

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Wednesday Oct. 25th, 2017

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chris Meyer, Dan Hall, Hans Madland and Lynette Power.

GUESTS: None

STAFF: Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator John Howard

1. Meeting called to order at 4:33 pm.
2. Minutes from Sept. 13, 2017 meeting approved unanimously without edit. Motion by Chris, seconded by multiple.
3. Revised Goals:
 - a. General Concepts:
 - John said the two goal pages regarding Air Quality and Water are included to see if he captured the discussion accurately at the last meeting, and to discuss if CEQC members have any new thoughts about the goals.
 - Dan asked if these goals were tabled at the last meeting? John replied that they were not tabled, but the physical copies were not assembled at the last meeting, so they are here now to vote on and discuss.
 - Lynette believes a broad focus is needed within goals to allow for full benefit. Dan also suggested focusing on the full spectrum rather than a narrow focus.
 - Lynette says Shakopee silica sand example may be instructive, as will the Maplewood Nature Center, for implementing best practices.
 - b. Air quality: Hans appreciates wider focus on air quality. Threats change, so the CEQC will want to be able to address current issues as they arise.

Motion by Hans to approve the goals are written and amended. Second by Dan, all voting in favor of the motion.

4. Future Plan and Structure:
 - a. Change to Commission status:
 - John described that if the CEQC is interested in being an independent commission, the best process would be to discuss with the Planning Commission, and if they agree to a division, then to request that City Council grant the CEQC status as a Commission. John does not know if either the Planning Commission or City Council will approve the CEQC's change in status. John believes that CEQC members, and not City staff, should lead this effort.
 - CEQC sees their goals and planned activities as reaching into areas not within Planning's purview, and therefore being an independent commission is a logical evolution.
 - Ex. Partners in Energy and energy reporting, GreenStep implementation.

- Hans believes that reporting directly to Council would increase the gravity of CEQC decisions, and require increased diligence on the part of the CEQC. He believes the CEQC is ready to step up and make this change.
 - Hans believes the CEQC should take a two meeting approach with the Planning Commission:
 - One meeting to introduce the CEQC and the idea of an independent commission.
 - Another meeting to have the Planning Commission debate and vote on the separation between the Planning Commission and the CEQC.
 - John said that he raised the subject of the CEQC having priorities and goals different than the Planning Commission when he went before the Planning Commission early in the summer to describe the CEQC revival. He did not receive any questions or comments from the Planning Commission regarding the potential need for a separation.
 - John stated that the CEQC should be able get on the agenda for the Nov. 13th planning meeting. CEQC likes the idea of taking the two step approach suggested by Hans.
 - Dan volunteered to do much of the speaking and presenting at the Council meeting. Chris is also willing to help with the presentation to the Planning Commission.
- b. Vacancy:
- Currently there is one vacancy on the CEQC because Liz Reach's term expired.
 - Hans wondered about the process for filling a vacancy? John stated that the vacancy is on the City website, and that to become a CEQC member, the individual would need to apply and be nominated by the mayor for approval by City Council. John is not sure how the vacancy is broadcast beyond the City website. He believes CEQC members are free to reach out to people they believe would be interested. John said the City Clerk administers the volunteer process, so he will ask her.
 - Lynette would like to expand the committee, as it seems reaching a quorum is a challenge and more people will bring new expertise and ideas. John said this is something that can be discussed, ideally during the restructuring when becoming a Commission.
 - Hans and Dan both feel it would be preferable to find a member from the community rather than a personal referral.
 - John stated that even if there are only 7 CEQC members, volunteers not on the CEQC are always welcome to help with implementing the CEQC work.
- c. Chair discussion: John said that Commissions/Committees are typically chaired by a member rather than the staff liaison, and therefore he would like a CEQC member to serve as the chair. Chris asked if Dan would be willing to serve as the chairperson, and Dan states that he would. Hans moves, via acclamation, that Dan be chairperson. No objections.

John will still be heavily involved by assembling the agenda packet and coordinating the logistics, with Dan running the meetings and helping set the agenda.

5. Committee Scheduling:

- a. Next Meeting: Weds. Nov. 8th appears to work for all members. John noted that the 2nd Wednesday can be problematic with getting items to Council as it is typically the deadline for getting an item on the Council Agenda. John therefore suggests that the CEQC move their meeting to the first or last week of the month to better align with the Council schedule. The first Weds. tends to be busy with other Commission meetings, so the CEQC will try moving to the first Thurs. of the month for the December meeting. John to confirm that this time works for CEQC members not in attendance.

- b. GreenStep committee: Consists of Chris, Dan and Fran. John suggests meeting an hour before the regularly scheduled CEQC meeting. Dan and Chris said this should work, so the next GreenStep committee meeting will be Nov. 8th at 3:30 pm.
 - c. Energy reporting: This subcommittee is only John and Chris at the moment – Liz was a member but is likely too busy to help. John and Chris will schedule a time outside of the meeting.
6. Partners in Energy: John noted that the Energy Action Plan will be up for a vote at the Nov. 6th Council meeting. CEQC members are certainly welcome to attend or can view online: <https://www.cityofwinona.com/city-services/city-administration/winona-city-council/city-council-streaming-video/>

John hopes the CEQC will be an integral part of implementing the Energy Action Plan.

7. Solar: John stated that the City Council approved a plan at the last Council meeting to obtain approximately 40% of the City's electricity through Solar Stone community solar gardens.

The next phase of solar development that John anticipates is presenting ideas for onsite arrays on City buildings or property. He would like CEQC help in furthering this next phase.

8. Winona Farm update: John presented that Bruno asked that the Winona Farm be on the agenda. John said the farm's owner is looking for a successor to continue the work of the farm after he passes away. Chris made a motion to table for Bruno to discuss. Accepted by acclamation.

9. Other:

Hans feels the CEQC should operate broadly, including improving downtown ambiance and intangible character of the City.

Ped/Bike plan is moving forward with the city's planning department. Broadway plan for a road diet and bike lanes was approved by the City Council earlier this month. Dan noted that there was good publicity on both in the local papers.

10. Meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm. Moved by Chris, seconded by Hans, all in favor.