

CITY OF WAUSAU SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Time and Date: The Sustainability, Energy and Environment Committee met on Wednesday, October 28, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Wausau City Hall and virtually via WebEx

Members Present: John Kroll (C), Tom Kilian, Ashley Lange, Mary Kluz

Members Absent: Paul Kage, Leah Van De Loo, Paul Zouski,

Others Present: Sam Wessel, Brad Lenz, Mayor Katie Rosenberg, Mike Kubowski- Focus on Energy (WebEx), additional unnamed participant joined by phone

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Kroll called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of Minutes from previous meetings

The incorrect meeting minutes date was listed on the agenda so no minutes were approved. Minutes for this meeting and the 9-22-2021 meeting will be reviewed at the next SEEC meeting.

3. Discussion of UWSP Sustainability for Local Government

Wessel mentioned that the toolkit was useful yet broad, and the variety of topics is helpful to consider when creating a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) resolution or climate action plan, but it didn't have calculations or goals, nor is it a template for creating a plan. Kroll agreed it was like the Green Tier Legacy Community scorecard but without scores. Kluz pointed out that it's useful and Volume 1 is internal, and Volume 2 is external, and it seems like internally SEEC runs into a lot of walls and there is room for improvement. For example, everyone forgot about the eco-municipality resolution even though it was important when it was passed. Kroll asked if any documents reference the toolkit, Wessel mentioned that the toolkit is good at listing cities where things have been tried and we can contact them. Kluz is interested in contacting La Crosse since they hired a sustainability director. Kroll said it would be nice to have standards to reference, and Kluz said it's a good document for giving us a "lens" to look at everything through, training people to think about the environment in all areas. Usually cost is a lens everyone looks through, but this lens allows you to see costs down the road that pollution creates. Rosenberg mentioned that a decision was made in the past to buy diesel buses instead of electric, and policy decisions like that could be influenced by SEEC.

4. Discussion regarding past City resolutions

Kilian brought up the environmental justice resolution and how that could be tied to policy decisions by including a sustainability score for everything. Kluz pointed out the American Planning Association's (APA) 4 strategies for planning for sustainability in the toolkit, and asked where APA stands on these issues now. Kluz also mentioned that there isn't a clear path for where SEEC should take its recommendations. Kluz would like to have Council revisit the eco-municipality resolution and consider what that means for the future. Lenz explained different approaches that could be taken and pointed out APA's strategies in the toolkit made it into the 2009 resolution. Kroll asked how SEEC can summarize questions and references and Rosenberg suggested getting on a Council agenda for SEEC to present and get feedback. Kluz would also like Council feedback on greenhouse gasses. Lange supports starting with a framework to show Council where SEEC is coming from. Lenz recommended going to

Council prior to putting a resolution together, which Kroll agreed with. Wessel suggested working sessions to create products from SEEC conversations.

5. 1300 S Cleveland Ave Discussion (Environmental Justice and Land Use)

Kilian showed in the code where SEEC is advisory to City Council and can bring recommendations to them. Kroll affirmed that SEEC will work on what to present to council and give recommendations instead of action items.

6. Green House Gas Emission Reduction Resolution Discussion

Kilian and Kluz agreed that whatever resolutions SEEC comes up with should be original to Wausau and not borrowed from elsewhere. Lenz suggested starting with existing resolutions when talking to Council rather than going straight to them with a final draft, but SEEC could decide what to ask when in front of Council, for example, is it a climate action plan or just a simple document that guides City decisions? Kilian says a presentation to council allows SEEC to gauge each individual council members' opinions which could provide clearer next steps. Brad mentioned that when Eau Claire began its climate action plan, they went to Council by highlighting the benefits of the plan not necessarily related to the environment, such as cost and energy savings.

7. Discussion on SEEC involvement with the City's strategic plan

Mayor Rosenberg explained that the City is working with a consultant who should interview SEEC so the committee can bring up sustainability as part of the strategic plan and mention past resolutions. Mayor Rosenberg also mentioned that the consultant can conduct interviews individually or as a group. The group agreed that individual interviews get more information since there isn't anyone influencing others' thoughts, and that information can be summarized. The plan process is starting now and interviews will be in the next month or two.

8. Update on energy efficiency pilot program

Kroll spoke with consultant Jay Dishnow about an energy efficiency pilot program, where he connects municipalities to WESCO corporation who does free audits and gives quotes on energy efficiency upgrades. Kroll thinks this should be done at some point, but probably after baseline GHG data is collected, and it would probably have to be a request for proposal process. WESCO's costs depend on scope of work. Kroll would prefer to hear more about Wisconsin local businesses and programs rather than corporations from out of state.

9. Discussion on possible City Newsletter content

Kluz asked if we could do a "sustainability corner" where topics are covered, like the goats eating invasive plants. Wessel said salt application in winter is another good topic. Lange asked if they did a survey of species on the island before and after the goats, if we had data, it would be nice to report. Lenz recommended asking the City Forester. Kilian said that what goats are an alternative to should be discussed.

10. Future items for consideration and future meeting date

The group discussed how and when to meet to have meetings and work sessions to cover all that was discussed. Wessel will send out a doodle poll to check SEEC member availability. In addition to work sessions for 1300 Cleveland letter of recommendation and GHG resolutions, future agenda items include Michelle Goetsch from Betterbin presenting to SEEC next month, including an agenda item for educational topics for discussion, and a public feedback section at the beginning of the agenda for comments and emails. Lange also would like to discuss micro remediation using fungus at solid waste management and potential compost bins that could be a part of No-Mow May.

11. Adjourn

M/S Kluz/Kilian to adjourn at 6:35 p.m.