



Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

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

Final Minutes

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

5:30 PM

GoToMeeting

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Alderperson Shana Defnet Ledvina

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

Others present:

Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director

Betty Sellenheim, Recording Secretary

Alderperson Jonathan Hansen

II. Public Comment

None

III. Items

1. Approval of the March 9, 2021 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Alderperson Ledvina moved to approve the March 9, 2021 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Gasch.

Commissioner Rakers asked for a status update regarding the solar panel tutorial discussion from March. Commissioner Gasch provided an update.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

2. Consider Election of Chairperson

Alderperson Ledvina nominated Commissioner Gasch as chairperson. Commissioner Rakers nominated Alderperson Ledvina as chairperson. Commissioner Gasch declined her nomination. Upon vote, the motion to elect Alderperson Ledvina as Chairperson passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	Eric Rakers, City Engineer
AYES:	Renee Gasch, Rebecca McKean, Eric Rakers
ABSTAIN:	Shana Defnet Ledvina
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton
EXCUSED:	Larry Garrison, Bill Niedzwiedz

3. Consider Election of Vice Chairperson

Alderperson Ledvina nominated Commissioner McKean as vice chairperson, seconded by Commissioner Gasch. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	Shana Defnet Ledvina, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Renee Gasch, Commissioner
AYES:	Renee Gasch, Shana Defnet Ledvina, Eric Rakers
ABSTAIN:	Rebecca McKean
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton
EXCUSED:	Larry Garrison, Bill Niedzwiedz

4. Consider and Possible Action on Commissioner Gasch's Request Regarding Farmer's Market Booth Proposal*

Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, introduced the proposal from Commissioner Gasch to staff a booth at the Farmers Market once a month. Commissioner Gasch elaborated on her proposal. Commissioner Gasch asked about staff providing printed materials at the booth. Mr. Thoresen offered a few suggestions for display options at the booth and asked Commissioner Gasch to take the lead on determining what information could be displayed. Mr. Thoresen also provided options for possible funding for small initiatives, staff availability, and the need to find people to staff the booth. Commissioner Ledvina asked if staff could provide a table. Mr. Thoresen explained staff would work with Commissioner Gasch, who is leading the charge, to determine what would be needed and Commissioner Gasch added that she assumed Definitely De Pere could provide that. Commissioner Gasch asked how volunteers will sign up to staff the booth. Mr. Thoresen explained staff would set up an online signup. Alderperson Ledvina asked to have the time slots clarified. Commissioner Gasch explained what was listed in her proposal but offered other options. Mr. Thoresen explained next steps for setting this item in motion. Commissioner Rakers stated he would prepare information regarding stormwater for the booth. Commissioner Gasch asked that information be presented on boards that residents can be prompted to take pictures of for reference, rather than having flyers or handouts.

Alderperson Ledvina moved to approve Commissioner Gasch's request regarding Definitely De Pere Farmer's Market Booth proposal, seconded by Commissioner Gasch.

Commissioner Gasch asked that City Alderpersons be offered the opportunity to volunteer at the Sustainability Commission booth.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

5. Discuss Commissioner McKean's Request Regarding GIS Project on Paved Surfaces
- Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, introduced Commissioner McKean's request to provide an update on the paved surfaces project as part of the Sustainability Scoresheet. Commissioner McKean updated the commission on the project. Commissioner Gasch asked what actionable items might come from compiling the data. Commissioner McKean stated her belief that it lies within the use of the information to reduce the amount of paved surfaces (unused parking lots, street narrowing during reconstruction, etc.). Commissioner Rakers agreed with Commissioner McKean with regards to using this information during street reconstruction to narrow the street width and offered information on a few upcoming projects that would benefit the city in reducing the paved surfaces. Mr. Thoresen offered additional information regarding construction in the city. Alderperson Ledvina asked Commissioner Rakers how often streets are reconstructed in the City. Mr. Rakers stated the City completes one major street reconstruction each year. Alderperson Ledvina asked if there was a cost savings by narrowing the streets and Commissioner Rakers stated there is. Mr. Thoresen also offered that staff always considers the uses of the street when narrowing streets and designating parking (i.e. garbage collection, snow plowing, traffic calming). Commissioner McKean asked for input regarding creation of a story map of the information. Commissioners and staff provided positive input. Commissioner McKean asked if staff had received follow up from the DNR regarding the inclusion of private surfaces; she did not believe they would be included. Mr. Thoresen stated he did not believe he had received follow up and would check into it, but believed Commissioner McKean was correct and these surfaces would not be included.
- Discussion only. No action required.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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6. Discuss Commissioner Gasch Request Regarding Brown County Clean Energy Subcommittee
- Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, asked Commissioner Gasch to explain her request regarding the Brown County Clean Energy Subcommittee. Commissioner Gasch explained that Brown County had approved the formation of a Clean Energy Subcommittee and they are accepting applications for members.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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7. Discuss Commissioner Gasch's Request Regarding No Mow May
- Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, explained the irony of this request (having been requested as a future agenda item to be implemented in 2022 by Sustainability, but then passed by Common Council for 2021) and future changes that may need to be made to the program going forward. Alderperson Hansen provided feedback he received from

