

CITY OF WAUSAU SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Time and Dates: The Sustainability, Energy and Environment Committee met on Monday, December 14, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Wausau City Hall and virtually via WebEx

Members Present: Mary Kluz, Paul Zouski, John Kroll, Tom Kilian, Leah Van De Loo

Members Absent: Paul Kage

Others Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Dan and Kathleen Barth, Katie Rosenberg, Patrick Peckham, Brian Kowalski/City Pages, Kathi Groeschel, Mike Kubowski/Focus on Energy, Jon Schrader, Tee Vang

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the Wausau Daily Herald in the proper manner.

Welcome and Introductions

Sippel called the meeting to order in the absence of a chairperson at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from previous meeting(s)

Motion by Kilian/Zouski to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2020 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Selection of committee chair and vice-chair

Due to the resignation of Meney, Sippel opened up nominations for a new chair. Kroll made a motion to nominate Mary Kluz. Mary declined the nomination due to new leadership roles she has recently taken on. She would be willing to take on a secondary role and be Vice Chair.

Kilian made a motion to nominate John Kroll for Chair. Kroll accepted and a vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously. A motion to nominate Mary Kluz as Vice Chair was made by Kilian. A vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and possible action on Sustainability award recipients

One application was submitted by Aspirus for their solar PV project. Committee member Kroll asked if a business or organization can submit multiple applications. Sippel doesn't see why not. This is a great start and Aspirus has broader goals so they may submit another project in the future. A motion was made by Kluz to accept the Aspirus application and a second was made by Kilian. There being no further discussion, the Motion passed unanimously to forward the application to the Mayor's Office for final acceptance.

Discussion of a potential composting program

Sippel turned this discussion over to Mr. Jon Schrader who introduced himself. He proposed a community composting program to the City of Wausau and explained what other communities were doing. Jon reached out to Meleesa Johnson of Marathon County Solid Waste and inquired about an estimated costs for a program in our area. Example: 12,000-15,000 parcels – Range monthly of \$5-\$15 per household. How would this be paid for?

Perhaps reserved funds the city has could potentially be used. Otherwise, a special assessment on taxes could be looked. Others options were discussed. Some communities have a drop-off site and some communities hire a provider to do residential pick-up. Contamination can be an issue and the members mentioned the Hsu's in the Wausau community has a means of treating contamination. Education and outreach would need to take place. Schrader will draft other options and costs and provide that to the committee at their next meeting.

Discussion on sustainability criteria in public-private partnerships

Sean Fitzgerald provided background information and explained the TIF application which is the first line in the process of engaging public-private partnerships. Currently the Mayor is wanting to revise the TIF application and RFP processes in place. It's important to incorporate sustainability practices going forward. Further discussion on this will continue at future meetings.

Discussion and possible action on local plastic reduction effort

Tee Vang from NAOMI and Dan Barth from the Citizens Climate Lobby introduced themselves. They have been working to reduce single-use plastics and wish to partner with this committee in providing further education to our community. Engaging in racial harmony and cultural education could be done during Earth Day in the future. Earth Day has always been about celebrating and appreciating our planet. Trees have always been planted. It would be an added bonus to incorporate education on banning single-use plastics. Through NAOMI, they are currently working on a campaign to keep plastics out of shopping carts. Legislator Katrina Shankland has initiated single-use plastic legislation and it was suggested that they reach out to invite her to the next meeting. Changing state law is a tall order. This committee could be a partner with NAOMI – advocate for the community. What can this committee do in the meantime? Perhaps a resolution in favor of banning the ban could be looked at. Should we form a work group or subcommittee? Discussion on this will continue at a future meeting.

Updates on previous items

The Finance committee unanimously passed the Betterbin recycling program for the city and will be launched in 2021.

Future items for consideration and future meeting date

A replacement for Claire Meney's position is an appointment the Mayor makes. Three applicants are interested in serving and Sippel will discuss this appointment with Mayor Rosenberg to get someone appointed soon.

A motion to adjourn was made by Kilian and seconded by Zouski. Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.