City of Ashland – Sustainability Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 27th, 2023

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm HYBRID MEETING:

Meeting Link: https://meet.goto.com/740241965 | Access Code: 740-241-965 - 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, Dale Kupczyk, Axel Peterman, Kate Ullman, Steven Wiley

Agenda

1) Approval of Agenda
   Peterman called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm. Kupczyk moved and Graf seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
2) Approval of minutes from the June 22, 2023 meeting
   Graf moved to approve the minutes and Peterman seconded. Motion carried.
3) Citizen Comments – Bob Laskowski on Junction Road had a bad incident two weeks ago Sunday. His dog died. He has had problems. His neighbors have been spraying their lawn with Green Oasis. A couple years ago his buddy was getting sick. He had blood tests done and there were toxins in the system. It came back as Green Oasis based out of Eau Claire. The vet said that this stuff is toxic. This year he got sick again and a couple weeks ago he showed signs. Sunday he was chipper and real restless. Later he started vomiting and diarrhea and Mr. Laskowski suspected his dog had toxins in his system. His dog died six hours later. He talked to the neighbor who said they were biocides. He would like this committee to look deeper into what these chemicals are. He talked to Kevin Seefeldt who has not yet found anything out. He does not see any birds around and we are a Bird City. He was on the Parks Committee for a long time. He does not spray anything on his lawn. He is putting his plea into this Committee so asking us to check it out.

   Peterman asked what the biocide is. Mr. Laskowski replied he did not know but the vet said the chemical is strong. He thanked the committee.

4) Projects/Discussions
   a) Waste and Recycling
      Peterman asked for an update. Wiley explained about Cleansweeps and that it seemed to have gone well. Graf stated that she was there and someone came with a U-Haul with a whole thing of paint which was great. The event went really well. Peterman wished he could have come this year. Kupczyk mentioned there are no recycling bins at Bayview Beach and oftentimes people come with things from Culvers and Dairy Queen, etc. All this goes into the garbage. Ullman mentioned that Sara Hudson was going to work on a pilot project to have recycling in some of the parks so suggested Wiley check with her on that. Wiley said that he would.
   b) Climate Change
      i. 25x25 Plan further discussion

Peterman asked for an update. Wiley explained about looking at the City facilities and that Marisa Bayer from the Partners in Energy group sent Wiley the energy dashboard recently. Wiley provided an update on the solar project the committee started discussing last month with Bill Bailey. Ullman asked Wiley to send her an email. She will send Wiley the information on utility bills. Wiley explained that he had conversations with John Butler and Brian Ledin about the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) along with Brant Kucera. They are open to exploring solar at the WWTP but Mr. Kucera would like to have more information prior to taking the proposal to Council. Graf said that we could break in the staff slowly to let them get their arms around it. A data logger would be a great first step. Graf liked Kelly Westlund's idea of having a team go through the bills. She also suggested that Wiley talk to Mayor about appointing Kelly Westlund to the committee.

c) Water
   i. Develop Sourcewater Protection Plan initial Recommendations
   Peterman stated that Radke was going to contact someone from the Berg Center and he has not heard any update on that. Wiley had not either. Ullman explained that the Berg Center folks were busy this time of year. Peterman said that at this time of year he supposed there was not anyone else we could contact. Ullman asked what our ask was of the Berg Center. Peterman explained that we decided we were not knowledgeable enough on sourcewater protection to develop recommendations. Ullman stated that the plan had recommendations in it and the Berg Center was involved in developing these. As a start we could look at these recommendations and find out which ones were the City's responsibility. We could then flesh out recommendations as needed. Peterman agreed. Peterman asked if anyone would be willing to take a look at the recommendations and pick out ones we are willing to do something about. Ullman said she can't volunteer for August but can for September. Ullman asked if we can we put this on the September agenda. Wiley stated that this could go on the agenda for September.
d) Annual Report for City Council
   Peterman asked for an update. Wiley explained that he has been working on an InDesign layout. Peterman had sent Wiley email chains that were pertinent.
e) Solar Incentives Proposal
   This item was discussed under the 25x25 Plan discussion above.
f) Complete Streets
   i. Discussion
   Ullman left the meeting at 6:33 pm. Wiley explained Complete Streets and that it was an approach where designers consider all road users when creating street designs rather than prioritizing automobiles by default. Mr. Laskowski left at 6:35. Graf thinks Ashland is doing a good job overall. Wiley explained that communities can adopt a resolution or ordinance to adopt a Complete Streets approach and this was a way to formalize Complete Streets here.
g) Green Tier Legacy Communities
   i. Update and Annual Report Discussion

