

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Ficek 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 Bryant Ficek; Vice Chair Michael Joyce; and Members Jarrod Cicha, Nancy Misra, Mike Collins, and Edwin Hodder

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Public Works Director Marc Culver; City Engineer/Assistant Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer

2. Public Comments

Chair Ficek indicated today is the 32nd anniversary of the signing of the ADA (American Disability Act). He thought it has pushed them towards greater acceptance of choices, multi-modal, whether bike or pedestrian and complimented staff on doing a good job of incorporating these in City projects.

Mr. Culver indicated the ADA has changed the way roads are built and designed and continues to change.

3. Approval of June 28, 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 Joyce moved, Member Misra seconded, approval of the June 28, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Communication Items

City Engineer Jesse Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated July 26, 2022.

Chair Ficek asked regarding State Fair parking, last year the City has no parking signs posted in areas and he wondered if the same thing will be done this year.

Mr. Culver indicated the intent is to continue that practice for the foreseeable future. He noted this was first done a year before COVID and then there was a hiatus so there was not much time to learn or apply what was learned from the first year but last year turned out pretty well and the City did not get too many questions or complaints.

Chair Ficek wondered what the City will get if it wins the sustainability contest. He understood the City is in the lead.

Mr. Culver thought it might give the City some momentum when applying for some other grants or participation to show that the City has an engaged community and have a good number of residents that are taking advantage of the programs that are being offered.

Member Hodder asked if rental properties had the opportunity to do similar things with energy savings.

Mr. Culver explained not yet but he thought the rental properties are still eligible for the same programs. The owner of the property would need to take care of that and make the actual improvements.

Mr. Culver reviewed City Council discussion regarding future proposed projects.

Member Hodder asked how the Pavement Management Fund is doing.

Mr. Culver indicated it is doing relatively well and showing a positive balance going into the 2030's. There have been more detailed discussions at staff level lately. He thought this may be an item for the PWETC workplan for discussion in the future.

Member Misra asked regarding the water section of the update if the City did sampling of the water supply and if the City had results on that. She wondered if this was the City system and City pipes. She also wondered about installing irrigation meters and where the meters are installed.

Mr. Culver indicated most of the irrigation meters installed are on City property with irrigation systems. He indicated years ago it was hard to track how much water the City was using because there were not any irrigation meters installed,

even on City buildings. He indicated at that time the usage was lumped into the City's unaccounted for water which was a pretty high percentage and the Department of Health and DNR could see that when the City submitted the water reports. He noted it is good practice for staff to be able to see how much water is being used for different areas and for different uses and that gives staff an opportunity to see if there is a way to use less water.

Mr. Freihammer updated the Commission on the City Water Rebate Program. He noted the City received additional grant funds this year but the program was expanded and rebates for irrigation is still available but the City also opened it up to appliances.

5. City Council Joint Meeting Review

Chair Ficek thought the joint meeting went well with good conversation.

Mr. Culver reviewed with the Commission how different topics could be discussed. He indicated the Commission and City Council discussed the following topics which could be discussed at a few upcoming meetings. He listed a few of the topics: speed limit, takeout food containers, name change, No Mow May, and various smaller topics. He asked if there were any other topics outside of the ones he listed that the Commission felt strongly about.

Member Collins indicated he would like to talk about the City bike plan.

Member Misra asked if there was interest in talking about the Solar and Renewable Program and maybe some upgrading on those.

Chair Ficek suggested talking more about EV Stations.

Member Joyce explained he would like an update on transit.

Mr. Culver explained staff could ask Metro Transit to come in and talk to the Commission about Post COVID ridership as well as other things. He noted because the takeout food container topic was previously discussed he thought that might be something the Commission could continue discussion on. He thought the discussion could continue at the August meeting and staff could bring in Ordinance information from other cities and talk about what the Commission likes and does not like as well as what the Commission would like to see. He noted the Council has discussed possibly doing a phased in program, starting with an education and trying to get restaurants to voluntarily start using some of these recyclable or compostable containers and then eventually get to an Ordinance where an Ordinance could be put in place for enforcement. He noted the Council liked the soft rollout concept.

Member Joyce asked if there was anywhere in the newsletter where the City can showcase restaurants in Roseville that are using and have adopted compostable and

recyclable takeout containers. He thought that may encourage other businesses to do the same.

Mr. Culver thought that was a good idea and the City could try to do some type of survey to find that out and beside putting something in the newsletter there could be an online article.

