



Sustainability Commission

335 South Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
<http://www.de-pere.org>

Special Meeting

Final Minutes

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

5:30 PM

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Betty Sellenheim

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Larry Garrison	Commissioner	Remote	
Renee Gasch	Commissioner	Absent	
Randall Lawton	Commissioner	Remote	
Shana Defnet Ledvina	Aldersperson	Present	
Rebecca McKean	Commissioner	Remote	
Bill Niedzwiedz	Commissioner	Remote	
Eric Rakers	City Engineer	Remote	

Others present:

Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works

Betty Sellenheim, Recording Secretary

II. Action Items

1. Consider Sustainability Commission Chairperson

Betty Sellenheim, Recording Secretary, requested nominations for the position of Chairperson for the Sustainability Commission.

Commissioner Rakers nominated Aldersperson Shana Defnet-Ledvina, seconded by Commissioner McKean.

Upon vote the motion passed with a 5-0-1 vote, with Commissioner Ledvina abstaining.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Eric Rakers, City Engineer
SECONDER:	Rebecca McKean, Commissioner
AYES:	Garrison, Lawton, Defnet Ledvina, McKean, Niedzwiedz, Rakers
ABSENT:	Renee Gasch

2. Consider Sustainability Commission Vice - Chairperson

Chairperson Ledvina requested nominations for the Vice-Chairperson for the Sustainability Commission.

Commissioner Garrison nominated Commissioner Renee Gasch, seconded by Commissioner Niedzwiedz.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Larry Garrison, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Bill Niedzwiedz, Commissioner
AYES:	Garrison, Lawton, Defnet Ledvina, McKean, Niedzwiedz, Rakers
ABSENT:	Renee Gasch

3. Approval of the June 9, 2020 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Ledvina moved to approve the June 9, 2020 meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Garrison.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Shana Defnet Ledvina, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Larry Garrison, Commissioner
AYES:	Garrison, Lawton, Defnet Ledvina, McKean, Niedzwiedz, Rakers
ABSENT:	Renee Gasch

4. Consider Baseline Assessment Projects

Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, explained this agenda item as discussed in previous meetings. Commission members were to compile a list of 3-5 items from the DNR baseline scoresheet they wished to see the commission work on in 2020.

Individually, the commission members listed the topics they felt the commission should work toward achieving and discussion could follow each topic.

Bill Niedzwiedz discussed the following topics of interest: League of American bicyclists certification, inventory of contaminated sites, recognition as Bird City of Wisconsin, inventory wetlands and ensure no loss, annual government fleet fuel use, and inventory paved surfaces.

Rebecca McKean discussed the following topics of interest: inventory contaminated sites, inventory paved surfaces, and inventory wetlands (in association with St Norbert GIS courses), create and implement climate change action plan, facilitate a group-buy program-volume based pricing on energy efficiency/renewable energy, and commit to science-based, community based GHG.

Larry Garrison discussed the following topics of interest: bike issues-bike routes, mandatory bike parking, wetlands preservation (Fox River trail), tree city/tree canopy, street lights, and noise abatement.

Eric Rakers discussed the following topics of interest: League of American Bicyclists certification, plan to identify disconnections and funding sources for bikes/peds, financial assistance for sewer lateral replacement, school plans with existing bike/ped structures (safe routes to school), and on-street/off-street trail network to rec facilities and malls.

Randall Lawton discussed the following topics of interest: 75 foot natural zone by surface water.

Shana Ledvina discussed the following topics of interest: bike parking, tree planting with new developments, tree canopy goals, Bird City Wisconsin recognition, replacing toilets, pedestrian safety task force, and ordinance banning smoking/e-cigs in parks/public events.

Chairperson Ledvina asked Mr. Thoresen what goals have been established by the internal staff sustainability group. Mr. Thoresen stated the internal team has not met since the start of COVID. Chairperson Ledvina asked if the toilet replacements could be a topic

of discussion. Mr. Thoresen stated it could be discussed but staff generally replaces the toilets only when they break. Commissioner Niedzwiedz asked if a brick could be added to the toilets to displace water in the tank and reduce the volume used. Mr. Thoresen stated that was an idea but many toilets in the city buildings are tank-less. Chairperson Ledvina asked if the fuel usage of government fleet was accessible information. Mr. Thoresen stated the fuel usage is tracked for each piece of municipal equipment.

Chairperson Ledvina moved to refer back to staff to compile a list of all topics of interest and bring back to Sustainability Commission at the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Niedzwiedz.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Shana Defnet Ledvina, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Bill Niedzwiedz, Commissioner
AYES:	Garrison, Lawton, Defnet Ledvina, McKean, Niedzwiedz, Rakers
ABSENT:	Renee Gasch

5. Consideration and possible action on Clean Energy Resolution*

Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, explained this item is for discussion only tonight and the intent is not to make a recommendation to Council. The discussion was a mini-workshop/brainstorming session to discuss any changes that commissioners may wish to see made to the draft resolution.

