

**Unapproved
Minnetonka Sustainability Commission
Minutes**

March 21, 2023

1. Call to Order

Chair Golob called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Sustainability commissioners Justin Anderson, Molly Birr, Elizabeth Boor, Brian Golob, David Ingraham and Ashley Pattain were present. Edwin Avalos, Matt Henry and Harapanahalli Muralidhara were absent.

Staff present: City Planner Loren Gordon, Associate Planner and Sustainability Coordinator Drew Ingvalson and Trails Manager Matt Kumka.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Pattain moved, second by Ingraham, to approve the agenda as submitted.

Anderson, Birr, Boor, Golob, Ingraham and Pattain voted yes. Avalos, Henry and Muralidhara were absent. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Sustainability Commission Feb. 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Boor moved, second by Pattain, to approve the minutes as submitted with a change to reflect that Julie Wischnack did not attend the meeting.

Anderson, Birr, Boor, Golob, Ingraham and Pattain voted yes. Avalos, Henry and Muralidhara were absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Ingvalson gave the staff report:

- A greenhouse gas inventory is being completed and city plans are being reviewed to be used in the climate action and adaptation plan.
- Commissioners are invited to sign up to attend the farmer's markets scheduled to be held on June 6, 2023, June 27, 2023, July 25, 2023, Aug. 29, 2023 and Sept. 26, 2023.
- The Minnesota House introduced a bill to require all lawn and garden equipment sold in Minnesota to be fully electric by Jan. 1, 2025.
- The tour of the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center is scheduled to occur March 30, 2023 at 1 p.m.

- City council is in concurrence with staff and the sustainability commission on not supporting “no mow May.”

6. Report from Sustainability Commission Members

Anderson stated that Macalester College will be hosting two sustainability events. The Sustainaversary will celebrate the 15-year anniversary of the Macalester College Sustainability Department. There will be different stations including an electronics repair station and craft stations. A Make Art Not Waste event will focus on art pieces made from up-cycled materials.

Pattain asked if city employees are able to work a hybrid schedule with some days traveling to work at city hall and some days work remotely. Ingvalson answered in the affirmative. He is in the process of polling staff to learn their schedules.

Chair Golob stated that Hennepin County has a zero-waste report on its website with ideas on how one could reduce waste.

Chair Golob explained that any residential property owner may look up their property on the website riskfactor.com to find out the property’s risk for being impacted by flooding, wild fire, extreme heat and wind.

7. Agenda Items

A. Minnetonka Trails and POST Plan

Ingvalson and Kumka reported.

Boor asked if buckthorn remediation is part of every trail improvement project. Kumka answered that ecological restoration is part of every project that disturbs natural areas. Buckthorn is removed at every opportunity and replaced with a native species.

Ingraham encouraged native plantings to be utilized instead of grass for remediation areas. Ingvalson noted that public works staff work to implement native plantings when possible.

Chair Golob thanked Kumka for the presentation. He appreciated the city’s effort to minimize the need to use a vehicle to travel.

The public-input portion was opened. No one chose to speak and the public-input portion was closed.

B. Everything Electric Event

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners provide comments and suggestions for the 2023 Everything Electric Event (EEE).

Pattain agreed with combining the EEE with another event like the farmer's market to attract more attendees. Ingvalson anticipates that the farmer's market will have a higher attendance at its new location at the park at Ridgedale, but that the parking area may not be large enough to hold the EEE and the farmer's market at the same time. Staff may look into working with Ridgedale management to secure more parking space. The farmer's market attendance averaged 1,000 people in 2022.

Pattain enjoyed the event. She appreciated electric vehicle (EV) owners bringing in their vehicles and being able to ask them questions. She is excited for the next event.

Chair Golob thought the 2022 EEE was well attended and attendees appreciated talking to EV owners in addition to sales representatives. He noted that combining the EEE with the farmer's market would generate more attendees, but a dedicated space would be needed. He hoped sufficient parking could be secured by working with Ridgedale management. He was not sure if Ridgedale management would like food trucks parked in the parking lot, but he would like the event to be as festive as possible. Ingvalson will contact Ridgedale management to discuss options.

Ingraham suggested providing promotional materials for the EEE at Williston Center and The Marsh.

Birr asked what other events the EEE could be combined with. Ingvalson noted that the city holds an annual open house which is well attended and already experiences a shortage of parking space. A safety concern could be created by drivers test driving an unfamiliar vehicle in an area congested with pedestrians.

In response to Pattain's question, Ingvalson explained that many EV dealers stated that it would be difficult to attend the EEE because they did not have enough inventory and fewer employees are available on a Sunday.

Anderson suggested promoting the free home-energy audits provided by Xcel Energy. Ingvalson invited anyone interested to email him for a link to sign up.

Chair Golob confirmed with Ingvalson that Minnetonka residents are able to receive a free home-energy audit from Xcel due to the city partnering with Xcel on multiple energy-saving initiatives. He has received over 100 requests from the public for the code to schedule an audit.

Ingraham asked if Xcel attends the EEE. Three of his neighbors had different experiences with Xcel installing a charger in their garage. Ingvalson answered affirmatively.

Chair Golob confirmed with Ingvalson that city councilmembers were invited and many attended the EEE. He appreciated the excellent report.

The public-input portion was opened. No one chose to speak and the public-input portion was closed.

C. Commissioner Educational Opportunities

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners review the list of options; provide additional educational opportunities; and select their top two choices.

Anderson added touring the material recycling and recovery center to the list.

Boor added a presentation on site-specific-restoration plans for wetlands in Minnetonka and a tour of the stormwater feature in Arden Park located in Edina.

Chair Golob added touring an electronics/mercury recycling facility; visiting the projects completed by the sustainability contest award winners; and taking a pollinator walk with Heather Holm to the list.

Birr added touring a school's outdoor-learning center to the list.

Anderson selected:

- Tour a material recycling and recovery facility.
- Tour an electronics/mercury recycling facility

Birr selected:

- Tour a community solar or wind farm.
- Tour a school's outdoor-learning center.

Boor selected:

- Tour a community solar or wind farm.
- Tour a school's outdoor-learning center.

Ingraham selected:

- Presentation on stormwater.
- Tour city facilities.

Pattain selected:

- Tour of the sustainable-award-winners' projects.
- Tour a school's outdoor-learning center.

Chair Golob:

- Tour a school's outdoor-learning center.

- Tour of the sustainable-award-winners' projects.

The public-input portion was opened. No one chose to speak and the public-input portion was closed.

D. Approval of Bylaws

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners adopt the sustainability commission bylaws as submitted.

Ingraham moved, second by Boor, to adopt the sustainability commission bylaws as submitted. Anderson, Birr, Boor, Golob, Ingraham and Pattain voted yes. Avalos, Henry and Muralidhara were absent. Motion carried.

E. Election of Officers

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners elect a chair and vice chair to serve on the sustainability commission for the 2023 term.

Boor moved, second by Ingraham, to elect Golob to serve as chair of the sustainability commission for the 2023 term. Anderson, Birr, Boor, Golob, Ingraham and Pattain voted yes. Avalos, Henry and Muralidhara were absent. Motion carried.

Golob moved, second by Ingraham, to elect Pattain to serve as vice chair of the sustainability commission for the 2023 term. Anderson, Birr, Boor, Golob, Ingraham and Pattain voted yes. Avalos, Henry and Muralidhara were absent. Motion carried.

8. Other Business: None

9. Adjournment

Pattain moved, second by Birr, to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary