



Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

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

Final Minutes

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

5:30 PM

Council Chambers and Virtual

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Alderperson John Quigley

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jayne Black	Commissioner	Present	
Emily Henrigillis	Commissioner	Present	
Randall Lawton	Commissioner	Present	
Nicole Slavin	Commissioner	Present	
Rachel Weber	Commissioner	Present	
John Quigley	Alderperson	Present	
Hope Dragseth	Teen Advisor	Present	

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer
Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary
Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works
Jonathan Hansen, Alderperson
Cory Groshek, Greener Bay Compost
Dona Persson

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

Cory Groshek, provided additional information about home compost bins and suggested contacting Mark Walter (Brown County Port and Resource Recovery), Recycling Connections of Stevens Point, and/or Winnebago County regarding bulk compost bin sales. Mr. Groshek also voiced concerns about home composting.

III. Items

1. Approval of the March 12, 2024 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Henrigillis moved to approve the March 12, 2024 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Lawton, Slavin, Weber, Quigley

2. Consideration and possible action on Proposal for 2024 Composting Services*

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated the agreement attached in the packet was reviewed and approved by the City Attorney and Greener Bay Compost. Mr. Kuffel explained that the Sustainability Commission had \$10,000 budgeted for this public/private partnership. Mr. Kuffel stated the agreement was being presented to the Commission for consideration and approval and if approved, would be forwarded to Common Council for final approval.

Alderson Quigley moved to approve proposal for 2024 composting services, seconded by Commissioner Henrigillis.

Alderson Quigley asked how the sign-ups would be administered. Mr. Kuffel explained that staff would work directly with Cory to determine residency requirements of individuals signed up and reimburse monthly for half of the cost. Alderson Quigley made a suggestion about holding a spot in the program for part-time residents who leave for a portion of the year.

Commissioner Black moved to open the meeting for public comment at 5:37 PM, seconded by Alderson Quigley. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Cory Groshek, Greener Bay Compost, explained a proposal for the future to accommodate the individuals who are part-time residents.

Alderson Quigley moved to return to regular session at 5:39 PM, seconded by Commissioner Black. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Quigley, Alderson
SECONDER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Lawton, Slavin, Weber, Quigley

3. Consider and Possible Action for 2024 No Mow May*

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained No Mow May procedures and recapped the past participation. Mr. Kuffel stated that administrative staff has requested that the recommendation be permanent, rather than reviewing annually. Mr. Kuffel stated that City of De Pere has collaborated with City of Green Bay the past two years and would continue this collaboration if the Commission decided to move forward with No Mow May.

Alderson Quigley moved to open the meeting for public comment at 5:41 PM, seconded by Commissioner Henrigillis. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Dona Persson, 1108 Cardinal St, stated she was not in favor of No Mow May and added that it promotes pests and weeds, which she actively tries to mitigate through pesticides and such. Ms. Persson suggested having the City provide flower seeds rather than No Mow May signs for the cost and promote the installation of designated areas for pollinators in backyards. Ms. Persson commented negatively on the slow mow summer proposal. Ms. Persson added that she had to call the City multiple times for locations that had not mowed by June 5 and had weeds over three feet tall.

Commissioner Henrigillis moved to return to regular session at 5:45 PM, seconded by Commissioner Lawton. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Alderson Quigley explained the slow mow summer proposal as an alternative or in addition to No Mow May and added that slow mow summer would not allow residents to