constituents in his district. Alderperson Ledvina shared her personal experience having participated and stated that more research should be done to determine where the full benefits lie for pollinators. Mr. Thoresen added that the City experienced an atypical spring. Commissioner Rakers stated his opinion on no mow May and offered an alternative of promoting permanent natural areas in lawns. Alderperson Ledvina and Commissioner Gasch provided positive interest in promoting permanent natural lawn sections. Mr. Thoresen stated this item would be brought back in September to work out issues surrounding rules/guidelines for future implementation in 2022.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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8. Discuss Commissioner Raker's Request Regarding Promote Bike/Walk to Work Event

Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, introduced the request from Commissioner Rakers to promote walk/bike to work options. Commissioner Rakers outlined his request and follow-up plans for bringing additional information to the September meeting and requested input from Commissioners. Alderperson Ledvina supported the request and asked to clarify about working with other municipalities on a regional event. Commissioner Rakers stated that he would work with Wello, which is a regional organization that promotes well-being and community connectivity, and determine if a regional event existed and if not, attempt to promote one beginning in 2022. Commissioner McKean stated her support and particularly liked the idea of working with private companies to promote within their organizations and wellness programs. Alderperson Ledvina mentioned a program the City offers its employees that rewards them with a free lunch when they go for a 1-mile walk over their lunch period and thought this could be a program private businesses could offer to incentivize activity within their staff. Mr. Thoresen suggested coordinating with walk/bike to school events. Commissioner Rakers stated based on the support provided by commissioners, he would do additional research and present it at the September meeting.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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9. Consider and Possible Action on Renewable Energy Work Plan*

Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, provided background history regarding the City of Green Bay renewable energy work plan and the modifications by Commissioner McKean to retrofit their plan to the needs of the City of De Pere. Mr. Thoresen explained intentions for setting a baseline, using WPS data, for City operations and facilities. Alderperson Ledvina asked for clarification from past meetings, if the work plan needed to be approved by the internal staff sustainability team before being presented to Common Council. Mr. Thoresen stated it would be presented at the next internal team. Alderperson Ledvina asked if the work plan would be re-presented to the Commission with feedback. Mr. Thoresen stated that is preferred but some commission members have expressed concerns regarding an urgency for approval and action. Commissioner Gasch explained the urgency she placed on this item was in regards to COVID relief funding and making a request to fund sustainable projects. Mr. Thoresen explained that the City did not currently know what was eligible to be funded with COVID relief monies. Commissioner Gasch urged staff to consider making a request and have a case built for their worthiness for funding with COVID relief monies. Commissioner Rakers suggested making a motion allowing the work plan to be presented to Common Council, provided the internal sustainability team did not have comments, and if there were comments, to

set up a special commission meeting to discuss possible changes prior to forwarding to Common Council. Mr. Thoresen agreed with the option laid out by Commissioner Rakers. Commissioners McKean and Gasch supported that plan. Alderperson Ledvina asked if staff foresaw Common Council being cancelled in early July due to Independence Day. Mr. Thoresen stated Common Council meetings are very rarely cancelled and he didn't foresee it being an issue.

