



Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

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

Final Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

5:30 PM

GoToMeeting

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	Excused	
Cindy Champeau	Commissioner	Absent	
Emily Henrigillis	Commissioner	Remote	
Randall Lawton	Commissioner	Remote	
Nicole Slavin	Commissioner	Remote	
Rachel Weber	Commissioner	Remote	
John Quigley	Alderperson	Remote	
Hope Dragseth	Teen Advisor	Remote	

Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works (Remote)

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer (Remote)

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary (Remote)

Cory Groshek, Greener Bay Compost (Remote)

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 October 10, 2023 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Alderperson Quigley moved to approve the October 10, 2023 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

2. Commission Member Introductions

Members and staff introduced themselves along with their interest in sustainability and what they wish to accomplish as a member of the Commission.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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3. Discussion on Greener Bay Compost Proposal for Composting Services

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that the Commission has \$10,000 budgeted for a public/private partnership with Green Bay Compost and outlined the partnership proposal included in the packet.

Cory Groshek, Greener Bay Compost, clarified aspects of his proposal including payback timing and stated he would like to see the program running soon.

Alderperson Quigley stated that he would like to see the program start as soon as possible. Commissioner Weber suggested offering a referral program to help fulfill the new customers associated with the partnership. Mr. Groshek explained that all new customers through the partnership would be provided all the same benefits of unsubsidized customers, including rewards program. Mr. Groshek added that he did not believe there would be an issue with fulfilling the new customer openings as part of the partnership and believed there would actually be too many new customers attempting to register. Mr. Groshek explained how he envisioned the partnership being promoted, along with how Greener Bay Compost reviews applicants and their application process.

Alderperson Quigley stated his understanding of Mr. Groshek's vision and process and explained how the Sustainability Commission had originally planned to promote the partnership including the City website and Facebook along with Farmers Market if all the spots did not fill initially. Alderperson Quigley clarified that additional funding in future years would need to be included as part of the budget cycle, rather than the proposal and asked if staff had discussed this with Mr. Groshek. Mr. Kuffel explained that staff had discussed more long-term plans with Mr. Groshek briefly, but wanted to focus on getting year one of the partnership started. Alderperson Quigley explained that the goal would be to grow the program but cannot guarantee funding until the budget process is completed. Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, explained that when this item is ready for action, it would need to be forwarded to Common Council for approval. Mr. Thoresen also suggested having the proposal reviewed by the City Attorney prior to presenting to the Common Council. Mr. Kuffel agreed that it was being presented today for Commission members to comment and then would be reviewed by City Attorney, prior to being considered for approval by the Commission and forwarded for consideration by the Common Council. Alderperson Quigley suggested numbering the bullet points in the proposal for easier reference during future discussions. Alderperson Quigley questioned the vacation/absence process. Mr. Groshek explained his current process for residents that spend winters outside of Wisconsin and possible changes to that process for this partnership. Commissioner Weber suggested a disclaimer requiring residents be active a certain number of calendar months in order to participate. Mr. Groshek explained that he would not want to turn someone away because they leave for the winter, but stated he would caution them that they would be moved to the bottom of the list if they wanted to reinstate their services when they returned and that might impact their ability to be part of the partnership program with reduced rates. Mr. Groshek stated that if residents leave for extended periods he would offer them the option to return to the program but at an unsubsidized rate. Alderperson Quigley stated he would like to have a way to honor loyalty for residents that leave for extended periods, but was not entirely sure how that would look at this point. Commissioner Lawton stated there are IRS requirements for residency that might be able to be used as part of the program eligibility. Mr. Groshek suggested that residents could sign up at full price when they returned to De Pere and return to the subsidized program if funds were available at a future time. Mr. Groshek added that his proposal includes the option for existing subscribers to sign up for the subsidized program. Alderperson Quigley questioned a former concept of having a De Pere Partnership specific website for sign ups. Mr. Groshek stated that was no longer part of the proposal and all the funds would be allocated to subsidizing the program for

residents. Mr. Kuffel explained that staff, including the Legal Department, will work with Mr. Groshek to finalize the proposal and bring back for consideration in February or March. Mr. Groshek added that having the program started sooner will help for 2025 budget by providing participation data for a few months.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	NO ACTION
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4. Discuss Next Steps for City of De Pere Sustainability Commission's Renewable Energy Work Plan

Chase Kuffel, explained that Advisor Dragseth had reached out to her alderperson (Jonathan Hansen) regarding Green Bay's Clean Energy Green Bay Plan, questioned if De Pere would be working towards a similar plan. Mr. Kuffel stated that he had included the City of De Pere Renewable Energy Work Plan from 2021 and an executive summary for Clean Energy Green Bay Plan in the agenda packet for consideration. Mr. Kuffel explained that he had been in contact with the City of Green Bay regarding the financial impact along with personnel hours to complete their plan and those figures are included in the packet. Mr. Kuffel added that funding would need to be budgeted in the future to fund this type of plan, as funding is not available in 2024.

Advisor Dragseth explained how she was introduced to this plan and why she believes it is important for the City of De Pere to move forward with their own plan. Advisor Dragseth explained that she would be able to help get further guidance on completing a De Pere plan.