violate the ordinance and lawns could not be longer than 12 inches. Alderperson Quigley reiterated that the action taken tonight will be permanently for or against No Mow May and would not be reviewed annually. Alderperson Quigley stated he has been contacted by constituents that are against No Mow May and added that each property is able to make the decision to participate or not for themselves. Mr. Quigley also added that Ms. Persson commented about having designated areas on a person's property for pollinators and explained that a recent ordinance revision allows for just that type of planting. Alderperson Quigley added that planned natural landscapes require a buffer area along each property line and right-of-way and stated that he would like to see the City move in the direction of having more planned natural landscape spaces. Commissioner Henrigillis stated that during No Mow May discussions in 2023, the Commission was looking to be able to end No Mow May and move towards planned natural landscapes, but felt the effort was not promoted effectively. Commissioner Weber reiterated her comments from March that she did not believe the transition of No Mow May to slow mow summer to planned natural landscapes was achieved in 2023, causing No Mow May to remain controversial. Commissioner Black agreed that the transition was not clear and that there was a lack of education about all aspects (No Mow May, slow mow summer, and planned natural landscapes). Commissioner Black added that there is a need for healthy habitats and happy neighbors. Commissioner Black asked if No Mow May worked. Commissioner Henrigillis stated that as an educational tool it worked. Alderperson Quigley stated that it also worked for awareness of pollinators, but it has not worked to convince everyone in the community that it is the right way to proceed. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that there is a fear that locations use No Mow May as a way to neglect their property for a month, which would need to be overcome before No Mow May can be fully embraced. Alderperson Quigley stated that he was leaning towards ending No Mow May and having the Commission focus more on education and outreach about more permanent solutions. Commissioners Henrigillis and Black agreed that additional educational resources should be made available for homeowners to empower them to make a difference for pollinators that is not No Mow May. Commissioner Slavin suggested increasing the use of social media to educate about other alternatives such as mowing less frequently and pollinator identification and increasing the public interaction on this topic. Commissioner Lawton reasoned that it took a long time for humans to cause the decline in pollinator species and stated that they would not make a miraculous recovery simply by offering No Mow May. Commissioner Lawton stated that as a Commission the task is to become knowledgeable on the options that benefit the community and pollinators and work to create change. Commissioner Lawton suggested altering the parameters and opting for a Pollinator May, rather than No Mow May. Advisor Dragseth stated that outreach needed to be more than a single social media post and supported offering a pollinator month, along with promoting the urban orchards. Commissioner Black stated she was not in favor of terminating No Mow May without having a plan in place to continue to support pollinators in other ways. Commissioner Henrigillis suggested having pollinators as a topic at the Farmers Market and offered to spearhead that mission. Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, provided background from the Commission and Common Council that preferred a longer term solution of supporting pollinators such as planned natural landscapes, which led to the ordinance being changed in 2023. Mr. Thoresen explained the regulations for planned natural landscapes. Mr. Thoresen added that there are multiple properties that had planned natural landscapes before they were approved because they cared to promote pollinators all season.

Aldersperson Quigley moved to terminate No Mow May but promote and educate the community on alternatives, seconded by Commissioner Henrigillis.

Mr. Kuffel reiterated that it would be a permanent discontinuation of No Mow May. Commissioner Lawton asked why the Commission would continue to offer No Mow May and promote and educate on alternatives. Aldersperson Quigley explained that he opted for terminating No Mow May because of the controversial nature of it and that it allowed for neglect. Aldersperson Quigley stated that terminating No Mow May also allowed the Commission to highlight the need to help pollinators year-round, rather than focusing on one month. Commissioner Weber stated that while No Mow May can be controversial, other topics are as well such as pesticide use. Commissioner Weber stated she was hesitant to dismiss No Mow May without a plan in place to replace these efforts. Commissioner Lawton pointed out the number of registrants that could be upset by the termination of the program and stated that it does not look good for the commission to remove this program. Aldersperson Quigley stated that he would be allowing his lawn to grow longer, but pointed out that in the highest year, there were about 285 participants in a City of over 22,000. Aldersperson Quigley pointed out that this passionate minority will likely participate in alternatives being promoted to replace No Mow May. Aldersperson Quigley asked for suggestions for promoting alternatives. Commissioner Henrigillis offered to provide information to the Commission for consideration. Commissioner Weber stated that No Mow May was successful in the sense that the word got out and stated her support of a campaign promoting native plantings, in an artistic and aesthetically pleasing way. Commissioner Black stated that she would not call No Mow May a success because of the lack of education, the small number of participants versus the overall population, and the amount of confusion surrounding the program. Commissioner Black stated she was okay with terminating No Mow May without an exact plan in place, but knowing the Commission would work to create something better than what was done the past few years. Aldersperson Quigley stated that it would need to be on faith that the members would continue to work to promote alternatives to help pollinators, as creating a separate plan is outside the realm of the present action on the agenda item. Aldersperson Quigley also warned not to have the members spread themselves too thin and to focus on creating good results. Mr. Kuffel added that education and outreach are key areas of focus for the Commission and stated that No Mow May was the springboard to creating the Planned Natural Landscape, which was a success. Aldersperson Quigley reiterated his motion. Mr. Thoresen explained that per the agenda item, the motion can only be to approve or deny No Mow May. Mr. Kuffel stated the education and promotion of alternatives would be a future agenda item. Ms. Marovich stated that based on the motion, if members were in favor of keeping No Mow May, they would vote against the motion. Aldersperson Quigley amended his motion to be termination of No Mow May. Commissioner Henrigillis agreed with the amendment.

