action: Review the draft 2024 work plan and discuss priority goals for 2024.

Agenda item 5C. Joint meeting with Park Advisory Commission

A joint meeting will be scheduled in early 2024 with the Park Advisory Commission to review the draft park maps and discuss next steps.

Action: Brainstorm possible agenda items for the joint meeting and discuss. Agenda items could include a continued review of the park maps, possible implementation planning, etc.

Agenda item 6A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

The 2023 Environmental Resources Expo exhibitor list is included in the January agenda packet.

Action: Review the exhibitor list and discuss who to invite in 2024.



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 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 7:51 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Frye, 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 **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Johnston**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 5:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on November 15, 2023. The commission members reviewed the draft November 15, 2023 meeting minutes and had no changes.

It was moved by member **Johnston** seconded by member **Greene**, to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried, 5:0.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Joint work session presentation, Tuesday, January 16, 2024

Chair Schroeher shared the notes that he created for the joint workshop. The notes include details on current initiatives such as public education, zero waste events, clean water and water conservation, clean air and battery powered lawn equipment, invasive species, and pollinator habitat. Taillon reported that she is drafting a memo to Council that will summarize 2023 commission projects and upcoming 2024 initiatives that were

identified at the November Environmental Advisory Commission meeting. She will complete the memo and send to all commission members for review prior to January 8th. Chair Schroeher will organize his talking points to match the memo.

B. Park maps

Taillon presented the draft parks maps for the commission members to review. Each map highlights all potential project areas that were identified at the park site visits this past summer. Taillon asked each commission member to review their respective park maps to see if the project locations have been corrected identified. Member Greenleaf asked Taillon to move prairie restoration site SP-PR2 at Stellmacher Park to the east and away from the outfield of the baseball diamond.

In response to Member Luxford's question, Taillon noted that the woodland restoration sites and the invasive species removal sites are the same on the maps. For the current draft, it is assumed that buckthorn removal in wooded areas will be the primary invasive species removal completed at the parks and that restoration will follow buckthorn removal

Member Greene stated that the number of restoration sites seem overwhelming. He suggested brainstorming ideas on how to break up the projects. Commission members discussed various ways to accomplish this, such as completing projects at one park at a time, and possibly prioritizing the parks that have had the fewest upgrades to ensure resources are used in an equitable way; focusing on one specific type of restoration such as raingardens; or prioritizing by the cost of each project.

For buckthorn removal, Chair Schroeher noted that buckthorn removal is not a large cost and that Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District is willing to lend out their buckthorn removal tools. He also mentioned that Metro Blooms provided plants for a demo native plant garden at Battle Creek. He suggests that the commission meet with the Parks Department to get their thoughts on adding demonstration gardens in some of the City parks.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. June 2024 EAC meeting date

Taillon stated that the June EAC meeting falls on the new Juneteenth holiday in 2024. She requested that the commission come up with an alternative date for this meeting. The consensus among the members was to move the June 19, 2024 meeting to June 12, 2024, a week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.

B. 2024 Draft Work Plan

For the sake of time, Chair Schroeher asked to postpone this item until the January meeting.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Parking lot deicing

Member Johnston showed the commission members a recent photo that he took of a parking lot on County Road E that had large amounts of excess deicing salt. He asked if the City sends letters to commercial properties about the importance of optimizing salt control. Taillon is not aware of any such correspondence. Manager Johnston mentioned that Ground FX works with HB Fuller Company to manage salt use on their parking lots. Chair Schroeher noted that Ramsey-Metro Watershed District recently gave Ground FX an award for their smart salting efforts. Manger Johnston wondered if the City could cooperatively send smart salting information to these businesses.

B. Staff updates

None

C. Commission member updates

Member Greenleaf mentioned that she talked with a resident at the volunteer banquet who reported a City raingarden that is not being maintained. She asked Taillon if she had spoken to him yet. Taillon stated that she talked with him at the event. She noted that all City owned raingardens are maintained by Natural Shore Technologies so the raingarden in question might be on private property. She will find his contact information and follow up.

Commission members discussed expanding the zero waste policy to other community events such as Marketfest. Taillon stated that this would require extensive coordination with Marketfest and its food vendors, so it is unlikely a food waste recycling program could be launched in 2024. Details such as the addition of food waste carts and pickup would need to be determined. Volunteers would need to be at each waste station to educate Marketfest attendees on what items go in the food waste containers. Commission members asked Taillon to determine if the City issues a permit for Marketfest and also the farmers market.

Regarding pollinator plantings and native habitat, Chair Schroeher mentioned that the University of Minnesota encourages the planting of more Oak trees and for farmers to plant buffer strips of native plant habitat.

D. Do-outs

New do-out items for December 20, 2023 include:

- Taillon to finalize the memo to City Council for the joint workshop and to email the memo to all commission members prior to January 8th.
- Chair Schroeher to re-order his talking points to match Taillon's joint workshop memo.
- Taillon to revise prairie restoration site SP-PR2 on the Stellmacher Park restoration map to remove the area from the outfield of the baseball diamond.

E. January agenda

Commission members asked Taillon to add a discussion of the joint work session and the 2024 work plan to the January agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Greene** seconded by member **Johnston** to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Motion carried, 5:0

DRAFT

Environmental Advisory Commission 2024 Work Plan - DRAFT

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 	Schedule tour of R&E facility at a date TBD
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 Fall newsletter articles 	Environmental Resource Expo, July 31?
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Work Plan Environmental Resource Expo Recap 	
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 	Volunteer recognition dinner
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

Current Do-Outs

Commission Members

- Gary to re-order his joint workshop talking points to match the Council memo.
- Gary to invite Metro Blooms to a future meeting.
- 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 2024 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.

Staff

- Prepare a draft memo for the City Council workshop and send to EAC before January 8th.
- Coordinate the joint parks discussion with Andy.
- Revise prairie restoration site SP-PR2 on the Stellmacher Park restoration map to remove the area from the outfield of the baseball diamond.
- Set up a joint meeting with the Parks Commission for early next year.
- Contact members who have not submitted their park visit reports.
- Highlight environmental related items from the zoning code for a future discussion.
- Research if the City has a policy regarding recycling in public spaces
- Look into recycling cart stickers
- Ask about starting a fall Trash to Treasure day
- Email air quality sensor info to Public Works
- Schedule tour of R&E facility at a date TBD
- Add AIS ID information to the website