



Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

335 South Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
<https://www.deperewi.gov/>

Final Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

5:30 PM

Council Chambers and Virtual

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Jayne Black

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jayne Black	Chairman	Present	
Emily Henrigillis	Commissioner	Present	
Randall Lawton	Commissioner	Absent	
Nicole Slavin	Commissioner	Present	
Carmen Van Schyndel	Commissioner	Present	
Rachel Weber	Commissioner	Present	
John Quigley	Aldersperson	Present	
Anna Metzler	Teen Advisor	Present	

Others present:

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant

II. Public comment upon matters not on the agenda. Comments made during the public comment period shall pertain only to matters under the jurisdiction of the Sustainability Commission. Section 6-3(f) DPMC

None

III. Items

1. Approval of the August 13, 2024 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Aldersperson Quigley moved to approve the August 13, 2024 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Van Schyndel. Upon vote, motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Quigley, Aldersperson
SECONDER:	Carmen Van Schyndel, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Slavin, Schyndel, Weber, Quigley
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton

2. Consideration and Possible Action on Extending or Terminating Contract for Food Composting Services with Greener Bay Compost, LLC*

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that staff spoke with Greener Bay Compost, LLC in August regarding the 2025 budget. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff had requested \$12,000 for continuing and growing the food composting services in 2025. Mr. Kuffel stated that Greener Bay Compost requested the City budget \$22,000-\$25,000 for continuing and growing the composting services. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff did not accommodate this request and Greener Bay Compost indicated they will terminate their contract with the City of De Pere at the end of 2024 if the City of De Pere does not budget what they deem to be sufficient funding in 2025. Mr. Kuffel explained that these

communications had been forwarded by Greener Bay Compost to some of the commission members and for transparency, staff forwarded the email chain to all commissioners. Mr. Kuffel stated the memo attached in the packet provides an update on the composting program to date including the number of participants and City subsidy contribution amount. Mr. Kuffel stated that based on the current participation, \$12,000 was deemed to be sufficient and would support approximately 82 participants monthly. Mr. Kuffel explained the options available to the Commission for action:

1. Request additional funding to meet the request of Greener Bay Compost.
2. Terminate Contract.

Mr. Kuffel shared the Greener Bay Compost requested a \$2,000 administrative fee in the justification for increased 2025 budget and Mr. Kuffel stated that an administrative fee was previously denied and would cause De Pere residents to pay more than other residents utilizing the same services. Mr. Kuffel explained that the City has sustainable alternatives if the program was terminated. These alternatives included: home composting, using kitchen garbage disposal to process food waste, and transporting to the landfill with normal household garbage. Mr. Kuffel shared how much food waste has been collected to date and the cost difference between processing by Greener Bay Compost versus transporting to the landfill.

Commissioner Henrigillis asked if there were specifics provided by Greener Bay Compost on how increased funding would be used to grow business in De Pere. Mr. Kuffel stated the funds were not to be used for anything besides subsidizing the cost of the service for De Pere residents and promotion on social media was the primary form of business growth. Commissioner Henrigillis clarified that if the program was terminated that Greener Bay Compost would pull out of De Pere completely. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff tried to get that clarified and Greener Bay Compost had declined to answer this question amongst others. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked to clarify whether a cost cap was established for the services. Mr. Kuffel stated that if the number of subscribers would deplete the budgeted funds, they would be notified that they would not be subsidized in that current year but the additional subscribers would justify increased budget for future years. Mr. Kuffel further explained that similar to many other projects with Sustainability Commission, the goal was baby steps for increased annual growth. Alderperson Quigley shared that he was surprised and disappointed that the Commission was in this situation on this program. Alderperson Quigley stated he would like to see negotiations opened back up to find a common ground to continue services and subsidies for 2025. Alderperson Quigley stated he would like to clarify with Greener Bay Compost whether the subsidy program was profitable and not losing money for the company. Alderperson Quigley explained how the Commission could request additional funds if the program was seeing additional growth. Alderperson Quigley stated he would have preferred to see more data to make decisions off, compared to the four months of programming currently available. Commissioner Henrigillis asked Alderperson Quigley whether he was comfortable continuing to work with a company that has communicated in this way with staff. Alderperson Quigley stated he has concerns with it and it was an issue previously as well. Mr. Kuffel commented on the profitability and that the user fees should cover the cost of operating his business. Mr. Kuffel added that the City reimburses half of the user fees for De Pere residents and Greener Bay Compost should be setting those fees accordingly. Commissioner Henrigillis commented that she believed the cost has increased twice in 2024. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if any of the Commissioners had purchased the compost and how they felt it was priced. Commissioner Van Schyndel stated she had purchased a small bag and thought it was fair