The motion passed with a 4-2 vote with Commissioners Weber and Lawton voting no.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [4 TO 2]
MOVER:	John Quigley, Aldersperson
SECONDER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
AYES:	Jayne Black, Emily Henrigillis, Nicole Slavin, John Quigley
NAYS:	Randall Lawton, Rachel Weber

4. Consideration and possible action on 2024 Farmers Market Booth*

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that staff reached out to Definitely De Pere and they are excited to have the Commission return for 2024 on a monthly basis. Mr. Kuffel stated that the Commission would need to decide if they wanted to participate for 2024 and which dates.

Commission Black asked how frequently the Commission participated in 2023. Commissioner Henrigillis stated it was once per month. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, agreed it was once per month on about the fourth Thursday of each month. Ms. Marovich added that it did not sound like the Commission would need to pick the same Thursday of each month and that it could vary on a monthly basis based on what worked best for members. Commissioner Henrigillis asked to have a poll created to gauge availability to select the best dates to participate. Ms. Marovich stated she could make a poll. Alderperson Quigley asked if this item required a motion. Ms. Marovich stated that it would require a motion to either participate in 2024 or not, but the motion would not need to include the dates. Alderperson Quigley stated that he would prefer having the same Thursday of each month and asked if it was difficult to fill time slots. Commissioner Black asked if Commissioners needed to do both shifts. Ms. Marovich stated that Commissioners should do the shifts they signed up for. Commissioner Black reworded her question and asked if only the early time slots were filled, if the booth could be taken down at the end of the early shift. Ms. Marovich stated she would check with Definitely De Pere, but added that most events require the booths to be set up the entire time. Commissioner Slavin stated she enjoyed working the Farmers Market booth and added that it was an opportunity to spend time with other commissioners and interact with community members on important topics to the Commission. Commissioner Henrigillis suggested having each event themed.

Commissioner Henrigillis approved Sustainability Commission participation in 2024 Farmers Market, seconded by Commissioner Slavin.

Alderperson Quigley requested that participation be once per month with the dates to be determined.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Emily Henrigillis, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Lawton, Slavin, Weber, Quigley

5. Consideration and Possible Action on 2024 Pollinator Week

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that the intent of this item was to make the Commission aware that June 17-23 is Pollinator Week and stated that a excerpt from pollinator.org was included explaining Pollinator Week. Mr. Kuffel stated that if the Commission wished to move forward with honoring Pollinator Week, the Commission could sponsor events, have interactive crafts at the Farmers Market, and/or partner with local organizations to host garden tours. Mr. Kuffel added that a sample proclamation was included in the packet that could be used as a template for a proclamation through Council.

Commissioner Henrigillis stated that she supported Pollinator Week, especially with the termination of No Mow May. Alderperson Quigley stated his support of Pollinator Week and added that Mayor Boyd enjoys reading proclamations at Council. Commissioner Henrigillis offered to help with planning events for Pollinator Week.

Alderperson Quigley moved to approve participation in 2024 Pollinator Week, seconded by Commissioner Slavin.

Alderperson Quigley stated members could use Pollinator Week as an alternative for No Mow May. Commissioner Lawton suggested having the Farmers Market on the Thursday of that week.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Quigley, Alderperson
SECONDER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Lawton, Slavin, Weber, Quigley

6. Consideration and possible action on Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Educational Series
- Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that National Bike and Roll to School Day is May 8, 2024. Mr. Kuffel added that the intent of Bike and Roll to School Day is to invite participants to celebrate the joy of active commuting while building a sense of community and school spirit. Mr. Kuffel stated the idea behind this item would be that the Commission could lead an educational series on social media about bike and pedestrian safety and the benefits of active commuting.

Commissioner Black stated she would like to see it tied to the Clean Air Initiative. Advisor Dragseth suggested having the schools promote the event through their newsletters. Alderperson Quigley stated that as a teacher, he sees some schools promote this event heavily while others do a more minimal approach to promotion. Commissioner Slavin suggested having participants submit photos of themselves walking or biking to school that the City could highlight as photos of the day.

Commissioner Black moved to support bicycle and pedestrian safety educational series in May, seconded by Commissioner Slavin.

Alderperson Quigley pointed out that someone will need to take the lead on crafting the message being provided by the Commission for this series. Commissioner Slavin offered to connect with Wello for materials that could be promoted.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jayne Black, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Nicole Slavin, Commissioner
AYES:	Black, Henrigillis, Lawton, Slavin, Weber, Quigley

7. Clean Air Initiative Update

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, requested the Commission provide any updates on the Clean Air Initiative and added that during the March 12 meeting the commissioners discussed drafting a pilot program for consideration and review. Mr. Kuffel asked the subgroup to provide any update they have from discussions outside of the meeting.

