

Environmental Commission

January 27, 2020 – 6:30 pm

Council Conference Room

Golden Valley City Hall

7800 Golden Valley Road

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:28 pm by Chair Seys.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners present: Tracy Anderson, Tonia Galonska, Dawn Hill, Susan Phelps, Joseph Ramlet, Scott Seys, Jim Stremel and Debra Yahle

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Eric Eckman, Environmental Resources Supervisor;
Drew Chirpich, Environmental Specialist;
Emma Pierson, MN GreenCorps Member;
Carrie Nelson, Administrative Assistant

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Yahle to approve the agenda of January 27, 2020 with the following change: Switch items 5A and 5B under Old Business, and the motion carried.

4. Approval of November 25, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Stremel, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the minutes of November 25, 2019 as submitted and the motion carried.

5A. Partners in Energy update

Eric Eckman gave an update on the Partners in Energy program.

- Commission approved the City's participation in the Partner's in Energy Program with Xcel Energy in October.
- City Council approved applying for the Partners in Energy Program in December.
- An energy action plan will be developed over the next two years for residents and businesses.
- Application was completed and sent in in mid-January. We haven't heard back from Xcel yet but should by next meeting.
- If accepted in the program:
 - 6 months of plan development and understanding the goals of the community.
 - Moving forward with implementation with energy actions from residents and businesses.
 - This will include other programs such as Home Energy Squad and others that benefit residents and businesses, provide efficiencies, save money, and reduce electricity use.
 - Exploring how to incorporate energy reductions and electrification in the transportation sector.



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- Eric asked the Commission if one or two members would be interested in joining a community group that will be created for the planning phase of the Energy Action Plan to determine the goals and priorities of the community and refine what is in the Resilience and Sustainability Plan. The community group will also include staff members, business owners, multi-family apartment interests, school interests, and 1-2 planning commission members. The group would meet 3-5 times in the next year.
 - Commissioners Hill and Golanska expressed interest in serving on the community group.

5B. Organics Recycling Considerations

Emma Pierson gave an update on the organics matrix presented to the Commission at the November 2019 meeting to address comments and questions at the last meeting.

- SCORE funds are affected by participation. The higher the participation, the more the SCORE funding will be from the County. The funds can be used toward residential recycling related items.
- There are no grants for education however, the County does have the ability to provide speakers/education for recycling and organics and will work with the City to customize this. We will reach out to the County about having a staff person at a booth at the Farmer's Market to plan dates and what information will be at the table.
- Education Requirements
 - If opting for a licensing requirement:
 - Haulers will need to follow the Hennepin County Ordinance 13 Education Requirements Section 2: Subsection 2B
 - Regardless of which route we go:
 - Cities will follow Hennepin County Ordinance 13 Education Requirements Section 2: Subsection 3
- City Code Sec. 22-23 States: "Containers shall be stored no more than three feet from the primary or accessory structure and shall at all times be located behind the front of the primary structure."
- Participating in organics can help you reduce the size of your garbage container by diverting waste to an organics bin.
- Saint Louis Park: Curbside Organized 1.76% Contamination Minneapolis: Curbside Organized 0.47%-1.45% Contamination. Contamination rates change when outreach is done.
- Trash containers are taxed by sales price, which is determined by Haulers based on the volume of containers. County taxes 15.5% on trash and the State taxes 9.75% on trash. There are no taxes on recycling or organics recycling. If adding a separate organics bin to your property, there will be no additional tax to your hauling, and you may be able to reduce the size of your trash bin, in turn reducing taxes. If you are co-collecting in a durable bag system, there is no tax on the price to participate in the organics program, however, the volume of your trash bin will likely stay the same, causing no reduction in taxes, depending on the program.

- Timing depends upon what decision City Council makes and when. Must have curbside opportunity available by January 1, 2022.
- There is no specific data showing contamination differences between the durable bag vs. separate bin programs. While discussing options with haulers, some have mentioned a durable bag program is a risk; others like the program.
- In general, an organized system requires more staff time than an open system since issues will need to be addressed by a staff person.
- There are no known methods to provide more compost to those participating more in the organics program. There isn't a way to determine who participates more.
- Republic Services currently does a curbside pick-up in Fridley and will soon be in Richfield.
- Cities and haulers have been moving away from yard waste co-collection bin to separate bin collection because of certain challenges with the recipes at compost facilities.
- The only known co-collection system currently available is the blue bag program and they do have one consistent bag that is heavier duty than a standard, green, compostable bag.
- Minneapolis does their own compost pick-up. They have a separate cart so they can use a paper grocery bag or certified compostable bag. There is no limit to the amount of bags that go in the cart.