and just enough for what she needed. Commissioner Henrigillis stated she purchased the larger bag and that it had been about \$30. Commissioner Black asked if there were similar businesses and how the prices compare. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, shared the current pricing for Bucket Ruckus out of Stevens Point. Mr. Kuffel stated that there had been a similar company in Appleton that recently shut down. Commissioner Van Schyndel stated that she thought they were closing due to moving, not due to profitability but couldn't be sure based on the information she has seen. Commissioner Slavin asked to clarify that services will continue through the end of the year for De Pere residents. Mr. Kuffel stated that Greener Bay Compost indicated that services will proceed until the end of the year per the contract. Commissioner Weber clarified the options the Commission has and what could be offered to incentivize opening the conversation for further discussion with Greener Bay Compost. Mr. Kuffel added that through the City program, the user base in De Pere has quadrupled and that the City has been promoting the program on social media to add subscribers. Commissioner Van Schyndel stated that a \$12,000 budget is better than no budget for this program. Commissioner Van Schyndel stated she would be curious what outcome goals Greener Bay Compost has for the program with De Pere and whether the two entities could be aligned on that goal. Commissioner Henrigillis asked how compost was processed at the City yard waste site. Mr. Kuffel explained that staff takes temperature and rotates piles of yard waste to create compost. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if the funding could be redirected to those efforts. Mr. Kuffel stated the site is not operated to DNR requirements for food waste composting and is in the process of being split and relocated. Alderperson Quigley stated that his understanding is that food waste composting is quite restrictive. Commissioner Weber stated the Greener Bay Compost is aware of those restrictions and if the City wanted to do food waste composting in house that Greener Bay Compost would be the expert on the subject. Mr. Kuffel stated that he did not think it would be an option to operate a food waste composting service in-house. Alderperson Quigley suggested referring back to staff and he would reach out to Greener Bay Compost to learn about the challenges associated with operating the program in De Pere and asked if this would buy the Commission a month to make a decision. Alderperson Quigley added that he would request information from staff regarding the communications and social media posts that have transpired and boundaries that may need to be set to continue with this working relationship. Mr. Kuffel stated that no additional questionable social media posts have been noted since the contract was signed and program began. Commissioner Henrigillis commented that as a subscriber she has received upwards of 20 text messages back to back from Greener Bay Compost. Mr. Kuffel added that one issue staff is aware of is in regards to invoicing, as the invoices are not processed until the due date, rather than upon receipt. Mr. Kuffel further commented that Greener Bay Compost may prefer that more promotion occur on social media for the program, but that the City has their own set of policies to follow as it relates to this. Commissioner Black stated that if the contract is renegotiated that language should be included to prevent this discussion from occurring in the future and added that she would like to see the program continue. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff did not provide a recommendation as staff does not want to be the reason the program fails to continue.

Alderperson Quigley moved to refer back to staff and reach out to Greener Bay Compost to find a middle ground for 2025 program contract, seconded by Commissioner Henrigillis.

Commissioner Weber requested clarification that De Pere residents be allowed to participate with Greener Bay Compost, even if contract is terminated.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	REFERRED BACK TO STAFF [UNANIMOUS]
	Next: 10/8/2024 5:30 PM
MOVER:	John Quigley, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Slavin, Schyndel, Weber, Quigley
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton

3. Teen Advisor Introduction

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained the intent of this discussion was to have the Commissioners introduce themselves to the new teen advisor, Anna Metzler, appointed to the Sustainability Commission. Mr. Kuffel asked each member to provide a little background on themselves and what they are looking to accomplish while serving on the Sustainability Commission.

All Commission members and staff introduced themselves and their interest in Sustainability.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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4. Consideration and possible action on Student Advisor Application Packet

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that as part of the Ordinance update in 2023, two student advisor seats were created for Sustainability Commission. Mr. Kuffel explained the current process for students being appointed to these positions. Mr. Kuffel suggested that the process be formalized by an annual application. Mr. Kuffel added that the packet included in the agenda was constructed similar to the application packet for teen advisor positions for Board of Park Commissioners. Mr. Kuffel stated when the applications would be due and that they would be for one year terms. Mr. Kuffel recommended the Commission approve the Student Advisor Application Packet.

Commissioner Henrigillis moved to approve the Student Advisor Application Packet, seconded by Commissioner Slavin.

Alderperson Quigley asked if Teen Advisors are able to serve more than one term. Mr. Kuffel stated that would be acceptable unless there were an abundance of applicants for the positions. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if there was an open position and if the intent was to fill positions from both Unified and West De Pere School Districts. Mr. Kuffel stated that there was an open position and that it would be ideal to have one from each district but not mandatory. Commissioner Black asked if the application packet could be posted to the website. Mr. Kuffel stated it could be.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Slavin, Schyndel, Weber, Quigley
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton

5. Consideration and possible action on Adopt-A-Drain Program

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated the Adopt-a-Drain program that was proposed at the August 13 Sustainability Commission was approved by Common Council at their August 20, 2024 meeting. Mr. Kuffel added that the intent of this item is to discuss the plan for the Adopt-a-Drain program moving forward and clarify what exhibits or handouts are needed at the September 19 Farmers Market booth. Mr. Kuffel stated that the anticipated booth location for Farmers Market was included on the map in the packet.

