

# Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

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Tuesday, October 22, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.  
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive  
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

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## 1. Introduction / Roll Call

Vice 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 Brian Cihacek; Vice Chair Joe Wozniak; and Members Stephanie Hammer, Michael Joyce, Nancy Misra, and Shane Spencer

**Absent:** Member Huiett (Excused)

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

## 2. Public Comments

Ms. Alena Howie, 991 Parker Avenue, explained she was excited to hear from Community Development tonight. She did look at the presentation packet and hoped a few of the items will be addressed a little more in depth. She was pleased to see the incentives that are offered to residents to promote sustainability. She indicated she has seen some of the programs but not all of them and wondered if the city should be promoting them a little bit more. She thought there would be more interest in the community if the residents knew it was there. She noted she is a member of Resilient Roseville and would be willing to help promote those programs. She thought with the Lily Newspaper stopping the city needed to find alternative ways to communicate with the community a little more effectively. In the area of building codes, Resilient Roseville believes that personnel energy needs to be directed at proposing specific options for the city to implement that would put Roseville on track to meet the expected goals for 2030. Other communities have implemented green ordinances that fit within the current Minnesota regulations. She indicated she brought some lists of sample ordinances.

Vice Chair Wozniak echoed some of Ms. Howie's comments, especially based on the fact that the city is seeing a lot of replacement housing going on in the city. He thought this may take advantage of some of the grants that have not recently been promoted.

Ms. Sherry Hood, President of League of Women Voters of the Roseville Area, 2220 Midland Grove Road, explained she was at the last meeting and there was a member from Resilient Roseville, which she is also a member of, talk to the Commission about the clubs concerns about the environment and what the city is doing about the concerns about energy consumption. The Commission stressed it would like to know more about energy consumption and if Resilient Roseville could provide some kind of education regarding that. She indicated there are many ways that can be done but there is a Board called the Citizens Utility Board (CUB), that does speaking engagements on reducing energy costs, etc. That group is willing to come to the Commission meeting.

Mr. Culver indicated the Commission does have a meeting scheduled in November, but the Met Council is scheduled to speak at that meeting and talking about transit and Met Council items. The Commission has targeted January as kind of a sustainability super meeting and have opened it up to ideas for that meeting so that might be a good opportunity to invite them to speak in January.

Vice Chair Wozniak understand at the Resilient Roseville meeting there was discussion about the Xcel Energy program “Partnership in Energy” and that is a program that wherein Xcel provides resources to communities who submit an application to identify goals and formulate a plan to reach those goals over a set time period, including a number of meetings with groups of interest in the community to try and formulate that plan and put it into action. He thought this was something that could be talked about at the January meeting and discuss preparing something for the application deadline period in July 2020.

Mr. Culver indicated someone talked at the city Council meeting about an upcoming educational program being held at Cederholm on November 20<sup>th</sup> about climate change and the individual that mentioned it indicated they have gone to some training program on how to present this educational material on climate change.

Chair Cihacek arrived at 6:42 p.m. Vice Chair Wozniak turned the meeting over to Chair Cihacek.

### **3. Approval of September 24, 2019 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.*

Mr. Culver noted Vice Chair Wozniak pointed out a spelling error for one of the speakers from last month that would be corrected in the minutes.

### **Motion**

**Member Spencer moved, Member Joyce seconded, approval of the September 24, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.**

**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 October 22, 2019.

Chair Cihacek indicated he would like to get a report in the future about the Ramsey County Organics site. He also asked if there is an update on the Forestry Sub-Task Force Committee.

Mr. Culver explained staff needs to follow up on that. There has been some interest from the Parks and Recs Commission. He indicated he will follow up on that and get the Commission names in order to organize the task force to get that going.

Mr. Culver explained the PWETC meeting in February 2020 is going to conflict with the primary election and there cannot be a city meeting on an election night. The meeting will need to be rescheduled or cancelled. He noted he can look at some February dates that are open and in November the Commission can set an alternate date or make a decision for that meeting.

Chair Cihacek asked if there is any standing business that has to occur in February.

Mr. Culver indicated there is not anything that has to get done but was not sure if there would be anything to follow up with from January.

**5. Youth Member**

Chair Cihacek explained members of the interview committee met with Jana Lynch and she is interested and seems qualified. She is interested in topics the Commission covers and seems like a good person to appoint. He also would like the city Council to allow them to keep the other position open on a rolling basis rather than closing the application at this time because it is a new position for this Commission and the more that can be messaged about it the more opportunity for people to know about it for next year.