Ullman rejoined at 6:38 and left due to technical issues at 6:39 pm. Wiley provided an update and explained that the material the committee was compiling for the annual report for Council would address this.

h) Great Lakes Friendly Restaurant Certification
   i. Discussion
   Peterman mentioned that Amman was not present. Peterman and Wiley explained that this is about helping restaurants become greener through a voluntary process. Some actions included changing practices and containers from their current ones. Graf provided an explanation for Kupczyk. Amman is leading the charge.

i) Seed Mix
   i. Discussion
   Graf has not heard anything back on this item.

j) Community Garden Update

Peterman got everything done that he wanted to. They have 34 lots instead of the previous 22. They filled every lot except one. The person that was going to fill the one lot flaked. They will fill it next year. They are overhauling the compost system. The one they had previously was not effective. This spring they had a 4-foot-high pile of compost six foot square and this was several years' worth of compost. The objective is to get everything out of compost area so they could turn it into a three-bin system. Graf asked what was most of Peterman's compost. Was it mostly grass? Peterman explained that it was weeds, etc. He had been talking with Sara Hudson about accepting food scraps. They are not at that point but they are working on that. Kupczyk asked if this was near the Beaser School. Peterman said yes. Kupczyk asked if the garden property was part of the school property. Peterman said it was separate. They have been drawing water from the school property but the water had been turned off. He had spoken to Ms. Hudson about this and they figured it out. They will continue to work it out. They have had five volunteer work events and now will have a sixth. Events included a kid's pollinator event, upcoming classes such as a garden foraging class, the second potluck of the summer a few weeks ago. There has not been a spot in the community garden for people to sit and hang out so this has been a fascinating change. There was also a public plot. They are hoping to expand the program next year and take over another chunk of Beaser Park also. Hopefully there will be a short piece about them in Agriview in the next month or so. They have a visit from the community garden and urban agricultural specialist from UW Extension soon. He does most of his work around Milwaukee and was up last year. The group was thinking about what they want to do next year. They want to think about fencing and plan to install permanent fencing next spring. They are thinking about chain link deer fencing since there were issues with deer this year. If anyone has a rolling measuring thing Peterman would like to use it for the day. The committee discussed that Public Works or Water Utility should have one. The group plans to have an orchard and more allotment plots. They ones they have are large at 200 sq. ft. per piece and intimidating. They are talking about 2'x2' plots. Peterman has been in touch with Northlakes Community Clinic who had someone there a month ago and they may sponsor a paid garden manager position. They may also

sponsor a program to help people start community garden program for people wanting to start gardens in their neighborhoods.

Kupczyk asked if Mr. Laskowski let his dog run loose. It was difficult if that is the case. He wished police would monitor this with trails too. It was important to keep dogs on a leash and clean up. The amount of dogs that are loose is a problem. If you say something to some people they holler at you. If your animal goes on someone else's property and gets sick that is your issue. Graf does not know if the City can pass an ordinance. Kupczyk was not sure how much the City can do. Peterman asked if the City has an ordinance requiring people to put signs up when spraying. Wiley explained that he was not sure and it may be a state regulation but we can check. Kupczyk stated that something needs to be done about the trees at Palmetto Beach. They impact the views currently. He stated that he had issues from the City about the view of the lake when Culvers, St. Luke's, and Toyota went in but could not see from City properties.

5) Future agenda items
   Ongoing agenda items would remain on the agenda.
6) Adjournment – Kupczyk moved and Graf seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm. Kupczyk stated he will not be at the next meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Wiley
Planning and Development Director