Commissioner Henrigillis explained that during the Farmers Market booth, participants will be able to use chalk to decorate the storm inlet to show what stormwater means to them and bring awareness, especially to locations that drain directly to the river. Commissioner Henrigillis stated she would send staff handouts to have printed for the booth. Commissioner Henrigillis stated she would also like to have a sign-up available for residents who want to participate in the new Adopt-a-Drain program. Mr. Kuffel stated that handwritten registrations would be acceptable during Farmers Market and then entered by staff following the event. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the online sign-up was ready. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that the forms were ready, but were not posted to the website yet and added that the option to upload photos was included as requested by Commissioner Black. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if a decision was made about removing inlets once they were adopted. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff would coordinate with residents if they request a drain that has been adopted. Ms. Marovich stated that residents that sign up on the paper form at the Farmers Market booth will be contacted by staff regarding their closest inlet and to verify their participation after they have been made aware of the location. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if residents could sign up for more than one location. Mr. Kuffel stated he did not see an issue with it. Commissioner Slavin asked if there would be a social media post in tandem with the Farmers Market to promote the program. Ms. Marovich stated she would work with social media staff to have something posted regarding the Commission being out at Farmers Market. Alderperson Quigley asked if the guidelines stated not to place yard waste on other people's lawn or terrace. Mr. Kuffel stated that the guidelines state to collect and take to the yard waste site, but does not specify not to place on the adjoining property terrace. Commissioner Black stated that she believes there are educational videos available for proper storm drain cleaning. Commissioner Henrigillis and Commissioner Slavin volunteered to film a City video for promotion and proper cleaning. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if a decision has been made for promotion of the volunteers or highlighting adopted drains. Mr. Kuffel stated that other locations create t-shirts and backpacks for participants. Ms. Marovich suggested creating a branded bucket for residents to use while they clean the drain. Mr. Kuffel suggested baby-stepping and first getting registrants and then working on additional promotional materials for the future. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the original intent had been to highlight the locations that had been adopted. Commissioner Henrigillis stated that was exactly the intent of the stickers proposed. Commissioner Weber asked if staff could make a map on the City website of the locations that had been adopted. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff could

create a map that would be updated as drains are adopted. Commissioner Weber suggested using the bucket as an incentive for residents that log their cleaning efforts. Commissioner Van Schyndel supported the t-shirt idea because residents will wear them at other times and promote the program, whereas the bucket will be used while they clean and not be as big of a promotion potentially. Commissioner Henrigillis suggested the swag/incentive to be finalized at a future meeting.

No action taken.

RESULT:	NO ACTION
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6. Consideration and possible action on Pollinator Gardens

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that staff met with The Plant Gal, to discuss pollinator gardens near the urban orchards at City of De Pere Parks: Voyageur Park, Braisher Park, VFW Park, and Samantha Park. Mr. Kuffel added that in this discussion, it was determined that 10-foot wide gardens along the short side of the orchard would be sufficient to promote pollinators at these locations with an estimated cost for the plants and planting at these four locations to be approximately \$4,000. Mr. Kuffel added that this estimate did not include any site clearing, tilling or preparation. Mr. Kuffel stated that the next steps would be to discuss the plan to install pollinator gardens with the City of De Pere Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department and the City's Urban Orchard Committee. Mr. Kuffel stated that with their approval, staff can work to solicit three quotes for the installation of pollinator gardens at the City parks. Mr. Kuffel explained that discussions with City staff will determine if site preparation needs to be included with the quotes or whether that can be completed in-house. Mr. Kuffel recommended meeting with the City Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department and Urban Orchard Committee to determine if the pollinator gardens would be feasible. If deemed feasible, staff will generate a proposal and reach out to potential solicitors for pricing.

Commissioner Slavin commented that these gardens would be a visible sign to the community to promote planned natural landscapes since the termination of No Mow May. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if staff knew approximately how much site preparation could cost. Mr. Kuffel explained that he usually assumes double the material cost when he estimates labor. Mr. Kuffel suggested having a line item for quarterly maintenance in the proposal. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if there was concern about the budget running out at the end of the year before work is completed. Mr. Kuffel explained that staff has requested a similar budget amount for next year. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the funds would be lost at the end of the year. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff could request to roll over funds to 2025 as long as there was a solid plan in place for using it.