6A. Curbside Organics Program Draft Pros-Cons

The commission reviewed the draft pros-cons of different options included in the packet and recommended the following edits.

Organized 'All-In, Everyone Pays' Program (Cart):

'Pros' Changes:

- Change to 'Increases participation' i.e. SLP
- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Add – City manages so there will be additional staff time required
- Add – Resident must provide bags

Can either give a cart to every resident or only give a cart to residents who choose to participate. Maybe more people would participate if they get the cart.

Organized 'Opt-In' Program (cart)

'Pros' Changes:

- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Change to Lower participation is likely to avoid the cost, i.e. SLP
- Delete last three items.
- Add – City manages so there will be additional staff time required

License Requirements Organics Recycling Collection (Cart)

'Pros' Changes:

- Add from Cons column – Hauler is responsible for education
- Add - Less city staff time required
- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Delete second item
- Move Hauler is responsible for education to 'Pros'
- Add – City has less input on education
- Delete 6th item since it's a duplicate

License Requirements Organics Recycling Collection (Durable Bag Program)

- Add /Co-Collect to Durable Bag Program
- Can this work in the parks?
- Only Randy's offers this option at this time

'Pros' Changes:

- Add from Cons column – Hauler is responsible for education

'Cons' Changes:

- Add – City has less input on education

Staff will update the pros-cons list and present it for review and approval at the next meeting.

6B. SCORE Funding

Emma Pierson reviewed SCORE Funding. The money helps cities with any operational expenses of a recycling program. 50% of SCORE funding in 2020 will go toward recycling and 50% will go to organics. The amount of SCORE funding the city receives fluctuates based on the number of active participants in the City. An active participant is one who puts their bin out for collection at least once per month. The participation number is determined in September. An increase in SCORE funds could offset having to raise recycling rates. Golden Valley has about 7,000 household accounts.

6C. GreenStep Cities - City Hall Organics

Proposed Update #1:

MOTION by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Galonska to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 1 with the following amendments:

- Include how education of the employees made a difference in participation.
- Include that Plastic Film Recycling was also added to the break room.

Proposed Update #2:

MOTION by Commissioner Stremel, seconded by Commissioner Yahle to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 2 with the following amendment:

- Add 'to every household' when talking about the bi-monthly newsletters being sent out.

Proposed Update #3:

MOTION by Commissioner Phelps, seconded by Commissioner Ramlet to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 5 with the following amendments:

- Change ‘there are currently 114 participating households’ to ‘In 2019 there were 114 participating households’.
- Change the last sentence to: In 2019, (2 out of 8) haulers reported 267.7 tons of yard waste was collected.

6D. 2020 Work Plan Ideas

Eckman reviewed the 2019 work plan (items complete and not yet complete) and engaged the Commission to offer ideas for the 2020 work plan. The 2020 draft work plan must be approved by the Commission by April to be considered by Council in May.

The Commission kept most unfinished items on the list and added new topics to consider:

- If accepted – Partners in Energy Program (Energy Action Plan)
 - Add private buildings energy benchmarking
- Reducing chemicals - look into salt use on roads; products used on weeds
- Look into options for maintaining the sidewalks in the winter – residents help clear them?
- Reducing single use plastics and styrofoam
- Update on Emerald Ash Borer – Possibly have Tim Teynor come talk – part of Natural Resources Management
- Downtown Redevelopment Study - Take opportunity to be a part of this planning process
- Climate Action Plan (GreenStep Cities as guide or separate plan?)
- Work with the Human Rights Commission on Climate Justice and Environmental Justice with a speaker on climate change or promoting community gardens and local food production – possible joint project and commission meeting.

6E. Program/Project Updates

- Staff recently met with the Garden Club and People for Pollinators group to share information about the upcoming plans for 2020. Consistent with the MOU executed last fall, the City will be promoting the Garden Club’s events and activities in a variety of ways in 2020. The Garden Club website is <https://gvgardenclub.com> and the Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/Peopleforpollinatorsgoldenvalley/>.
- The Board of Water and Soil Resources has a program called “Lawns to Legumes” that will reimburse people to convert portions of their lawn to pollinator habitat. The link to the program website is: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l> . The Metro Area is the highest priority for the program, and the application deadline is February 28th, 2020.

6F. Council Updates

None

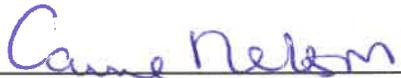
6G. Other Business

Bike/Ped Task Force has been dissolved. Bike/Ped will now fall under open space. Consider adding bike/ped involvement to the work plan.

7. Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Ramlet, seconded by Commissioner Stremel to adjourn the meeting at 8:33pm and the motion carried.

ATTEST:



Carrie Nelson, Administrative Assistant



Scott Seys, Chair