Commissioner Rakers moved to have the work plan presented to the internal sustainability team and if there were no comments or changes, move this item directly to Common Council, seconded by Commissioner Gasch. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

10. Consider and Possible Action On Commissioner Gasch's Request Regarding Clean Energy Resolution*

Scott Thoresen, Public Works Director, explained the history of the resolution through past Sustainability Commission meetings and explained the resolution being presented in the packet was not the same resolution the Commission had previously modified. Commissioner Gasch expressed her intentions to move this and the work plan forward for approval by the internal sustainability team and outlined the changes she made, including: language regarding the American Rescue Funds (COVID relief) and years for achieving milestone levels. Commissioner Gasch explained the years are non-binding, but believes they are necessary to meet the requirements for Green Tier. Mr. Thoresen reiterated the purpose of the Sustainability Commission, to promote and create sustainable opportunities for the City of De Pere community and residents, whereas the City's internal team is tasked with City operations and facilities. Mr. Thoresen stated his concerns with the resolution with regards to staff and budgeting decisions and stated in other communities where similar resolutions had been passed, consulting firms were hired to assess a city-wide baseline. Commissioner Gasch rebutted Mr. Thoresen's concerns, stating it was not right for the Commission to ask residents to invest in sustainable practices if the City was not equally investing in their operations. Mr. Thoresen outlined sustainable practices the city has implemented and the increased costs associated with them. Mr. Thoresen explained there will be a time for implementation when the cost of sustainable practices align with the market. Alderperson Ledvina provided a personal example of choosing a less sustainable option based on price and stated she didn't think it would tie the hands of council but would provide a policy to work towards. Mr. Thoresen explained the changes originally proposed when the years were removed, that allowed for Council to make the decisions to implement sustainable operations when it was economically appropriate and viable for the City to pursue. Mr. Thoresen also shared a personal experience and how City operations are looking toward the future of electric vehicles and equipment with clean energy power sources. Commissioner Rakers provided input regarding the goal years and the impact they could have on economic decisions for the City and requested documentation be provided to back up statistics. Mr. Thoresen read from the July 2020 draft resolution the changes

implemented when the goal years were removed. Commissioner Gasch stated she felt staff was resisting her requests, as a community member, for change. Commissioner Rakers stated that although he is staff, he is also a commissioner, and as a whole, there is agreement on a desire to meet sustainable levels but economic impacts for the entire city must be considered. Alderperson Ledvina asked Mr. Thoresen if it was an option to send the resolution with the work plan to the internal sustainability team. Mr. Thoresen stated if that was the direction of the commission, he would suggest both versions of the resolution, from the packet and July 2020 draft, be provided for review. Commissioner McKean stated that she could provide documentation for some of the statistics listed in the resolution. Mr. Thoresen suggested the Commission move the draft resolutions to the internal sustainability commission for review and set a special meeting if the commission desires. Alderperson Ledvina agreed with that plan of action. Commissioner Gasch stated her support and requested the comments be brought back to the Commission for review prior to Council. Mr. Thoresen stated he would work with the Chairperson to set a special meeting in July.

Alderperson Ledvina moved to have both drafts of the Clean Energy Resolution presented to the internal sustainability team for review, seconded by Commissioner Gasch. Upon vote, the motion passed 3-1 with Commissioner Rakers voting no.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [3 TO 1]
MOVER:	Shana Defnet Ledvina, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Renee Gasch, Commissioner
AYES:	Renee Gasch, Shana Defnet Ledvina, Rebecca McKean
NAYS:	Eric Rakers
ABSENT:	Randall Lawton
EXCUSED:	Larry Garrison, Bill Niedzwiedz

IV. Future Agenda Items

None

V. Adjournment

Alderperson Ledvina moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 PM, seconded by Commissioner Gasch. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Any person wishing to attend this meeting who, because of disability, requires special accommodations should contact the Clerk's office at 339-4050 by Noon, the previous day so that arrangements can be made.

***Items with an asterisk require City Council approval.**

Agenda Sent To:

Alderpersons
City Administrator
Mayor
Department Heads
TV, Newspapers & Radio Stations
Kress Family Library

De Pere Chamber of Commerce

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Sellenheim