Commissioner McKean suggested a few changes to the draft resolution. In the second paragraph change St. Norbert College to St. Norbert Student Government Association. There has been no formal commitment from the College administration yet and the resolution should be as accurate as possible. Mr. Thoresen agreed that all the statements need to be factual. Commissioner Lawton expressed concerns with the wording. Commissioner Rakers expressed concerns regarding the resolution and the lack of a plan to guide the commission. Commissioner McKean agreed with Commissioner Rakers and stated the aspirational nature of the resolution is important and shows the city is making a commitment to sustainability. Commissioner Niedzwiedz and Commissioner Lawton discussed some concerns and changes to wording.

In the fourth paragraph, Commissioner McKean suggested changing it to “WHEREAS, continual advancements in clean energy technology as well as opportunities for federal and state grant money have made investment in many types of renewable energy more cost-effective than further investment in fossil fuels (which are a major contributor to global climate change), posing a financial benefit for the long-term budget of the City of De Pere;”

In the fifth paragraph, Commissioner McKean suggested changing it to “WHEREAS, Brown County, including the City of De Pere, is already experiencing long-term climatic changes, such as increased annual temperatures of 3 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit and a 15% increase in annual precipitation, as well as an increase in the severity of individual weather events, such as increased intensity of individual precipitation events, which have contributed to increased flooding along the Fox and East Rivers;” Commissioner McKean stated her reference for this information was the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI).

In the sixth paragraph, Commissioner McKean suggested changing it to “WHEREAS, climate scientists from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (the IPCC) have

found that if rapid action is not taken to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, the planet will reach 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Reaching this level of warming will lead to long-term changes in the climate system that will have negative impacts on human health, food and water security, and economic growth;”

Commissioner McKean also suggested adding a paragraph that read “WHEREAS, the goal of carbon neutrality fits within a cornerstone element of the City of De Pere’s comprehensive plan related to sustainability and becoming an eco-municipality, such that the City Council and the Mayor of De Pere already adopted a resolution “endorsing the principles of sustainability and applying them in city decision making, planning, policy making, and municipal practices” and a second resolution committing the City of De Pere “...to working towards greater sustainability as an eco-municipality”;”

Chairperson Ledvina expressed concerns with paragraph eight. Commissioner Garrison agreed and suggested using aspirational and less committal language (‘pursue’ or ‘strive’ to reach benchmarks). Commissioner Rakers agreed with concerns regarding this language and the proposed changes to ‘pursue’. Commissioner Rakers suggested including wording about cost-effectiveness and efficiency and wording from Eau Claire’s resolution regarding unintended consequences and short and long term achievements based on technological advancements.

Mr. Thoresen suggested a few changes to the draft resolution. In the eighth paragraph, change to one of the following suggestions or combining them into one “BE IT RESOLVED, that given the City’s first choice for meeting energy needs is energy efficiency measures that reduce both operating costs and carbon footprint, the City will prioritize energy efficiency and conservation as a means of rapidly reducing the need for centralized fossil energy generation” or “BE IT RESOLVED, that given energy efficiency is a key and economical choice for meeting energy needs and reducing our carbon footprint, the City will advance energy efficiency and conservation projects, programs, and outreach”. Mr. Thoresen thought the following two sections should be added to the beginning of the document to add history: “WHEREAS, the protection, stewardship, improvement, and promotion of the environment is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety, and welfare of the De Pere community for present and future generations;” and “WHEREAS, on July 17, 2018, the City Council established a Sustainability Commission to explore sustainability initiatives that can be implemented in De Pere, with the ultimate goal of providing a more sustainable, livable, and healthy community;”. Mr. Thoresen agreed with a previous suggestion from Commissioner Rakers and suggested adding the paragraph from Eau Claire that states “WHEREAS, the process to achieve these ambitious goals represents a journey that needs to be realistic and sensitive to unintended impacts. Careful and ongoing planning is necessary to understand what is practical in the short term while emphasizing efforts in the mid and long-term ranges, where technological advancements occur and costs decline;”.

All suggestions were met with positive reactions from the commission members.

Commissioner Garrison questioned how the commission will proceed with analyzing the proposed changes. Mr. Thoresen stated staff would incorporate the changes that were discussed and send to Commission members and discuss at a future meeting for recommendation to Council.

Mr. Thoresen scheduled a special meeting to be held on August 11, 2020 at 5:30 PM where the City of Green Bay work plan and changes to the resolution will be discussed.

III. Future Agenda Items

None

IV. Adjournment

Commissioner Rakers moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM, seconded by Commissioner Garrison.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Sellenheim