



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Steinkamp called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Chair Steinkamp asked for Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Wasilowski and Chair Steinkamp.

Absent: Commissioner Behrens and Commissioner Garcia

2. Approve September 27, 2021 Minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Huston and seconded by Commissioner Wasilowski to approve the September 27, 2021 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion unanimously passed.

3. Items for Discussion

A. Update on the Downtown Tree Inventory

Sarah Shapiro gave her update on the tree inventory and will bring an update to us on the next meeting in in November. Shapiro report that her first effort was to target the downtown from the railroad tracks to 2nd Avenue and from the library to 5th Street. In that, they discovered 16 different varieties with the three top being Ash, Maple and Honey Locust. The heaviest density was around City Hall and by the railroad tracks to the east. It is reported that a population should not have more than 10% of one variety. The size of trees were pretty evenly distributed. There was approximately 38% that had some form of damage with only two trees that appeared to be dead. The common damages were leaves eaten by insects, branches missing, bark damage and browning needles on coniferous. As for invasive; Shapiro identified two buckthorn and Norway Maple. Next step would be to identify priority planting areas such as along 4th Street where there are no trees presently. Wasilowski did ask about green roofs. Shapiro stated she was not looking at that at this time. Steinkamp asked who pays to put the trees in the Wanberg stated the property owners are responsible. Peanasky does have a grant for boulevard tree planting. Steinkamp talked about I-Tree and stated that he would like to see if there could be a way to educate the homeowners on how they could save money with planting trees. Steinkamp and Diessner were thanks for participating in the downtown tree inventory with Shapiro. Wasilowski asked if there was a city code

about urban hotspots and putting in artificial trees or canopies. Wanberg said that there is not and that they are looking into those options as well. Solar canopies in lieu of trees. Wasilowski also asked about rain gardens and pollinators. Nesvold commented that GROWS has been working on this subject. Steinkamp stated that Penn State has a webinar tomorrow from 11 to 12 on Urban Trees and Casper is to send out the link. Shapiro is to meet with a Greencorps rep working on the downtown Minneapolis and will report back next meeting on her experience with that meeting.

B. Plan to Distribute Donated LED Bulbs

Wanberg received 150 boxes containing 12 bulbs and a bag. Wanberg was looking to the Board to come up with ideas to distribute. Wanberg stated that we could possibly pass them out to Boards and Commission members as a thank you; do another ride and drive event with electric vehicles; perhaps a Meeting in a Box to help empower the public to get involved and pass them out there. The Board liked the meeting in a box idea. Huston wanted to pass out to people that might not have the funds to purchase them directly. Wanberg went over the program with Growing up Healthy and the Home Energy Squads that were completely free of charge to home owners in the Manufactured Home Parks that completely replace all light bulbs in each home with LEDs.

Nesvold left at 6:52 p.m.

Wanberg mentioned a brochure in several different languages.

C. Debrief of October 19 Work Session with the City Council and Preliminary Discussion of 2022 Environmental Commission Work Plan

Steinkamp started off by stating that he was a bit late but felt overall at the Council was supportive and felt that they liked the idea of collaboration with other groups. Huston mentioned that the city has always had a good relationship with the City. Huston also wanted Wanberg to mention that when he cleans up Crocker's Creek, if the City paid for the chemicals, he would be happy to spray for the parsnip and thistles. It was reminded that the Council has the power to spend money and the Environmental Commission can advise them on such matters. Wasilowski stated that he felt the Council wasn't receptive to any changes to the ordinances and Wanberg did get that take away from the meeting.

D. Potential Joint Meeting with Northfield's Environmental Quality Commission

Steinkamp wanted to put together a committee of three to go over the 2022 work plan and also discuss collaborating with Northfield's Environmental Commission. Earth Day was mentioned. Also, could work with Rice County as well. Organic composting was also mentioned. So far Steinkamp and Diessner offered up meeting but could use one more person. Casper is to email all board members to see if they would be interested

in assisting.

E. Routine Business

A. Announcements and Updates: Youth on Boards

i. Past and Upcoming GreenStep Cities Webinars

Wanberg put a list of potential webinars on the screen and encourages the Board to watch them.

ii. Other

Steinkamp mentioned that he will be unavailable from 12/8 to 1/17 for a trip

B. Agenda items for November 22, 2021 meeting.

Update on tree plan and update from subcommittee.

F. Adjourn

A motion was made by Commissioner Huston and seconded by Commissioner Wasilowski to adjourn at 7:34 pm

Motion carried on a 4/0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 25, 2021

by: _____
Kari Casper, Recording Secretary