



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Approve Agenda

Chair Huston called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Anderegg, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Steinkamp Commissioner Wasilowski and Chair Huston.

Absent: Commissioner Nordmeyer

Staff: Sarah Shapiro, GreenCorps Member, David Wanberg and Kari Casper.

2. Approve May 23, 2022 Minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Nesvold and seconded by Commissioner Anderegg to approve the May 23, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed on a 5/0 vote.

Commissioner Brown arrive at 6:07 p.m.

3. Items for Discussion

A. Debrief of Heritage Days Event

Shapiro started out by thanking the members that were able to participate. Shapiro was not present during the festival and was not able to assist in participating. She reported that there were 18 sign-ups for the Home Energy Squad visits. She asked if they had enough information to inform the community. Anderegg felt that she did. The raffle did not go as planned. Tent would be nice since it was sunny. Shapiro reported that the group handed out a lot of light bulbs there.

B. Plan for the Role of the Environmental Commission at International Day

Shapiro began by stating that she will be available to help man the booth at the International Festival. She is going to try to get a table set up by the Diversity Coalition for the day. She is waiting for a response from the Diversity Coalition regarding their participation. They suggested a Google doc sign up. Brown thought that all should try to participate. Chair Huston mentioned that they should partner up with the Rotary on this. Steinkamp asked what the mission is? Chair Huston said to get different people involved in the environment and issues in town and to have a presence there. Shapiro

mentioned that we could ask a question about the No. 1 issue people are concerned about in our community.

Shapiro then deviated from the agenda and moved on directly to 3E.

E. Overview of Electric Vehicles, Charging Stations, and Ride and Drive Events

Shapiro reported that the Council has approved working with Carbon Solutions and they have sent us a map of potential spots; however, this needs to be revised and recommend other potential spots 14 chargers in 7 locations. Brown asked about the charging stations off the interstate. Shapiro confirmed that Faribault was chosen for one of those charging locations as an alternate fuel corridor. This will be less than one mile from exit and less than 50 miles to the next. We do have two charging stations in the downtown at this time. Wasilowski was concerned about putting one in at the water park since it's not plowed in the winter; thought it best over by the ice arena. Wanberg stated that the ice arena is owned by the school district, not the City.

C. Pollinators, Bee Lawns, and Prairie Ridge Park

Wanberg reported that Duchene intends to begin construction this fall. He intends to put in the rain gardens and plugs. Wanberg asked what role the ENV commissions would like to take in the plantings. Wanberg indicated that the park department has money budgeted. Chair Huston mentioned that we would to create the educational/identifying signs. Nesvold mentioned looking at other venues in what they have for signs like New Ulm. Brown mentioned getting the youth involved. Steinkamp asked "what's the big plan; will it be in all parks?" Nesvold stated that the Pollinators might be able to help/make suggestions; what is the timeline? Huston suggested forming a subcommittee. Nesvold would be willing and would like to work with the youth this fall when they come on board. Brown asked about the layout. Asked staff to email the layout that Duchene presented during MS4 discussion following the meeting. There is a need to coordinate with the park dept on this.

Brown asked for more discussion on bee lawns and explained briefly how the bee lawns work. Stated that the Bee Lab educates people a bit. Wants to get the big picture on all the parks and make a recommendation to the council. They identified the three main flowers used in bee lawns. Short discussion on buffer zones. Brown and Anderegg asked to have staff get in touch with Peanasky to set up a meeting too identify a few areas. Wanberg will call Peanasky.

D. July 19 Council Work Session on Greening the Downtown and the Tall Grass and Weed Ordinance

Wanberg invited the ENV to attend the City Council's Work Session. They would not be in the discussion but would be sitting in as public. They will be discussing greening the downtown. Wanberg mentioned the lawsuit against N. Mankato regarding tall grass and

weed ordinances wherein they were sued and lost the case on trying to enforce. Talked a bit about the ash tree situation. May need to replace them. Discussed that the owners will need to replace; there is no program through city. Wanberg mentioned Wasilowski's suggestion to not replace with heavy pollinator trees to reduce allergens. Shapiro looked at 360 trees in the downtown and about 20% were ash. City will take care of the downtown and city parks. Wasilowski asked if the City would get a discounted rate if more done at one time. Shapiro stated that Minneapolis removed all ash trees and replaced with oak trees. Steinkamp asked if there was a requirement to remove the ash trees. Wanberg said no but some cities will tag them and require them to be removed in a certain amount of time. Steinkamp, at this time, mentioned that the City is missing the hybrid scene for electrical F150 city fleets. Asked if the city was considering this. Wanberg mentioned that Shapiro polled the directors and they were not interested at this time. We do have a full electric and hybrid at this time and Faribault has been used as a model on this subject. Faribault also has a full electrical school bus, the first one.

F. Staff Liaison to the Environmental Commission and Youth on the Commission

Wanberg is working with Becky Ford and Martha Lundeen to get the youth on board. Sounds like this fall they will come on. Ideally one would be a junior and one a senior. Nesvold want to meet with them to pave the way. Wanberg suggested mentors on the Commission. Brown suggested introducing them to the Robert's Rules of Order as well.

Nesvold, Huston and Steinkamp would like to mentor the youth.

Wanberg also mentioned that the department will soon be hiring a new staff liaison to assist with the ENV commission.

4. Routine Business

A. Announcements and Updates

5. Adjournment

Chair Huston asked for a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Nesvold brought the motion, seconded by Commissioner Anderegg at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 27, 2022

by: 
Kari Casper, Recording Secretary