Commissioner Slavin moved to approve staff's recommendation to reach out to City of De Pere Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department and the City's Urban Orchard Committee for approval to plant pollinator gardens at the urban orchards and to solicit quotes following their approval, seconded by Commissioner Weber. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously

RESULT:	ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Rachel Weber, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Slavin, Schyndel, Weber, Quigley
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton

7. Discussion on August Farmer's Market

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that the intent of this item is to provide the Commission the opportunity to discuss their experience at the August 15, 2024 Farmers Market booth. Mr. Kuffel stated he believed it was lower attendance due to poor weather.

Commissioner Weber commented that it was closer to zero attendance. Commissioner Henrigillis agreed with Commissioner Weber. Commissioner Black commented that there was a lot of rain, with standing water on the street, and added that she was surprised it was not cancelled. Commissioner Black asked if Commission members had the option to opt out of a market due to inclement weather. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that Definitely De Pere had reached out to staff at about 2 PM on the day of the market and stated they were still having the market and asked if the Commission had still planned to set up a booth and staff had indicated they would be there at that occasion, but it is an option to opt out. Commissioner Henrigillis asked if the Commission had the flexibility to go a different day if they opted out of one due to bad weather. Ms. Marovich offered to reach out to Definitely De Pere, if the Commission cancels due to bad weather, and see if there are other weeks that have openings, provided the Commission can get enough volunteers to staff the booth on the make up date. Mr. Kuffel stated that if there is inclement weather (rain) during the September date that it would add to the presentation for stormwater awareness.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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8. Consideration and possible action on Sustainability Commission Subgroups

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that Commissioner Black requested that the Sustainability Commission discuss the best practices for subgroups after discussion at the July Sustainability Commission meeting. Mr. Kuffel listed the three subgroups presently active for the Commission. Mr. Kuffel stated that Commissioners are discouraged from subgroups containing four or more commissioners as it would create a quorum. If a quorum is inadvertently created, the Commission risks violating Wisconsin Open Meetings Law. Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law is in place to promote openness in government and to provide Wisconsin citizens with an opportunity to observe and educate themselves about their government's operations. Mr. Kuffel added that from the City's standpoint, as long as a quorum is not initiated, there are no formal rules for a commission subgroup meeting but recommended that subgroups take meeting minutes and share group meeting minutes with subgroup members who were unable to attend a given meeting.

Commissioner Weber suggested creating an introductory packet for new members. This packet would include information on past and current initiatives and initiative history. Commissioner Van Schyndel commented that a lot of the information about initiatives is

available in minutes from past meetings. Commissioner Weber agreed that minutes show the history of the initiatives but added that coming into the meetings, new members only have so much time to review old meetings and this would give subgroups an opportunity to highlight key points regarding the initiatives. Commissioner Black agreed that there are a lot of meetings to try to review and having this packet creates a condensed version that is easier to review. Commissioner Black also commented that it could include government meeting procedure. Mr. Kuffel suggested that when new members join the Commission, there could be an agenda item to outline current initiatives. Alderperson Quigley offered to create a Robert's Rules of Order summary page for government meeting procedure. Commissioner Van Schyndel commented that the discussion seemed outside the agenda topic. Commissioner Weber clarified that the intro packet would help get information to new members about the subgroups. Commissioner Black further explained that it would help new members by including work of each subgroup to help determine whether that group was of interest to the new member, whether the new member could join an existing subgroup based on the number of current members, how to create new subgroups, and procedure for meetings. Mr. Kuffel volunteered that the City house the document and update following each meeting with information provided by the subgroups. Commissioner Weber added that teen advisors can join any or all subgroups without creating quorum because they are not voting members. Commissioner Black asked what action needed to be taken. Mr. Kuffel stated he did not need action on this agenda item and recapped that Alderperson Quigley would create a Robert's Rules of Order sheet and City staff would create summaries of the initiatives based on the minutes.

Commissioner Weber moved that subgroup rules/best practices be created by Commissioner Weber for review, along with the Robert's Rules from Alderperson Quigley, and initiative review by staff, seconded by Alderperson Quigley.

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, clarified that this document would be used for internal use by Commission members and not made publicly available on the City website. Commission members agreed that was the intent.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Rachel Weber, Commissioner
SECONDER:	John Quigley, Alderperson
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Slavin, Schyndel, Weber, Quigley
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton

9. Discuss Clean Energy Workplan Updates

Mr. Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the intent of this item is to allow the Sustainability Commission the opportunity to discuss next steps and any updates pertaining to the Clean Energy Workplan.

Members of the Clean Energy Subgroup stated they did not have any updates.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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IV. Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Henrigillis requested information on how tree species were selected for right-of-way planting.

Chase Kuffel stated he would be bringing forward an update on the Clean Air Initiative from meeting with Unified School District.

V. Adjournment

Commissioner Henrigillis moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 PM, seconded by Commissioner Van Schyndel. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Marovich