



Sustainability Commission Agenda

July 11, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers – Minnetonka Community Center

Members of the public who desire to monitor the meeting remotely or to give input or testimony during the meeting can find instructions at <https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/government/participate-in-city-meetings>

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda

4. Approval of Minutes: May 16, 2023

5. Report from Staff:

- A. Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Update
- B. Restaurant Outreach Update
- C. Sustainable Minnetonka Awards Update
- D. Everything Electric Event Update

6. Report from Sustainability Commission Members

7. Agenda Items

A. Minnetonka Sustainability Communications Presentation

- Recommendation: Listen to presentation and ask questions.
- Staff Members: Jon Lyksett

B. Sustainable Minnetonka Webpage Update

- Recommendation: Listen to presentation, ask questions, recommend additions/changes.
- Staff Member: Jon Lyksett

C. Future Business Outreach

- Recommendation: Recommend staff move forward with creating a new business outreach program.
- Staff Member: Drew Ingvalson

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8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

If you have questions about any of the agenda items, please contact:

- Drew Ingvalson, Associate Planner/Sustainability Coordinator (952) 939-8293, dingvalson@minnetonkamn.gov
- Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner, (952) 939-8296, lgordon@minnetonkamn.gov
- Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director, (952) 939-8282, jwischnack@minnetonkamn.gov

**Unapproved
Minnetonka Sustainability Commission
Minutes**

May 16, 2023

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

Staff present: City Planner Loren Gordon and Staff Liaison Drew Ingvalson.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Henry moved, second by Ingraham, to approve the agenda as submitted with modifications provided in a change memo dated May 16, 2023.

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

4. Approval of Sustainability Commission March 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Anderson moved, second by Henry, to approve the March 21, 2023 minutes as submitted with a change on page 3, paragraph 7 from “He has received . . .” to “Ingvalson has received....”

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

5. Report from Staff

Ingvalson gave the staff report:

- Commissioners may now sign up to attend a workshop on the climate-action-adaptation plan in June and sign-up to serve as a sustainability commission ambassador at Summerfest. A webpage detailing the climate-action-adaptation plan will go live in June.
- Staff is hoping to hold the everything-electric event in September at the park at Ridgedale Commons.
- A flyer seeking applications for the Sustainable Minnetonka Awards has been posted in numerous places, and Ingvalson has additional copies available for commissioners to distribute.

- Applications are being accepted to fill an open sustainability commissioner position until June 1, 2023.
- Two GreenCorps members will be working with the city from September 2023 to August 2024 to reduce air pollution and waste production and host a reuse event.
- Commissioners may now sign up to be an ambassador for the sustainability commission for a variety of events.
- The city has applied for an energy efficiency and conservation block grant and an EPA climate pollution reduction grant.
- Several commissioners toured the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center on March 30, 2023.
- Two commissioners and two staff members visited the Minnetonka High School Envirothon Club.

6. Report from Sustainability Commission Members

Boor announced that this would be her last meeting. She will be moving out of Minnetonka. She appreciated working with commissioners and staff and enjoyed serving as an ambassador for the sustainability commission. On behalf of the commissioners, Chair Golob thanked Boor for her service on the commission. She will be missed.

Chair Golob shared a newspaper article regarding life-long learning of sustainability items.

7. Agenda Items

A. Restaurant Outreach

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners review the restaurant outreach materials, recommend changes and approve the materials.

Henry suggested that commissioners encourage managers of restaurants that would not be able to make many of the changes, like those in malls, to use biodegradable utensils and do whatever else would be possible for them to do to reduce waste and energy consumption. Ingvalson will do some research and make a note of which restaurants could receive a shortened version of the information.

Avalos suggested providing the resource materials in other languages, including Spanish. Ingvalson believes the materials are available in several languages and will work on getting them to commissioners.

Ingraham confirmed with Ingvalson that the next Thrive newsletter would be issued in the middle of June.

In response to Henry's question, Ingvalson will check to see if breweries are eligible for the energy-smart-one program. Breweries are not eligible for the minimize program.

Chair Golob opened the public-input portion of the meeting. No testimony was submitted. The public-input portion of the meeting was closed.

Ingraham moved, second by Henry, to approve the restaurant outreach materials as included in the staff report.

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

B. Electric Yard Equipment

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended commissioners review the information and discuss alternative methods that the city and commission can use to encourage people to move from gas to electric yard equipment.

