

City of Ashland – Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 25th, 2023

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm HYBRID MEETING:

Meeting Link: <https://meet.goto.com/159211365> | Access Code:
159-211-365 - CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS (601 Main Street W)

Energy Action Plan, 25x25 Plan, Sourcewater Protection Plan linked here:
<https://sites.google.com/view/ashland-sustainability/themes>

Present: Laura Graf, Lissa Radke, Amy Amman, Axel Peterman, Adam Zais

Excused: Kate Ullman, Dale Kupczyk,

Agenda

- 1) Approval of Agenda
Peterman called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Amman moved and Zais seconded. The Committee voted to approve the agenda as proposed. Mr. Peterman acknowledged Mr. Wiley's assistance as staff person and thanked him for his help.
- 2) Approval of minutes from the March 23, 2023 meeting
Zais moved and Graf seconded. No one had revisions to the minutes so the Committee approved the minutes as written. Motion carried.
- 3) Citizen Comments - None
- 4) Projects/Discussions
 - a) Waste and Recycling
 - i. June 3rd Ashland Spring Clean Up
Wiley explained that this event was scheduled for June 3rd and that the flyer was included in the packet materials.
 - ii. June 20th Cleansweeps Event – Update
Radke informed the Committee that this is the 28th year in a row for the event and it costs \$10,000 every year and the County Board approves it every year. The UW Extension promotes it. The organizers have good volunteers and Radke explained that the event is from 2-6 pm on a Tuesday at Northwoods Technical College in the parking lot. They greet people, give information, and thank them for disposing of things appropriately. They do a survey to obtain more information from people when they are in line. It has been a fun event. Peterman stated he had a good time doing it last year. Radke explained that there are two shifts: 1:45pm – 3:45pm and 4 pm – 6 pm. There is a free box lunch for people that do the second shift. The event occurs rain or shine. Amman explained that the old flyer from the water bill had a June 30 date. Radke asked Public Works to be at the Spring Clean Up with flyers and also reached out to the press since the date is now June 20th. Zais asked Radke if they take old paint at the event. Radke explained that they take old paint except for latex. Latex can be put in garbage as long as it is dry. Oil based paints are acceptable. June 6th Radke is having a one-hour webinar and is interviewing the head of NWRPC who started this. The webinar will occur at noon and it will be on the UW website. Amman asked for items not accepted

if we have somewhere where we can say what to do with these things. Radke answered that there is such a huge variety of unacceptable items so the UW Extension has put together a guide of where you can take some items. CNG for example can go to a natural gas dealer. Vaping pens are now allowed at the Cleansweeps events. Drugs for Donuts exchange allows people to bring unused/unwanted medications.

b) Climate Change

i. 25x25 Plan further discussion

Wiley provided an update on low hanging Focus on Energy LED replacements/rebates. Peterman mentioned charging stations. Graf mentioned the ribbon cutting for the charging stations. Graf asked about the PD solar. Wiley explained it is online and that he needed to follow up.

c) Water

i. Develop Sourcewater Protection Plan initial Recommendations –

Radke stated that there was much room for community engagement to go through recommendations and look at who can work on what. This is important. She wanted to have the community engaged in Sourcewater protection. She asked if it was possible to do something as a group. Peterman suggested doing a survey if we are interested in getting community input. Wiley explained that he can follow up with staff on the proper survey medium. Graf asked if the committee could cherry pick certain items in the plan to promote. Radke answered that the committee can at least tell people that this is something the city has. There are low hanging fruits such as water conservation in homes and businesses. Graf suggested maybe bring in committee members to help cherry pick things. Radke explained that there are items in there that could use subcommittees and suggested bringing back to the July meeting. The Committee could focus on the section with the action steps. Graf proposed examining it little by little. Radke suggested perhaps just start by looking at goals and recommendations. Peterman asked if everyone be willing to take a look at that section prior to the next meeting. Committee members answered that they were.