**Motion**

**Member Cihacek moved, Member Wozniak seconded, to recommend the City Council appointment of Jana Lynch as a Youth Commission Member on the Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission.**

Mr. Culver indicated the next step would be the city Council will need to make an official appointment to the Commission at their November meeting and will get

some attention there. He was not sure how the city would go about announcing the position from there.

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion carried.**

## **6. Review of Turf Grass Presentation**

Chair Cihacek reviewed the Turf Grass presentation with the PWETC.

Member Hammer asked if there was anywhere for the public to see and review the information that was presented to the Commission.

Mr. Culver indicated there is the Commission packet online along with the meeting video that can be watched.

Chair Cihacek thought that starting a communication campaign on a number of topics might make sense. He also thought working with community partners that might be interested at a local level and introducing it to Dr. Sandor makes sense as well. He asked if the city had a turf grass management practice or program, at any level, of how the city is approaching this topic. If not, can the city start to develop something and talk to public works to see what might make sense in the city.

Mr. Culver explained staff has had many discussions about this for many years internally. One of the newer maintenance staff used to help with the research that Professor Sandor is doing. The city has applied that as far as what kind of turf grass is being planted in some areas. There is always going to be the balance between aesthetics and maintenance, depending on where it is. The city is also learning more about salt tolerant grasses and things like that as well and putting in practice different irrigation practices.

There was discussion regarding how the city can communicate the presentation and other information to the residents.

## **7. Utility Rates**

Mr. Culver presented the PWETC the proposed 2020 Utility rates and asked the Commission to review and give feedback.

Member Joyce asked if there was any benefit to the low flow shower heads and programs like that.

Mr. Culver indicated there was, particularly on a large scale.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked if the city Council declined to add the irrigation tier and instead advocated an outreach campaign to reduce or minimize irrigation.

Mr. Culver indicated that was correct.

Vice Chair Wozniak thought that fit in with Dr. Sandor's presentation about over watering. He wondered if there was some way to put those two things together.

Mr. Culver indicated staff is planning on being very aggressive next year with an outreach campaign, particularly directed to the high-water users that the city knows is irrigating and encourage them to use new technology to help lower their water usage. The city has applied for some grants to hopefully do some rebates for some actual controllers and things like that. Even if the city does not get the grants dollars may be set aside to do that and get at least a couple of users in Roseville to do it and report on the results. The Council was not opposed to ever setting an additional tier but what the Council wanted to do was do a targeted outreach campaign first and see if people will change their behavior by doing that first and then increase the rates if needed.

Member Misra thought with all of the developments going in that have not done their landscaping could the city talk to them about some of the options.

Mr. Culver indicated that could be done.

Member Hammer inquired if the city gets much inquiring when the rates are published.

Mr. Culver indicated generally there is not much inquiry. He thought most people really do not notice. The recycling one might be interesting because of the percentage.

**Motion**

**Member Joyce moved, Member Hammer seconded, to approve the 2020 Utility Rate Schedule.**

**Ayes: 5**

**Nays: 0**

**Abstain: 1 (Wozniak)**

**Motion carried.**

**8. Sustainability Efforts in Community Development**

Community Development Director Janice Gundlach was at the meeting to present the sustainability efforts within her department including Economic Development focus areas.

Chair Cihacek asked Ms. Gundlach to expand on the MN GreenStar and MN Green Community certifications. He wondered what each one was and differed and what each one represented.

Ms. Gundlach indicated she has been with the city since February and could not speak to anyone that is actually even offered. She did understand with speaking to staff that the language was made fairly vague and was left open for applicants to apply for and then make a good case as to what was done in terms of Minnesota Green Star.

Chair Cihacek asked what the difference was between MN GreenStar and MN Green Community.

Ms. Gundlach indicated she was not familiar with the detail of the programs either. Staff will need to come back to the Commission with greater information if details are needed.

Vice Chair Wozniak wondered if the rebate was only available to housing replacement program housing.

Ms. Gundlach indicated that was correct. It is the housing replacement program that the EDA runs.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked if the EDA has built any homes recently.

Ms. Gundlach explained there have not been any homes built recently but the EDA has rehabbed one down by the library in 2017 or 2018.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked when the EDA rehabs the homes are the homes eligible for the rebates.

Ms. Gundlach indicated the homes were available for rebates.

Member Joyce asked if any of the programs were communicated to the permitting office of when a homeowner pulls a permit for remodeling. Could this be something that the city could tie together with staff to show available programs available for remodeling.

Ms. Gundlach indicated these are available at the Community Development window at city hall and on the website, there are links available. She noted depending on the program there are income limits to meet in order to take advantage, there are caps on the amount of funding available under these programs and some are limiting factors for people, depending on the type of work that is being done or the financial position the homeowner is in.

