

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Wozniak called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and at his request, Public Works Director Marc Culver called the roll.

Present: Chair Joe Wozniak; Vice Chair Bryant Ficek; and Members Michael Joyce, Jarrod Cicha, Shane Spencer, and Mike Collins

Absent: Member Nancy Misra (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Marc Culver; City Engineer/Assistant Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Civil Engineer Stephanie Smith, and Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Approval of January 25, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners prior to tonight's meeting and those revisions incorporated into the draft presented in meeting materials.

Motion

Member Ficek moved, Member Joyce seconded, approval of the January 25, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Election of Officers

Chair Wozniak indicated this will be his last meeting as a member of the PWETC. He nominated Vice-Chair Ficek as Chair of the PWETC.

Motion

Member Wozniak moved, Member Joyce seconded, to appoint Bryant Ficek as Chair of the PWETC.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Commissioner Joyce nominated himself as Vice-Chair.

Motion

Member Joyce moved, Member Collins seconded, to appoint Michael Joyce as Vice-Chair of the PWETC.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Commissioner Spencer volunteered to be on the Ethics Commission.

Motion

Member Spencer moved, Member Cicha seconded, to appoint Spencer to the Ethics Commission.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Chair Wozniak asked if there has been any new information on a Youth Commissioner for the PWETC.

Mr. Culver did not believe there has been any solicitation for that yet.

5. Communication Items

City Engineer Jesse Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated March 22, 2022.

Mr. Culver indicated the Roseville Area Progressives Group is organizing a walkout on Friday to draw attention to climate change. He reviewed the student demands as well as the student appearance at the City Council meeting.

Chair Wozniak indicated he was happily surprised at this and had no idea that there was a movement at the school.

Vice-Chair Ficek thought the presentation on the Xcel Project was great. He asked if there will be at least one sidewalk open at all times.

Mr. Freihammer explained there will be a requirement that a sidewalk be open on one side or the other of County Road B and during the majority of the project sidewalks on both sides of the project will remain open.

Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson updated the Commission on sustainability efforts in the City.

6. Climate Change Response Recommendation

Chair Wozniak reviewed the history of the Climate Change Response item and explained in January the City Council reviewed it and decided not to set the item aside for a future agenda item for discussion and had a discussion about it. The discussion focused primarily on the importance that the City was doing things than the City needs to claim an emergency about it as well as some concerns about what signifying an emergency can mean and raised a few concerns among the Council. He indicated the Commission should discuss whether the Commission wants to take any action on this item. He asked Resilient Roseville to discuss it at their meeting and perhaps offer some suggestions for what that group might see as edits to or additions to the proposed resolution.

Chair Wozniak explained Mr. Culver and he also talked about this and wondered if it might be better, instead of a resolution, to take the Be It Resolved action steps and agree on a set of those, as a Commission, as a way of informing the City Council what the PWETC believed are the best next steps for the City, without claiming a Climate Emergency, but instead focus on action steps that this Commission, City Staff and/or residents can perhaps consider and then that might then serve as a backdrop for this Commissions discussion with the City Council at the Joint meeting in July.

Chair Wozniak opened the floor to the public.

Ms. Donna Peterson, 2650 Lexington Avenue, explained she is with Resilient Roseville and is trying to gather comments from residents and the City. She noted Resilient Roseville did not delete anything from the Commission's template received. She indicated there were not many comments except in the Be It Further Resolved section. Resilient Roseville did not take out anything from the template but did add a list of possibilities for people to consider.

Ms. Tammy McGehee indicated she really appreciated the list of items in the resolution and as it stood, she was really unclear if all of those action items are the action items that Chair Wozniak and Mr. Culver were planning to move forward. She would have to say that it is most important to move those things forward and there are some very easy steps there that the City could do by changing zoning and

by putting in some incentives, which would not be very costly. She indicated she was in favor of the extensive list of things in the document.

Ms. Carol Marcell, 2976 High court, Roseville, wrote in a chat that she was supportive of the items for action in the list.

Chair Wozniak closed the public comment and indicated the Commission has had a chance to look at this and he has taken the list and reordered the items in a different, sequential way. He read the additions to the list.

Member Spencer explained he liked the rewording on some of the items. His point was going to be similar to the education point. He thought one of the things that probably do not do well enough is to educate what the City is doing as far as sustainability and one suggestion he had is to bring out more the website for sustainability because it is buried in a menu and should be brought out on the City website. The other things he was thinking of was trying to bring sustainability more to the forefront in the newsletter. If the City did not have a sustainability section in the newsletter already then there should be one and maybe if the City can time it when the Commission has its sustainability super meeting, have the front page dedicated to sustainability and the things that the Commission is going to talk about on the sustainability super meeting. He thought Roseville and the Public Works group does a great job of getting out in front of a lot of green initiatives and looking at green alternatives and doing an incredible job of trying to stay at the forefront of what is out there in terms of new technology to be sustainable.