In response to Henry's question, Ingvalson answered that some businesses accept batteries back at the end of their life to be recycled. Ingvalson said that information could be included in the outreach done by GreenCorp members.

Avalos noted the evolution of battery technology for generators and vehicles. He suggested holding an event or continuously allowing residents to turn in and, hopefully, recycle gas-operated lawn equipment as they are replaced by electric ones.

Commissioners discussed which batteries are recyclable and which ones are allowed to be thrown in the garbage.

Chair Golob opened the public-input portion of the meeting. No testimony was submitted. The public-input portion of the meeting was closed.

C. Work Plan Amendment and Event Materials

Ingvalson reported. Staff recommended that commissioners approve the proposed work plan changes and event materials.

Chair Golob opened the public-input portion of the meeting. No testimony was submitted. The public-input portion of the meeting was closed.

Anderson clarified that he would like commissioners to tour a material-recovery center that covers Minnetonka.

Henry moved, second by Avalos, to approve the amendments to the work plan and approve the event materials as provided in the staff report.

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

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

Anderson moved, second by Ingraham, to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7A
Meeting of July 11, 2023**

Title: Sustainability Communications

Report From: Jon Lyksett, Communications Coordinator

Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner
Drew Ingvalson, Associate Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

The communications division is tasked with providing information to residents, businesses and employees of the City of Minnetonka. The communications team provides information via print, social media, through the city's website and more.

The strategy is constantly evolving with changing media. Beginning in 2022, there has been a higher emphasis placed on storytelling. The city is communicating important information through resident and employee stories. Information that was formerly presented with graphics or short informational pieces can now be shared with quotes, comments and testimonials.

As residents, commissioners offer a unique perspective that employees may not see. Commissioners are connected with neighbors and friends that engage in sustainable practices. Staff is looking to highlight those individuals- especially if they participate in the many programs offered through the sustainability division and its partners.

Recommended Action

Receive presentation, offer feedback on potential stories to pursue

Strategic Profile Relatability

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: See [Strategic Profile](#).



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7B
Meeting of July 11, 2023**

Title: Sustainable Minnetonka and Minnetonka Matters Webpages

Report From: Jon Lyksett, Communications Coordinator

Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner
Drew Ingvalson, Associate Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

The communications division has begun its work on revamping the city's website. As part of that work, there are new landing pages for many departments and divisions along with some of the most popular pages including Williston Fitness Center and The Marsh.

Beginning last fall, the communications division worked with sustainability staff to begin refreshing the Sustainable Minnetonka webpages. There is now a landing page, and separate individual subjects on the Sustainable Minnetonka page into separate categories. This will allow for easier access, and shorter load times for the webpage.

Changes presented are in the back-end of the website, so they're not yet publically viewable.

Minnetonka Matters is a tool used by the city to solicit feedback from residents. As part of the strategy for the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, resident feedback was highlighted as a key priority. Minnetonka Matters offers residents and business owners the opportunity to offer their thoughts through a convenient and all hours accessible portal. The current page includes existing data collected by LHB, and workshop meeting minutes. The site will be updated regularly.

There is also a map feature that allows residents to drop a pin with comments about current conditions regarding climate change. The page will allow for other tools, including surveys in the future. Visit www.minnetonkamatters.com/climate-action-plan to review the site.

Recommended Action

Offer feedback for Sustainable Minnetonka page.

View Climate Action Plan Minnetonka Matters page.

Strategic Profile Relatability

Financial Strength & Operational Excellence

Safe & Healthy Community

Sustainability & Natural Resources

Livable & Well-Planned Development

Infrastructure & Asset Management

Community Inclusiveness

N/A

Statement: See [Strategic Profile](#).



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7C
Meeting of July 11, 2023**

Title: Business Outreach

Report From: Drew Ingvalson, Associate Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

The city's [Energy Action Plan Addendum](#) (Strategy 6) states that the city shall "launch a targeted outreach campaign to advise action to local businesses." In addition, one of the sustainability commission's duties and responsibilities outlined in the city code is "serving as an ambassador to the community" about programs that relate to sustainability.