Chair Cihacek asked if there were any programs available for commercial developers.

Ms. Gundlach indicated there was. She explained she did not include in her memo anything in the city's business subsidy policy. She encouraged the Commission to

visit Grow Roseville site, the city's economic development site, there is a tab at the top called Business Incentives and within that is a dropdown menu for a variety of programs that are available for the businesses. A lot are geared toward new businesses. She noted the city is constrained by Statute under what it can actually fund. There is redevelopment TIF as a public subsidy, Housing TIF, Tax Abatement and the policy falls into that category.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked for clarification that if someone is granted TIF is there a requirement to meet certain qualifications.

Ms. Gundlach explained the business is not required to implement energy efficiency or sustainability requirements.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked why that would not be a requirement.

Ms. Gundlach interjected it is something the EDA could about. One of the paragraphs in her memo talks about sustainable development realities. She bullet pointed some things that are being seen in the construction industry happening. One thing she called attention to is some of the practical considerations. New versus rehab, renovation challenges with incorporating sustainability and green building practices is proven to be difficult. Materials cost and available is a huge issue right now in the industry with building. Knowledgeable tradesmen have proven to also be a challenge in the field when working under really tight time frames and wanting to do these things. She also put economic competitiveness in this as well.

Mr. Culver reviewed TIF and what it is and means with the Commission.

Building Official Dave Englund was at the meeting to present building code requirements and trends including the MN Energy code and Mechanical code.

Chair Cihacek asked if a resident wanted something like the green standard included in the energy code then the resident should contact their Legislature and let them know that.

Mr. Englund noted the resident could also contact the State Building Official or the Commissioner of Public Commerce. He explained there is two to three and a half years of consideration on each change. It is a long process and a lot of it is not significant changes but smaller word changes.

Chair Cihacek thought the MN Energy Code may never reflect current industry standards because it is meant to represent a minimum and not a best standard.

Mr. Englund indicated that was correct and is what the city enforces, which is the minimum standard, but the city can accept and allow a higher standard.

Member Hammer asked if staff foreseen a lot of additional changes, in terms of building code.

Mr. Englund thought that gets very difficult for the State because their main charging statement says codes cannot be put into place that will increase the cost of construction. He thought what will happens when it becomes more of a standard practice, the costs will go down and become standard.

Mr. Culver noted that is where some cities are pushing incentives onto developers to put into place more sustainable efforts that meet these other standards that are not necessarily required.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked how the incentives are funded, if not by TIF money or something else available.

Chair Cihacek thought there had to be an income stream somewhere.

Mr. Culver explained there are grant programs out there as well for builders and developers. Larger cities can offer up incentives as well that are outside of TIF.

Chair Cihacek wondered if Roseville could have a more stringent code then the State such as a Green Building Code.

Mr. Englund indicated the city could adopt more stringent codes. There is another level of what happens when a city requires something that does increase the cost of development or rehabilitation or remodeling within the city.

Chair Cihacek asked how cost of construction is measured.

Mr. Englund assumed cost of construction is the estimated value at permit submittal.

Member Misra asked how often are some of the landscape options included such as rooftop gardens, native landscapes, and is the city some of this in some of the larger new developments going on.

Mr. Englund indicated those items go to city Planning Department first, which are more of the conceptual plans. When his department sees an actual construction set of documents those go back to the City Planner to make sure that those documents are meeting the requirements in planning. He indicated he does see a lot of the native plantings and with the Engineering Department, a lot of the stormwater management.

Mr. Culver noted that almost all development is required to do stormwater mitigation. Staff is finding that more of the corporate users and residential users that have a higher standard for aesthetics which will use more native plantings in

concert with stormwater mitigation because there is an aesthetic value to it. He explained this is something that is required and that the city and watershed reviews.

Vice Chair Wozniak asked if the largest potential energy efficiency gains are achieved by looking at single family homes, multi-unit housing or commercial sector buildings.

Mr. Englund thought the biggest area for improvement would be not newly constructed multi-family buildings. With those buildings the heating systems are very old and expensive to replace, and he did not believe those are very efficient. A lot of the issues with multi-family is how those residents use their individual unit.

**9. Items for Next Meeting – November 26, 2019**

Discussion ensued regarding the November PWETC agenda:

- Public Works 2020 Work Plan
- Metropolitan Council Councilmember Peter Lindstrom and Staff

Vice Chair Wozniak indicated he was a little worried about the January meeting agenda and how that is going to come together if it is not discussed in November.

Mr. Culver explained the January meeting will be discussed at the end of the November meeting.

**10. Adjourn**

**Motion**

**Member Misra moved, Member Wozniak seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:31 p.m.**

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion carried.**