Vice-Chair Ficek agreed with most of what Member Spencer said and what was presented by Chair Wozniak. He thought one of the things the Commission debated last time was just the specific language of the emergency and how that might trip some other things in the City as well as a there is a legal association with it. He liked the idea of slimming this down and talking about the resolution parts of it and things the Commission wants to do. The other thing he was thinking about was if the Commission could, as a part of this, highlight that the City is doing these things. Some of the items on the list the City is already doing.

Chair Wozniak agreed. He thought there was some agreement on the Be It Resolved section and he wondered if it was the Commission's desire to move ahead with a resolution to the City Council to declare a climate concern/crisis, anything but an emergency.

Member Joyce indicated he liked the term "action plan", because the City is taking steps towards climate change and energy partnerships. He thought the City may need to do more advertising on what the City is doing toward climate change.

Chair Wozniak thought this could be called the "Sustainability Action Plan" and a component of that could be a climate action plan and these other elements being talked about. Perhaps the Commission could advocate to the City Council or pass

a recommendation to the City Council that the Council consider a Sustainability Action Plan that has these components and that the PWETC would be an integral part of carrying that forward.

Member Joyce indicated a lot of this is weaved into what the Commission is doing right now. He thought the State Legislature is looking at things as well.

Member Cicha thought regarding the word “emergency”, the whole scientific community agrees that the world is in a climate emergency right now and there is a lot of fear about using the word “emergency” and what that could mean but that is where he hears that argument stop and without any explanation of what those things are that the community is scared of, there are multiple other cities that are excepting these types of proposals and using the word “emergency”. He was not sure if those cities skipped the due diligence of figuring out what the word “emergency” means to them. If the City is not able to declare an emergency or pass a resolution without that word, he would like to advocate for the City to find out what those consequences are of using the word “emergency” because if the City cannot say when it is right before their eyes, he was not sure what they are really doing.

Mr. Culver thought there may still be some discussion or a decision point on whether the Commission is recommending the Council adopt a resolution or whether the Commission is forwarding a set of recommendations to the Council. He thought if it the latter, the Commission has more leeway as far as and maybe it is just as simple as saying The Public Works, Environment, Transportation Commission recognizes that the planet is in the midst of a climate emergency. The Commission is not declaring one but the Commission is recognizing this emergency condition the world is in. As a result of that and because of this, the Commission is recommending the following actions be taken in the short term. He thought the timing is probably good from the perspective that the City is moving into its budget cycle for 2023.

Member Cicha indicated he did like the resolution as written but if the Commission was not able to pass that and suggest it to the Council then at least declaring that the PWETC acknowledges the ongoing emergency is at least a good first step.

Member Spencer indicated he agreed with Member Cicha and believed Mr. Culver’s response was a good way to present this to the Council by making a list of things recommended by the Public Works Department and the PWETC.

Mr. Culver indicated he could right up a proposal for the City Council if the Commission wanted to move to the next item and come back to this item afterwards.

Chair Wozniak tabled further discussion on this item until the end of the meeting.

7. Take Out Food Containers – State of the Region

Civil Engineer Stephanie Smith made a presentation to the Commission on take-out food containers.

Mr. Johnson indicated the City has been working on making events zero waste and the costs ended up being a few cents each per item. He thought looking at it from a business side, there could be a sticker shock from one type of container to another, if purchased in bulk.

Ms. Smith indicated she could reach out to some businesses in St. Paul to see what their impact has been for turning to compostable containers.

Chair Wozniak indicated container costs are one factor but he was wondering about other costs such as did business choose to leave a city due to compostable or recyclable container requirement.

Ms. Smith thought the cities would be more lenient on those measures instead. St. Louis Park and Minneapolis both had allowances for if the businesses were not able to find a compostable or recyclable alternative from what the business typically uses.

Chair Wozniak indicated another perspective he would like to hear from is from the recycler.

Ms. Smith indicated she would be interested in that information too. She did not think Minneapolis was single sort like Ramsey County is with Eureka. She thought there are other ways the Commission can talk about sustainable practices.

Member Spencer asked what the plan is for the plastic bags that carryout the take-out containers.

Ms. Smith indicated Minneapolis has a plastic bag ban. She thought if the Commission wanted to consider a plastic bag ban that could be reviewed and would affect retail stores as well as restaurants.

Chair Wozniak thought the both the recycling vendor and waste processing facility would appreciate that. He noted bags get stuck on processing equipment and have to be jackhammered off the equipment at the end of each day.

8. Business Sustainability Recognition Program

Civil Engineer Stephanie Smith made a presentation on the Green Business Recognition Program.

Vice-Chair Ficek indicated the programs seem to be successful and he wondered if they were accepted by businesses. He asked if there is any feedback from businesses in other cities.