Chair Ficek thought the Commission should start to talk about No Mow May and pollinator information in order to have something in place before next May. He wondered when this should be discussed.

Mr. Culver thought there should be something about these topics in the March/April 2023 newsletter and reinforce it in the May/June 2023 newsletter. A detailed conversation on this topic could be done at the November or January meeting as well to make sure that something is ready to put in the newsletter.

Chair Ficek asked if the speed limit discussion should be a two-meeting item.

Mr. Culver indicated that should be discussed and he thought the expectation for Roseville will be to have some sort of public participation on the topic. He thought the Commission should have a preliminary meeting on what that would entail and how will the City engage the public and what does the City want to talk about preliminarily. Then the Commission will want to review the comments and have an opportunity for the public to come to a Commission meeting to discuss the topic and see what people would like to see on their streets or not like to see. Then he thought after that staff and the Commission work on some proposed speed limits and how to enact that across the City. They can also talk about limitations of enforcement and some other things. He thought the Commission could start discussion on this in September with some public interaction.

Mr. Culver updated the Commission on possible topics for future meetings.

Member Misra asked if there has been any thought about revisiting the Master Plan for the City campus.

Mr. Culver explained staff currently has August 8th scheduled for an update to the City Council but it might get moved to August 22nd because of other agenda items. He thought staff had some good information and could discuss at the August or September meeting with the PWETC.

Member Collins indicated he would be interested in touring the City facilities.

Mr. Culver suggested adding that to a meeting where the Commission would meet first and go through the meeting and then adjourn to tour the facilities.

6. Discussion of Commission Scope, Duties, Function and Name

Chair Ficek indicated the Commission has touched on the topic of a name change several times and the City Council gave the approval to talk about this and think about it in the broader scope.

Mr. Culver reviewed the Commission's scope that is in City Code. He noted if this were to be changed there would need to be a public hearing and other actions taken to change it.

Chair Ficek indicated from that, the first thing he wanted to bring forward was the sustainability and how that could be worked in, whether the name were changed or not, it seems like that should be said somewhere in the scope. He explained he was looking at some other cities' scopes and read from a few different cities' scopes.

Chair Ficek explained another part to this is infrastructure itself or transportation infrastructure if the Commission wanted to characterize it. He thought that could also be in the description. He thought there were a lot of things that could be put in the description of the Commission. As this was originally brought up, it involved the name and leaning towards sustainability and infrastructure and it has broadened out to what the Commission's purpose is and they are related. He thought it was trying to make it more relatable to the public than what it is now and sustainability and infrastructure did those two things for him and he thought those items could be included in changes to the scope and the Commission could then define those words as well. He noted infrastructure would not be related to parks because that has its own Commission and would be a part of the description.

Member Misra asked staff if they have come across any other department within the City or Commissions that have discussed sustainability.

Mr. Culver explained Planning would be the one that would have the greatest amount of crossover on that topic. He noted the City's Community Development Director would like to come and give the Commission an update on what the Planning Commission has been talking about as far as Ordinance changes and incentives towards sustainability. He indicated that would happen either in August or September. The Planning Commission is actively talking about some of these items right now. Because of limitations in Statute, as far as Building Code, the City cannot require more stringent or more expensive building code provisions than what the State adopts in its State Building Code. The City cannot require sustainability efforts in building that is not already in the State Building Code. The City can incentivize it, particularly and where the City has been successful or think it has been successful with that is commercial properties that are looking for assistance from the City on something. There are some other things the City is looking at doing. The Shoreland Ordinance is something the Planning Commission has worked on and recommended to the City Council for approval.

Member Hodder indicated when he was on the Finance Commission, in the sense of, for example, the Capital Improvement Plan, they looked at things that kept

things on a sustainable plain. He thought Chair Ficek's idea of looking at the scope was good and he thought the Finance Commission did a similar exercise. He thought this is something that the PWETC should consider. He thought sustainability had different meanings and for this Commission it is looking at sustainable Public Works systems. He liked the idea of looking at the scope and trying to incorporate that definition of what it is the Commission would like to do.

Member Misra thought there was a way to look at sustainability rather than the PWETC is the Commission that does sustainability. She thought that is a way to look at it that is really worthwhile to exam but she thought in real effectiveness it needs to be spread across all departments so that planning and finance and all the areas of the City that are affected by sustainability are involved. She thought in the Commission scope they should think about how to connect that to other areas of the City.