The sustainability commission has already begun outreach to Minnetonka's restaurant community, with a goal to reach all Minnetonka restaurants by September 2023. As a next step, the staff is gauging the commission's interest in conducting outreach to other business groups in Minnetonka. There are several utility and county programs that can help businesses become more energy efficient. The Energy Smart program, which is currently being promoted to restaurants, can help provide businesses with education, funding, and research. With this information, businesses can then make educated decisions to become more energy efficient.

Recommended Action

Recommend staff move forward with creating a new business outreach program.

Strategic Profile Relatability

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: See [Strategic Profile](#).

Background

The City of Minnetonka regularly informs businesses of cost-saving opportunities. The city typically does this through:

- Traditional mailings;

- Emailing business subscribers;
- Reaching out to specific businesses (if a program applies to them); and
- Posting articles in the [Thrive Minnetonka](#) newsletter, a business publication from the City of Minnetonka, to help businesses start, grow, and thrive.

Recently, the sustainability commission started conducting outreach to Minnetonka restaurants, promoting the [Energy Smart](#) and [MNimize](#) programs. Commissioners have been reaching out to restaurants via phone, email, or in-person meetings to encourage restaurants to learn more about their facilities and ways to reduce their energy consumption and/or waste. As a next step, the staff is gauging the commission's interest in conducting outreach to other business groups in Minnetonka.

Sustainability Commissioner Outreach

Staff is recommending that the sustainability commission assist with another business outreach effort this fall. This new outreach could be to a specific business sector, business nodes, or other business group. The outreach techniques would be similar to the ones used for the restaurant outreach (see below); however, they could be modified.

- Visit/contact businesses (in-person, over the phone, email)
- Distribute handouts about the Energy Smart program;
- Talk with managers/owners about programs; and
- Provide contacts for more detailed questions.

With assistance from the Partners in Energy program, the city would create the following:

- A target audience list of businesses that the commission should contact. This would not include new buildings or buildings likely to be redeveloped in the near future.
- Modified Energy Smart handouts (similar to those used for the restaurant outreach) or Xcel Energy [One-Stop Efficiency Shop/Business Energy Assessment](#) handouts;
- Talking points for commissioners; and
- A shared business sign-up to be used by commissioners.

In addition, staff would monitor the number of businesses that sign up for programs as a result of the additional outreach.

Where has this been done?

The City of Fridley did a business outreach campaign in 2022. Staff would contact the City of Fridley for lessons learned. Below are details of their campaign.

- **Staffing:** Environmental Planner (lead), intern (co-lead), One-Stop Efficiency Shop consultants (outreach team)
- **Call to action:** Lighting assessment and upgrades from One-Stop Efficiency Shop
- **Target audience:** Commercial nodes were identified as areas for reinvestment

- This was coordinated with the environmental planner, intern, and city planner.
- The idea was that the city wanted to prioritize outreach and business retention in certain commercial nodes across the city (primarily strip malls). The call to action and relationship building could further support investment in the building and connection to additional economic development initiatives from Fridley.
- When reviewing their parcel and building data, the city avoided areas that were identified as redevelopment opportunities or new construction.
- **Pre-outreach prep:** GIS map of the commercial nodes and parcels prepared by the city team; One-Stop Efficiency Shop consultants gathered a business list for businesses at those addresses; Letter from the Mayor mailed to businesses noting the date of door-to-door outreach and call to action; information shared on city communication channels about; Intern prepared Fridley-branded packet of financing, grants and other economic development program materials to share
- **Day-of outreach:** One-Stop Efficiency Shop Consultants conduct door-to-door outreach doing a walk-through assessment to identify lighting upgrade opportunities with the business and providing recommendations and rebate information for upgrades. Fridley intern joined with some businesses. The One-Stop team handed out flyers plus had the mayor's letter on hand to provide additional context for why they were visiting the business.

Proposed Timeline

- July 11, 2023:** The sustainability commission decides if they want to conduct additional outreach to Minnetonka businesses.
- September 2023:** The sustainability commission will review handouts and talking points provided by staff.
- October 2023:** Sustainability commissioners start connecting with local restaurants and tracking the ones they have visited.

Questions

Based on the commission's experience with the restaurant outreach, is the sustainability commission interested in conducting another outreach campaign in fall 2023?

If interested:

- Are there any changes needed from the restaurant outreach campaign? What worked? What didn't work?
- Would the commission like a shorter timeframe campaign or would they like more time to reach multiple businesses?
- Are there specific sectors the commission would like to connect with regarding these programs?