Ms. Smith indicated Coon Rapids is doing ok but one thing to understand is how difficult it is to reach different tier levels. She thought making the different levels attainable is important. She thought Stillwater's program is very extensive because the city has a full staff working on it. Having a nice central location for people to go and look for businesses with green practices is really appealing for a lot of people.

Member Joyce asked if any of the businesses get recognized for new designs and energy efficiencies in the buildings or expansions.

Ms. Smith indicated while researching this she found other cities were doing an annual award for different projects specifically or some type of step-by-step award. She thought the step-by-step award gives more opportunities for continual growth and improvement and is something staff is looking at for feedback.

Chair Wozniak thanked Ms. Smith for the presentations. He recommended the Commission keep pushing both programs forward. He thought both are opportunities for how water is managed and sending a message to the people who use the services that the City can do better.

Ms. Smith thought it would be nice for the City to provide to the small businesses in the City some kind of financial bump for making those switches. She did not think the bigger chain businesses will be hurt as much as the small businesses.

Member Spencer agreed with Chair Wozniak that the white Styrofoam needs to go and encouraging businesses to switch over and helping them with the switchover whenever possible. He thought that is the best approach.

Member Collins asked if the product being discussed to ban being used in another industry besides restaurants.

Ms. Smith noted Styrofoam is also used in shipping and she was not sure what it would take to remove it from everywhere.

Member Collins thought if it was to be banned from one industry in the City it needed to be banned from all industries.

Ms. Smith thought that was an excellent point.

Chair Wozniak asked if the Commission would consider recommending a ban to the City Council on the use of Polystyrene (PS) and plastic No. 6.

Motion

Member Wozniak moved, Member Joyce seconded, recommendation to the City Council the City place a ban on the use of Polystyrene (PS), Plastic No.6 in food take out containers.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Culver indicated Councilmember Etten has wanted to do this but the Council has put it off due to the current hardships with restaurants. He thought the Council was committed to tentatively discuss this item in the third quarter of this year or later.

9. Climate Change Response Recommendation (Cont.)

Public Works Director Marc Culver indicated he came up with some wording for a recommendation to the City Council on climate change response. “For consideration the PWETC recognizes that there is ongoing global climate emergency to address and promote action in response to this climate emergency the PWETC recommends the following action items on the part of the City of Roseville: budget for a full time City of Roseville Sustainability position as soon as possible, create and implement a climate action plan with interim implementation goals and task City Staff, PWETC and or City of Roseville residents with developing, monitoring and routinely reporting on the progress of the climate action plan. Identify key metrics for energy reduction and sustainability goals and routinely report on progress. Pursue Federal, State and other funding in support of targeted climate response actions. Explore private sector partnerships to expand EV charging stations within the City of Roseville. Work with other City Commissions and departments to develop and implement City Policies and or Zoning Ordinances that incentivize energy conservation and EV ready construction. Increase and enhance the tree canopy to require diverse native tree that will tolerate anticipated climate stresses for public areas and provide education and guidance to residents and businesses to guide their selection of climate tolerant trees and other plantings. Decrease impermeable surfaces and heat island effects by incentivizing proven alternatives and provide education and guidance to residents and businesses to guide their choices.” He indicated the only thing he did not have in this paragraph is a recommendation to the City Council about adopting a resolution because he was not exactly sure how to word it.

Vice-Chair Ficek asked if the Commission wanted a resolution.

Chair Wozniak asked what the Commissioners thought about including the draft resolution from the November/January meeting.

The Commissioners supported forwarding the draft resolution to the City Council.

Chair Wozniak thought as part of what Mr. Culver provided, there would be a bullet point on the list stating the Commission encourages the City Council to declare a climate emergency in Roseville as proposed at the January City Council meeting.

Mr. Culver suggested it could be softened up by stating the Commission recommends the City Council consider adopting resolution recognizing the global climate emergency committing to the action items.

The Commission liked what Mr. Culver suggested.

Motion

Member Wozniak moved, Member Ficek seconded, to recommend the City Council consider adopting the resolution recognizing the global climate emergency and committing to the action items.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

10. Items for Next Meeting – April 26, 2022

Discussion ensued regarding the April PWETC agenda:

- Bike Network Plan
- Preliminary 2022 Calendar
- May MS4 Annual Meeting
- New Commissioner Swearing In

11. Discussion on Postponed Tour

Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson made a presentation to the Commission on the Ramsey County Ditch 4 project.

City Engineer/Assistant Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer updated the Commission on the RCD 4 & Twin Lakes Trail construction and costs.

Mr. Culver indicated beyond the trees the City planted, there were also native grasses and savannah seed mix that were planted. This will create a more prairie look with low maintenance and very pollinator friendly.

12. Adjourn

Motion

Member Wozniak moved, Member Ficek seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.