Member Hodder agreed and some of the Finance Commission thinking too was to look at the community visioning and what the community was asking that Commission to do. That all flowed into that discussion as well. He indicated there was overlap there.

Member Joyce explained sustainability is embedded in a lot of the crosswalks throughout all of the Commissions and everything done in the City. He asked if there was a way to embed sustainability in the Commission's role and responsibilities in the overarching title of environmental.

Mr. Freihammer thought if the Commission went with one of the definitions Chair Ficek brought up, it could potentially cover that.

Chair Ficek explained there are City goals for sustainability. He asked if there are official policies along with those that need to be referenced at all. Otherwise, a generic statement within the scope of advising on sustainability and resiliency could be crafted as a statement within the scope.

Mr. Culver agreed and thought generally speaking for the purposes of City Code, the Commission would not want to necessarily reference any current land or something like that because then that would age it. He noted even the Comprehensive Plan in the resiliency chapter has some goals in there for carbon reduction and such, which are very far reaching, but will very likely be out of date by 2027-2028 when the City adopts the next new Comprehensive Plan. He thought it would work by trying to keep it vague and identifying that the Commission has goals in the Comprehensive Plan and or other Citywide plans such as the current Energy Action Plan which will hopefully evolve into a Climate Action Plan at some point. Maybe referencing that the City does have sustainability and resiliency goals within the plans and that this Commission is tasked with implementing or monitoring the implementation of that.

Chair Ficek indicated he would almost change, if he goes back to what the Commission has now, “serve in an advisory capacity to City Council, City Manager, Director of Public Works”, it is almost like after that statement, instead of “on public works, environmental and transportation matters”, that is where the Commission could come in with something different that talks about sustainability, resiliency, maintenance of transportation infrastructure and grabbing those terms all in there and whether the Commission needs to define them further from there he did not know but that seemed like an easy place to start and change that. He explained going down the list, the second one read is “to maintain an interest and understanding of the functions and operations of Public Works”, he agreed with that but he wondered if that needed to be stated in there or did it need to be changed. It could be opened up to get to some of the other points and working with other Commissions.

Mr. Culver did not think there was anything that would restrict them from adding a letter to this. He indicated if B was left as is and modify C a little bit but put something in between B and C, a new C statement that talks a little more about sustainability. Something along the lines of education and monitoring progress on City goals towards sustainability. That might a whole other paragraph that addresses sustainability on its own.

Chair Ficek indicated putting aside a name change he asked if there was general agreement that this would be a good step. Maybe modify a couple and add a new one towards that sustainability.

Member Misra explained she liked that idea and would like to see a little bit more flushing out of what is meant by sustainability because it is a definition that is quite variable. She thought in its broadest scope if the Commission were to make recommendations to other areas of the City that they have not taken part in how would that be received. She thought to be effective that is what it would take.

Mr. Culver did not think there is anything that prohibits the Commission from going outside their lane because even if they look at the HRIEC, that Commission talks about engagement and part of that is how should other departments and Commissions and that engage on issues. He indicated the Finance Commission also struggles on what its role is because they review all of the department’s budgets and he thought there will be some crossover as sustainability efforts are discussed. He thought part of that is if the Commission is making a recommendation to Community Development and/or the Planning Commission on such things.

Chair Ficek thought that is where it can be acknowledged too, the way it is written now, the other Commissions are not acknowledged at all. He thought directly putting in the scope that working with other Commissions as needed would be good for any topic and just having that recognition there.

Mr. Culver asked if there is an interest in one of the Commissioner's drafting some proposed language and bringing it back or would the Commission want staff to work on something.

Chair Ficek thought something was needed to be put on paper because it makes it easier to discuss and react to. He volunteered to help draft something up but would appreciate staff help on this.

Member Joyce asked if a document could be set up in Google Docs for Commission collaboration and adding to it.

Mr. Culver indicated that could be done. He noted a sub-committee could work on that as long as the entire Commission does not work on it due to open meeting laws.

Vice Chair Joyce indicated he would be willing to help.

Commissioner Misra volunteered as well.

Mr. Culver reviewed possible ways to start working on the scope for the Commission such as reviewing other Commission scopes.

7. Items for Next Meeting

Discussion ensued regarding the August PWETC agenda:

- Takeout container discussion
- Commission scope and name
- Update on Zoning Changes by City Community Development Director, possibly August or September.

Mr. Culver updated the Commission on selecting a new PWETC member.

8. Adjourn

Motion

Member Misra moved, Member Collins seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:07 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.