Commissioner Black stated that during the March meeting she had asked members to bring back creative ideas for promoting the clean air initiative/no idling. Commissioner Black provided an example of speaking about the clean air initiative at PTO meetings. Alderperson Quigley asked if there were other school groups that commission members could speak with as each group will likely have a different subgroup of parents. Alderperson Quigley added that newsletters are a good idea, but it might not have a lasting impact. Advisor Dragseth suggested having the clean air initiative as a theme for Farmers Market one month, possibly September when school is starting back up. Commissioner Henrigillis added that the air monitors could be at Farmers Market for residents to see how they operate and what they detect and how that changes based on what is happening around them at the time. Commissioner Black suggested meeting with the new superintendent during the summer to revisit the topic with the schools and discuss what has worked and where the Commission struggles to get acceptance of the initiative on school grounds. Commissioner Weber suggested designing bumper stickers to be handed out at Farmers Market. Commissioner Weber also reiterated wording discussed at a past meeting about highlighting the initiative on school grounds not being district sponsored. Commissioner Black stated that since the initiative has the support of the superintendents, it should be district sponsored, but that members are still struggling to get access on grounds while dealing with eleven different principals. Commissioner Black stated that was part of what led her to request additional ideas for promoting the clean air initiative. Commissioner Black added that when they were able to speak to parents on site, it was highly effective and would like to broach that topic with the superintendents this summer. Alderperson Quigley added that during the meetings, the superintendents support the initiative, but also have many other requests to consider and balance and suggested having multiple meetings with the superintendents to keep the topic on their minds. Alderperson Quigley stated that having received the push-back that members have, members know better what to request during meetings with the schools. Mr. Kuffel suggested having a draft ready for the air monitor pilot program to be presented for review and approval as well. Mr. Kuffel asked if the school is required to react if the air monitor detects concerns. Commissioner Black stated there are no state laws that require the school to act on indoor air quality. Commissioner Henrigillis stated there are handouts available that explain what can be done if the air monitor detects issues. Commissioner Black stated that the EPA has a toolkit that can be shared with the air monitors. Mr. Kuffel stated that make sure that information is included in the draft for the pilot program and asked to have information provided on the type of monitors being considered. Commissioner Black asked if there were any other ideas for promoting the clean air initiative. Commissioner Lawton suggested presenting the information to the kids in some way and they could educate their families on the importance. Advisor Dragseth mentioned that her school offers AP Environmental Science and suggested the Commission try to get in to speak with that group of students, the ecology class, or the sustainability club. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that she was able to order free copies of Magic School Bus books about cleaning up bus exhaust and suggested they be placed in younger grade level classrooms or with the air monitors. Alderperson Quigley suggested using the agenda topics as Farmers Market themes, including May/June for pollinators and September for clean air. Commissioner Weber

reminded the Commission that September has stormwater awareness week. Alderperson Quigley suggested August for clean air to help form habits early for going into the school year.

Discussion item only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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8. Discuss Clean Energy Workplan Updates

Alderperson Quigley apologized for not following through on subgroup requests or getting subgroup meetings scheduled and asked if another member would be willing to lead the group. Commissioner Black offered to take the lead and verified that Alderperson Quigley still wished to be a member of the subgroup. Advisor Dragseth suggested having information available to homeowners regarding the Inflation Reduction Act. Commissioner Black agreed with offering information on the Inflation Reduction Act and the funding available to homeowners, families, businesses, and cities.

Discussion item only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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9. Discuss Sustainability Commission Vacancies

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that in September 2023, the Commission make-up was altered to remove the staff position, add a community member position, and add two teen advisors. Mr. Kuffel stated that one teen advisor position remains open and that a community member position opened up in February. Mr. Kuffel asked commissioners to inform staff if they were aware of community members that would be good additions to the commission.

Commissioner Henrigillis stated she had two individuals interested in being members of the Commission and that she would be meeting with them to discuss the commission further and would pass their information on to staff. Commissioner Black asked if the Commission could have the schools help advertise for the teen advisor position. Commissioner Black asked if it was advertised on Facebook. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that she did not believe it was on Facebook or the website but could be added. Advisor Dragseth suggested reaching out to the school counselors. Alderperson Quigley asked what Advisor Dragseth's plans were for the fall. Advisor Dragseth stated she was on the fence between two schools.

Discussion item only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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IV. Future Agenda Items

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated that No Mow May alternatives would be brought back for discussion.

V. Adjournment

Alderperson Quigley moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 PM, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Marovich