



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

PUBLIC MEETING ROOM

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2023

6:00 PM

Meeting Items

1. Call to Order

Chair Wasilowski called the regular meeting of the Environmental Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were commissioners, Martha Brown, Teresa DeMars, Cindy Diessner, Roger Steinkamp and Chair Sonny Wasilowski. Also in attendance were Mathias Hughey, Community Development Coordinator, Kari Casper, Administrative Assistant II and special guest, Mark DuChene, City Engineer.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Martha Brown, seconded by Roger Steinkamp to Approve. The motion passed on a 5/0 vote.

3. Items for Discussion

A. 2023 SWPPP Annual Report and Public Hearing

Mark Duchene is our City Engineer and, on an annual basis, the City is required to hold a public hearing to open a discussion on the 2023 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Report to solicit feedback on the City's activities. DuChene went over some of the activities the City has implemented, such as, under the MCM4 the city has conducted 947 site inspections with 89 enforcement actions for Stormwater runoff control.

In the MCM5 which is the post-construction stormwater management, they have inspected 6 so far in 2023.

For MCM6 the Pollution Prevention and good housekeeping, which is internal, the city is contracting with WSB to conduct pond assessment looking for the sediment and whether it is time to dredge the ponds. Some of the sealers on blacktop driveways have a chemical that has been outlawed in some states and may affect the sediment. If it is found in the sediment, they will need to take it to the landfill, which will be costly. Otherwise, the sediment in the ponds is nutrient rich for soil, which would be the intended purpose. Those chemicals are referred to as PAH's, (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons). Hughey asked if they were wet detention ponds. DuChene said yes, the city has 35 of them. DuChene mentioned that the city doesn't have any problems with their aquifers. Diesner asked if the city worked with the blacktop agencies. DuCene said that they do not. DuChene said that they inspect construction sites after .5" of rainfall, but since there was not much rainfall this year, they would tend to go out once a week to check.

DeMars asked about the tanks by The Depot that were put in and asked if there were other needs to assist the run-off? DuChene said that they are updating and working on the surface water where locations are susceptible to flooding. They identified 17

projects to address the water quality. The next one they will work on is over by the Library in regrading the stormwater basin. DuChene also identified a joint effort with TruVue to upsize the stormwater basin for flood reduction. The County Club Regional Basin will also be done in the next couple of years.

DeMars asked if they are looking for state funding for those projects. DuChene stated that these are usually funded through utility bills. There is a calculation relating to the impervious surface coverage that ties in to the fees collected. They have tried for grants but found that they need to officially adopt a plan. He mentioned the Bowzer (sp) grant or Heritage Council. Brown asked about the projects by the River and DuChene stated that the project was hindered by the DNR due to the migration of the Box Turtle in the area. Wasilowski asked about the area around the old Tilt-a-Whirl factory being a floodplain. DuChene said that some time ago the floodplain was remapped and he wasn't familiar with any issues in that area.

Hughey asked if there was anything the ENV could do to assist. DuChene said that he appreciated the engaging conversation. They could also partner in a rain garden and he would be willing to come back and talk about other things as well.

B. Gold Leaf Program Final Report

Hughey reported that with the Gold Leaf Program, we had an intern who is no longer available. Right now, the city is stuck on Step 2. He went over the work that's been done and will check on the Young on Boards portion of this. He believed that someone had been identified but he hasn't received the name yet.

C. IRA Ambassador Program

In this portion of the discussion, Hughey went over the "Inflation Reduction Act" and how people could obtain rebates for energy-conserving purchases and the tax incentives that could be achieved. He mentioned that sometimes the retailers will apply for rebates and reduce the cost of the appliance because of what the rebate would be for as an incentive to buy the energy-conserving appliance. Hughey mentioned it could be up to 30%; however, it is based on 150% of the area's median income. He mentioned that the incentives could be stackable.

There was much discussion about heat pump technology. At this time, Minnesota didn't allow this to be the sole system for heating and was not capable of keeping up with the cold winters. It is the reverse in the summer; it draws in the heat and cools the air.

Diessner asked if it covers geothermal? Hughey stated he thought so.

Bottom line, Hughey was looking for ambassadors to help front this cause. No one came forward at that time. Diessner suggested compiling a list of contractors to educate them on these financial advantages. Perhaps a letter from the ENV could benefit?

Steinkamp asked if an ambassador would work with CERTS. Hughey stated that any ideas would be helpful. Hughey stated that education would be best on both ends, that being the contractors and the consumers.

4. Routine Business

A. Announcements and Updates

i. Energy Action Plan Adopted

Hughey stated that the City Council has approved the Energy Action Plan at the last meeting. Brown asked if Wasilowski's suggestion on sustainable building codes was included. Hughey thought that some sort of language to that effect was included. No action was taken at this time.

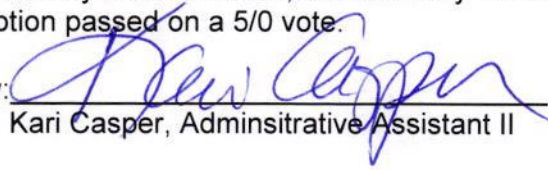
ii EV Ordinance Updates

Hughey reported that the EV Ordinance was tabled at the Planning Commission meeting due to the bonus parking reduction incentive and will bring this matter back possibly in January .

5. Adjournment

Motion by Martha Brown, seconded by Teresa DeMars to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. The motion passed on a 5/0 vote.

By:


Kari Casper, Administrative Assistant II