d) Annual Report for City Council

Peterman stated that this has been on the agenda for awhile. His understanding that the Committee has never actually submitted an annual report to City Council. Graf stated that not too many committees have submitted reports so Sustainability is not an anomaly. She mentioned the Committee of the Whole meeting where Council reps give committee updates. Peterman asked the Committee what the annual report would look like. He asked if it would be paragraphs or a 2 hour presentation. Wiley mentioned the annual report that was required for Green Tier and the Oshkosh State of the City event he participated in when he worked in Oshkosh. Committee members supported an open house. Radke stated that No Mow May is an example of something that came from this committee and that the committee is doing good things. Graf supported doing a night where Sustainability has a display. Radke suggested a fact sheet could be attached to Green Tier or emailed to Council. Radke asked if it was viable to write such a fact sheet. Peterman explained that Ullman has her website and that is a source of information. Radke and Peterman will put together an outline of

- initiatives going on. Peterman asked Radke to send photographs to Wiley along with an outline. Peterman will send list of accomplishments from the past two years. The committee discussed photo ideas such as fruit trees, community garden, native plantings, etc. They stated that they would send information to Wiley next week. Amman mentioned the dark sky promotion from last spring.
- e) Solar Incentives Proposal

Peterman asked if anyone was in charge of this. Zais was excited but was not sure what it was. Wiley was not sure. Radke asked if it had to do with funding (BIL, etc.) Amman stated that the Committee had talked about it and Graf asked if this was to be with Bill Bailey. Committee members believed it was and Wiley explained that he could reach out to Bill Bailey potentially for the July meeting. Radke explained that Bayfield was writing a multi-million dollar grant for EV charging infrastructure. Graf asked if it was City of Bayfield or Bayfield County. Radke stated it was Bayfield County. Mark Abeles-Allison is involved. The committee could also consider bringing it to Dan Grady at Ashland County.
 - f) Complete Streets
 - i. Discussion - Ullman wanted it on so the committee held off for now.
 - g) Green Tier Legacy Communities
 - i. Update and Annual Report Discussion - Wiley provided an update and stated that he would send out the new annual report format to everyone.
 - h) Great Lakes Friendly Restaurant Certification
 - i) Discussion

Amman had a meeting in April and the person who leads the Great Lakes was on the call along with a gentleman from Duluth who is starting a grassroots effort over there. They were excited to hear the committee was interested. Amman supported connecting our desire to bring this to the community with the 25x25 plan. The Committee could shop this concept around with restaurants as we explore it. It could work with fine dining, food trucks, schools, etc. Committee members asked if they have had fast food restaurants do it. Amman answered not yet but that is an area for improvement. Graf asked what it takes to be Great Lakes Friendly. Amman explained that there is a list of criteria. The City and Sustainability Committee moving it forward is new to the organizers of the initiative. The Committee can explore how we track who signs up, etc. Once we have a general idea, the organizers would help us roll it out. It could be possible to tie it to Great Lakes paddleboard surfing, etc. If Ashland develops a chapter here, we could join in/merge chapters in the area together. There is room for growth but the committee would have to lay parameters down. Amman asked Committee to check out the Surfrider Foundation-Great Lakes page. She said she could also send out the Northshore one. She was not sure how to proceed. Peterman believed this is a great opportunity and asked if there is an item on the agenda that we are comfortable dropping for the time being to get to this. Wiley mentioned potentially having a “parking lot” section that we can move such an item to in order to not forget but keep on and not necessarily discuss. Radke stated that Mary McPhetridge from the Chamber has been here 25 years and knows her business and the committee could approach her. The committee could also approach Northland College.
 - j) Seed Mix

- i. Discussion – Committee members saw spraying but are not sure what the City is using. Graf stated that Sara from Parks was talking about getting into it more. Graf can reach out to Sara. Amman wanted something in City contracts about approving whatever is used. Amman stated that this would be for the City and for the contractors. Graf will follow up and have a report on something. Amman has been in touch with Sara. The question arose of who handles the contracts. Some accountability or contract specification would help. Graf stated that maybe the contractor has to submit something showing what they are putting on the ground. This would apply to public projects and terraces/water lines. Sara and John are the people to check with.
- 5) Future agenda items
Graf saw that in MN there was a place paying people to get rid of their yards and put in plantings for pollinators. They are getting rid of lawns and paying \$2,000 per yard. She wants to look into it. May run into resistance but she is interested and will do some research. Peterman would like to provide a community garden update.
- 6) Adjournment
Amman moved and Graf seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Wiley
Planning and Development Director