

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 28, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Cihacek called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and at his request, Public Works Director Marc Culver called the roll.

Present: Chair Brian Cihacek; Vice Chair Joe Wozniak; and Members Karen Huiett, Michael Joyce, Nancy Misra, Shane Spencer and Youth Member Jana Lynch

Absent: Member Stephanie Hammer (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Marc Culver; and Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson

2. Public Comments

Ms. Donna Peterson, 2436 Pascal Street, stated as a member of the League of Women Voters and also Resilient Roseville she and her fellow members are really excited about the meeting and are looking forward to what can be learned.

Mr. Shawn Gosiewski stated Alliance for Sustainability is working on getting more momentum from Ramsey County to provide additional staff support to help cities work on this issue.

3. Approval of November 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners prior to tonight's meeting and those revisions incorporated into the draft presented in meeting materials.

Motion

Member Wozniak moved, Member Spencer seconded, approval of the November 26, 2019 meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Communication Items

Public Works Director Marc Culver provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated January 28, 2020.

Chair Cihacek updated the Commission on the Forestry Task Force Supergroup meeting.

5. St. Louis Park Climate Action Plan

Ms. Emily Ziring, Sustainability Manager at the City of St. Louis Park made a presentation on St. Louis Park's adoption of a Climate Action Plan and their sustainability goals.

Member Misra asked how many cities in Hennepin County are covered by the building Benchmarking Ordinance.

Ms. Ziring indicated right now it is only Minneapolis, Edina and St. Louis Park. She noted it is a good start and other cities in the County are interested as well.

Member Wozniak asked if the cost of construction or renovation of a building would increase due to the requirement for EV charging.

Ms. Ziring explained it is such a drop in the bucket when talking about million-dollar buildings. It is not something the developers have balked at yet. The developer can sell it as an amenity and a great selling point.

Member Wozniak asked in regard to the two ordinances, were those driven by the fact that there was a climate action plan or were those ordinances spontaneous.

Ms. Ziring explained both ideas are in the climate action plan, so she suspected those ordinances were launched out of that or born from that. She noted it is a really good step on getting large property owners to take action on energy efficiency.

Member Wozniak asked how important it was having the students initiate their action to get this off the ground.

Ms. Ziring explained it was crucial and the Youth Commissioners on the Environment Sustainability Commission are crucial to the success of that group and the outreach that the Youth Commissioners do and the ties the city has with the high school and City Hall are really important and bringing that youth voice has been very important.

Member Misra asked what sort of reception has been received from developers, the business community and multi-family housing since implementing these standards.

Ms. Ziring indicated on the Bench Marking Ordinance there were two open houses to be able to talk about the proposed Ordinance before going to Council. There

were a handful of building owners that showed up but there was not any resistance, just a lot of questions.

Member Spencer asked if St. Louis Park is looking to do more solar power or other renewables or is it a combo of doing what the city can with the land it has plus purchasing renewable power going forward.

Ms. Ziring explained in May 2019 the Sustainability Commission went to the city Council and recommended the city purchase wind source subscriptions for all of the buildings that are not currently subscribed to renewable connect or renewable energy. All of the city street lights and wastewater and almost all of the city's operations are now subscribed to Xcel's Wind Source program. The city is getting to be as renewable as it can for city operations. On the community side of things, the city is looking at where it can install community solar on a public building and then sell subscriptions potentially to local residents. There is also a solar group buy program that is going into year three and helping to market as many programs as can be found that the city thinks makes sense to its residents and community business owners.

Member Misra thanked the city of St. Louis Park for taking the lead on this and laying a lot of the groundwork and allowing other cities to ask questions on its progress. She was curious, given these are pretty long projects, what sort of technical expertise, given that hopefully there will be changes in technology and innovation, how is the city going to make those adaptations or keep track of that. Is there a list of resources that is regularly updated.

Ms. Ziring explained St. Louis Park is in a good place with great community partners. When needed the city can get consulting services as needed. She did not know if there is any technology currently that the city is worried about implementing.

Member Huiett asked what advise could be given for communities just beginning its first step into a climate action plan.

Ms. Ziring thought engaging with the programs that are out there, talking to cities like St. Louis Park and cities that have implemented it is pretty important. Talking to getting involved with partners in energy, which was a great first step for St. Louis Park. Also making sure the city is really engaging its community members and find out what the community is looking for.

Chair Cihacek asked how difficult it for the city Council was to authorize specific sustainability positions as part of this plan. He wondered if this is a job that could be done by people at a .2 or .5 and be successful or does this level of undertaking really require dedicated resources to really be successful, given it is such a long-term, data and communication extensive process.

Ms. Ziring thought the city would need at least one full time employee in order to do this. There is a lot to juggle and many different plans and programs out there.

6. Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Presentation

Mr. Jack Sedlacek, Community Relations and Economic Development Manager with Xcel made a presentation of the PiE program.

Ms. Marisa Bayer from the Minnesota Center for Energy and Environment (MNCEE) was also at the meeting to discuss the PiE program in detail.

Ms. Yvonne Pfiefer with Xcel Energy spoke to the Commission on how Xcel has customized offerings to put community plans into action.

Member Misra indicated she was interested in the energy action teams and if the members tend to stay engaged.

Ms. Bayer explained Xcel Energy has seen communities as a part of the recruitment process for the energy action teams because the community that applies to Partners in Energy knows it is community based. The city has those community connectors and contacts. The communities are engaged throughout planning process and there are folks that do step away, but the successful partners are the ones who are enthusiastic and excited to be a part of this.

Ms. Pfiefer thought a good job was done as well through community workshops and incorporating that message that there is a need to have the resources available for implementation and thinking through what strategies need to be taken and identifying what community resources the city has that are local and really unique that can be leveraged in doing that.

Chair Cihacek thanked Xcel Energy for its presentation.

7. City of Roseville Sustainability Update

Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson updated the Commission on how Roseville has taken a more active role in making the city more sustainable.

Mr. Culver indicated some of the things not shown in the report is the reduction of use of electricity or energy. The city went through a massive effort of replacing all of its lighting both internally and externally both on and off campus with LED lighting in 2014-2015. This does not necessarily reflect some of that energy use reduction, just from those. Another area that can be looked at is how to reduce energy consumption as well.

Member Joyce indicated the OVAL was identified in the Governors bonding and asked if the city would see some energy savings by upgrading some of the mechanicals on it.

Mr. Culver indicated the city would and there are some options the city can pursue. City staff needs to delve into it a little deeper but the geo-thermal field the city has does have some more capacity on it if more buildings were brought on the grid.

Chair Cihacek asked with the redevelopment of Roseville have there been any conversations about making it more energy efficient.

Mr. Culver explained the city cannot make a private business implement sustainable practices or more sustainable green building codes or anything. As of right now the developer is not using any public financing. He did not know what conversations are going on and it would be unfortunate for them to build and not incorporate some sort of sustainable practices.

Member Misra understands that the city cannot mandate it, but she thought the city could try to discuss with the developer possible energy sustainable practices. She wondered if the city could partner with some of the business owners to expand its solar grid and try to do something.

Mr. Johnson indicated it is always an option. He continued with his presentation to the Commission.

8. Items for Next Meeting – February 27, 2020

Discussion ensued regarding the February PWETC agenda:

- Continue conversation on sustainability and goals
- St. Louis Park EV Ordinance and Energy Benchmark Ordinance
- Communication Systems Overview
- Incorporate monthly Mr. Johnson's Work in the Communications Items
- Asset needs mapping

9. Adjourn

Motion

Member Misra moved, Member Huiett seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:38 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.