

MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Present: Greenberg, Hanelitz, Hart, Heid, Lyng, Myers, Pendaz-Foster, Presler

Absent: Hansen

Staff: Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator; Tim Sandvik, City Manager

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

A. October 16, 2024 Sustainability Committee Minutes

Lyng motioned to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2024 Sustainability Committee Meeting and Heid seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

A. A Conversation with City Manager Tim Sandvik

Tim Sandvik, Robbinsdale City Manager, introduced himself and shared information about his background in local government with the group. Sandvik explained the history of the Sustainability Committee, the difference between a committee and a commission, and encouraged the Committee to prepare to provide a six-month update to the City Council in March. Sandvik and Kirtz opened up the floor for discussion and Q&A among the group. Questions posed to Sandvik varied, some highlights include:

- What do you see as the advantages of being a commission rather than a committee?
- What is the process and timeline for securing funding for a project?
- Could the City go above and beyond certain state statutes and implement more strict requirements for certain policies?
- Are there low-hanging fruit tasks that you'd like to see the Committee address?

The Committee discussed additional topics, including organics recycling, annual priorities set by the City Council, PFAS treatment, and how to improve city communications related to sustainability topics. Kirtz and Sandvik encouraged the group to identify two or three actionable items to pursue and discuss at the next Committee meeting.

B. Swap, Don't Shop Event

Hart shared that she is working with the "Buy Nothing" groups in Robbinsdale, North Minneapolis, Crystal, and New Hope to schedule a "Swap, Don't Shop" event for holiday gift giving. Hart stated they are looking at dates in December to schedule the event and are also seeking a host site. The committee voiced support for the event. Kirtz stated that she and Hart could coordinate on specific outlying needs and that the Sustainability Committee could provide support.

C. Tree Lighting Event

Kirtz informed the group of the annual Tree Lighting event held at City Hall on Tuesday, December 3rd at 6:00 p.m. Kirtz explained that she is working with the Partners in Energy implementation team to include energy

outreach at the event and is looking for two or three volunteers from the Sustainability Committee to help out at the event. Heid, Presler, and Pendaz-Foster expressed interest in volunteering at the event. Kirtz noted she would follow up with them with more details.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

INFORMATION ONLY

A. Geothermal Feasibility Study

Kirtz informed the Committee that the City has begun a geothermal feasibility study at the site of the Public Works facility. Kirtz explained that the project is funded by a Local Climate Action grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

B. Water Treatment Plant Solar Array

Kirtz informed the Committee that the solar array on the roof of the Water Treatment Plant is now officially operational as of Tuesday, November 12th.

C. Sanborn Park Resilience Hub Planning Grant

Kirtz informed the Committee that there are a number of climate-related grants available from various state departments and that the City is intending to apply.

D. Roundtable Updates

Committee members each shared a brief update. Myers voiced she was feeling hopeful and motivated about the action that the Committee can take on a local level. Hanelitz shared that she was glad to hear Sandvik's suggestion that the group prioritize actionable items. Heid voiced that he was also feeling optimistic. Pendaz-Foster shared information about an upcoming panel hosted by the Inver Hills Community College climate change program that Kirtz, Hart, and Mayor Blonigan will be speaking on. The panel is scheduled for December 10th at 2:00 p.m. and is open to the public via Zoom or in person. Pendaz-Foster also suggested that the group write a thank-you note to Mayor Blonigan for his leadership on sustainability before his term ends. Presler suggested that by December 18th, the group identify a project to move forward with and then start planning and implementing it. Presler suggested focusing on organics recycling. The group determined that at the December meeting, the group will vote on top priorities and will spend the coming months creating a one-page goals document and implementing action items.

E. December Meeting

Kirtz confirmed with the group that the meeting date in December is still a viable time to meet, given the upcoming holiday.

Kirtz confirmed with the group that at the December meeting, the group would decide on two or three actionable items to pursue and implement before giving a six-month update to the City Council in March.

ADJOURNMENT

Kirtz adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

 01-15-2025
Kayla Kirtz, Sustainability Coordinator