



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 provides that a meeting of a public body may be conducted via telephone or other electronic means if meeting in a public location is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or declared emergency. Due to the declared health pandemic, this meeting of the Environmental Commission held this meeting through electronic means, rather than in-person.

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Vice Chair Behrens called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Wasilowski and Vice Chair Behrens and Chair Steinkamp.

2. Approve February 22, 2021 Minutes.

A motion was made by Nesvold and seconded by Steinkamp on to approve the February 22, 2021 meeting minutes as written.

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Wasilowski and Vice Chair Behrens and Chair Steinkamp.

Nay: None

Motion carried on a 6/0 vote.

3. Items for Discussion

A. Recommend Amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 31 – Tall Grass and Weed Regulations

There has been only one permit issued in Faribault to date. The issue is that the permit is \$150.00. Do we want to continue with the natural landscape permit? A draft ordinance was presented on August 24th; however, there was difficulty in what defines a “weed”. Should we say that ragweed growing in a yard – what if the homeowner likes ragweed and should there be a defined list of what the weed is. How do we define “rank growth”. Talked about a buffer area but didn’t come to an agreement.

Make a list of prohibited weeds and go beyond the state's noxious weed list. Eliminate the subjective definition of a weed.

Eliminate the requirement to maintain turf grass to a height of no more than eight inches. Instead state that plants cannot overhang the public right of way in manner that creates a hazard or public nuisance. Add language that neighboring properties.

The state had a list of 16 on the Eradicate List and then they have a control list that you should be removing and control so that they do not get out of hand. They also have restricted noxious weeds and specially regulated plants.

Commissioners felt that we need to have a list and could possibly go by the Rice County's and the State's lists and make some positive spins on them.

They discussed the time frame to take care of a potential violation and it was suggested that 10 days would be enough time. Have no requirement for a permit either. Make sure all plantings are off the right-of-way.

Commissioner Wasilowski left at 7:08 p.m.

A motion was made by Huston and seconded by Nesvold on to approve the revised ordinance and recommendation on changing the ordinance.

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, and Vice Chair Behrens

Nay: Commissioner Steinkamp

Motion carried on a 4/1 vote.

- B. **Preliminary Discussion regarding an Environmental Commission Webpage** – Kari Casper (verbal update – no written report), not discussed.
- C. **Update on GROWS' Pollinator Efforts** – Emily Nesvold (verbal update – no written report), Wanberg asked if there are any deadlines? Commissioner Nesvold stated she is working with Paul Peanasky and are hoping that the City Council will proclaim May "Pollinator Month".
- D. **Update on the Environmental Commission Road Map Document – Chair Steinkamp (verbal update – no written report)**, Commissioner Steinkamp and Commissioner Wasilowski sent in several ideas and will incorporate them in the Roadmap as well. Considers it a living document.

4. Routine Business

A. Announcements and Updates

- The University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership shortlisted our idea brief to promote equity in the City's environmental planning efforts – detailed proposal due May 3.
- Submitted an application to host a GreenCorps member for 11 months starting in September – will hear by May.
- No response yet from the state regarding the City's grant application for an electric vehicle charging station at City Hall – public charging stations in a downtown parking lot should be installed soon.
- RFPs sent to solar installation contractors regarding the Faribault/Northfield/Rice County Solar Group Buy Program – next steps will be to select a contractor, then promote the program to the public.
- City Planner will schedule review and approval of the Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Joint Environmental Commission/City Council work session will likely not occur until after the Governor lifts the emergency order related to the pandemic.

B. Identify Agenda Items for April 26, 2021 Meeting

- Review and recommend improvements to draft Environmental Commission webpage
- Review and recommend status of Green Step Cities actions
- Legal opinion on communication between Commission members
- Youth involvement in the Environmental Commission efforts and meetings

5. Adjourn

A motion was made by Steinkamp and seconded by Huston to adjourn at 7:23.

Roll Call: Commissioner Behrens, Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, and Chair Steinkamp.

Motion carried on a 5/0 vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 22, 2021

By: _____
Kari Casper, Recording Secretary