Commissioner Weber stated that it appeared the Green Bay plan was part of their work plan and asked where De Pere is presently on their work plan. Alderperson Quigley explained that the work plan presented has been a work-in-progress for a while and has been reviewed by the Common Council. Alderperson Quigley added that calculating a baseline has been a hold-up. Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, explained that the City work plan had been modeled off Green Bay's work plan and Green Bay had now executed #3 of the De Pere Work Plan, which is to research and compile a white paper report outlining considerations towards transitioning to carbon neutrality. Mr. Thoresen stated that some municipalities has received grants and others have funded outright. Alderperson Quigley stated it was up to the Commission to decide next steps for completing the white paper report. Commissioner Lawton stated it was not going to be an easy process and will require completing many small work items towards the larger goal and will take time. Advisor Dragseth asked if staff knew how long it may take to create this report and if there were steps that could be taken in 2024 to be set up better for future years when it was budgeted. Alderperson Quigley asked the Commission where they would prioritize the white paper report on the work plan and if the baseline was still priority. Commissioner Weber questioned previous work that had been started in regards to establishing the baseline. Alderperson Quigley stated that commissioners and staff had begun working on some of the tasks questioned and added that staff time can become a limiting factor. Mr. Thoresen stated that many great ideas come from the Commission and there can be limited resources for completing all of them, including staff time and Commissioners need to take ownership on some projects. Mr. Thoresen added that staff began creating the baseline and did run into conflicts with other staff positions duties and requirements. Mr. Thoresen added that staff understands that the Commission members can't take on all the responsibilities either with their own work and responsibilities, which Green Bay also ran into and ultimately led to them hiring consultants to complete some

of the bigger tasks. Mr. Thoresen explained the timeline and process of achieving goals on the work plan. Mr. Thoresen added that each step will take time; time to acquire the funding-pursuing grants and City budgets, solicit proposals. Mr. Thoresen stated that Green Bay's Clean Energy Green Bay Plan took over a year and a half from start to finish. Mr. Kuffel further clarified the City of Green Bay timeline from start to finish. Mr. Kuffel added that Green Bay has a dedicated staff position for sustainability. Alderperson Quigley suggested creating a subgroup to spearhead research of funding options and working on applications. Commissioner Weber suggested that finding funding sources would be a good next step for moving forward. Alderperson Quigley reminded the Commission of open meeting laws regarding establishing a subgroup. Commissioner Henrigillis stated her confusion over the introduction of this large-scale project seemingly out of the blue. Advisor Dragseth stated that she had brought it forwarded to spur action on the work plan and to begin action as it will be a considerable time commitment. Advisor Dragseth offered to be part of a subgroup to gather additional information and research funding options. Commissioner Slavin echoed Commissioner Henrigillis's confusion and stated she would need to do more research before being able to accurately comment on this subject or join a subgroup. Alderperson Quigley explained that there was a former commissioner who was very interested in moving forward with the work plan steps and when the Common Council was presented with the work plan they felt it was vague and did not commit the Council to any specific next steps and the commissioner was frustrated with the progress. Mr. Thoresen explained for the benefit of all commission members that as a government entity things take time and he doesn't want to see commission members getting discouraged if things don't progress as fast as members wish they would. Mr. Kuffel added that this item was brought forward for discussion only and at a minimum highlights the actions taken by Green Bay moving their plans forward. Alderperson Quigley offered to create a summary of the work plan and actions taken to date, along with establishing a subgroup to move forward. Commissioner Lawton stated that the Commissions position had been to influence, without authority. Mr. Thoresen added that 2024 is the first year the commission has a budget to accomplish projects.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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5. Clean Air Initiative Update

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, explained that the initiative was included to have the subgroup provide an update if available and added that Commissioner Black had provided an updated newsletter for review which Commissioner Weber suggested adding verbiage with regards to idling in parking lots while waiting for student pick-up. Mr. Kuffel added that staff would request direction from the Commission for distributing the newsletter and added that Commissioner Black had requested that staff reach out to the superintendents to consider the updated newsletter before distribution to individual schools.

Alderperson Quigley suggested more precision on the wording as it seems vague, perhaps quantify the level of idling. Alderperson Quigley suggested adding wording in paragraph one for weather permitting. Commissioner Henrigillis shared Commissioner Black's suggestion for cold weather ("winter rule") which allows for turning your car on for one or two minutes between having it off for five minute intervals. Alderperson Quigley stated he would like to see that included and stated there is a similar rule that can be

applied in the summer for running the a/c on hot days. Alderperson Quigley asked what the next steps would be. Mr. Kuffel explained that he took notes on the suggestions and offered to reach out to Commissioner Black for consideration. Advisor Dragseth asked if this was being enforced in any way or if it was strictly a recommendation. Advisor Dragseth added that she has witnessed many parents and students idling their cars because they either don't know about the initiative or don't care. Advisor Dragseth suggested having additional information added about the effects of idling because she believes people are ill-informed and misinformed about the consequences. Alderperson Quigley explained that the program is voluntary and does not have an enforcement mechanism.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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6. Social Media update

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, outlined the last couple featured commission members for the "Meet the Commissioner" series and requested volunteers to write up social media posts for meeting recaps and sustainable topics for the end of February and end of March.

Alderperson Quigley offered to complete the meeting recaps. Commissioner Henrigillis offered to complete a post for the end of February and Commissioner Slavin offered to complete a post for the end of March. Alderperson Quigley suggested running a series that highlights the sustainable practices commission members do in their own homes or that are meaningful to them.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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IV. Future Agenda Items

Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works, let members know that agenda items can be sent to Chase or Betty to be added to future agendas and are not required to be requested at the meeting. Alderperson Quigley requested discussing the frequency of having virtual meetings. Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, plans to bring back the work plan, stormwater art projects, and Greener Bay Compost proposal for review and/or consideration.

V. Adjournment

Commissioner Slavin moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 PM, seconded by Commissioner Lawton. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Marovich