

Environment and sustainability commission (ESC): Sustainable SLP

Minutes

Oct. 3, 2018

Community Room, St. Louis Park City Hall

Members present: Chair Bridget Rathsack, Hannah Ampe, Sue Bloyer, Katie Christiansen, Niki Ciulla, Stefan Collinet, Zoe Frank, Ryan Griffin, Larry Kraft, Claire Lukens, Shaina Ashare, Julie Rappaport, Jim Leuthner

Excused absence: Shannon Pinc, coordinator

Staff present: Lauren Michaels, intern

Guests: Kim Erickson

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Rathsack.
2. The minutes for the September 2018 meeting were approved. *(Claire and Bridget abstained)*
3. Chair Rathsack opened the meeting, and the members introduced themselves. The group sang happy birthday to Zoe.
4. Business
 - a. Staff updates
 - i. Welcome to new members, and commission now has full membership.
 - ii. Because Shannon is out ill tonight, new member orientation will be rescheduled for the next meeting.
 - iii. Shannon will be transitioning out of her role as ESC coordinator, and Meg McMonigal will be taking her place. Shannon will be the project lead on Climate Action Plan implementation, but still be in contact with ESC and occasionally attend meetings to give updates. 2019 meeting dates and times have been distributed and will be discussed further at the retreat.
 - iv. The annual retreat will be held Sunday, Dec. 2, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. A dietary restrictions form will be sent around the group for members to fill out. The retreat will be three hours long with a working lunch and will review the Climate Action Plan. All members are asked to preview the plan prior to the retreat and look for biggest impact areas. Meg McMonigal will be at the retreat also. Ryan suggested extend the retreat to four hours and members can leave early if needed. The group decided to change the retreat time to 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

- v. Solar Power Hour (Oct. 18) – The event was posted on Nextdoor and two Facebook pages, one by the city and one by MREA. Everyone is encouraged to hang up a few flyers and share the event pages individually on Facebook. Shaina and Bridget will volunteer at the event.
- b. Work group updates
- i. Communications – Chair Rathsack presented an ESC ecosystem slide which gives an overview of structure of the commission and will discuss further at the retreat.
 - ii. They also discussed being ad hoc, which might be better for project participation, and not focusing too much time on which group does what. Chair Rathsack said projects will need to be well planned with events, developing new resources, and plug things in as they go. This will need to be discussed further at the retreat. Ryan asked if there is a need for leaders to be assigned to each project as point person in charge of deadlines.
 - iii. Julie noted in the past there were eight work groups with people from the community involved in each of the groups allowing for members to be invested in work groups, projects and events.
 - iv. Chair Rathsack said she can put together another structure and how each project ties into implementation and promotion of the Climate Action Plan. She noted it will be helpful having Shannon working full time on implementing the Climate Action Plan. Ryan suggested Roots and Shoots is a partner with the ESC rather than a branch of ESC. Stefan added it would be helpful to have a kit available with flyers and materials and volunteers ready to go for sustainability-related events on an as needed basis.

Business outreach - none

Residential outreach – none

Roots and Shoots – Katie said there will be a second meeting next Friday at the high school with the superintendent, Tom Bravo and Shannon to discuss climate goals for the school that can be incorporated into their strategic plan. Solar is part of this as well. Zoe said the logo pledge group will be handing out window decals to businesses who commit to taking action against climate change as part of the climate champions program. Larry said next steps will involve talking to businesses and getting them to agree to attend a training or information session about the Climate Action Plan. The consultant may help with training sessions on this.

Shaina is connecting with business council at Twin West Chamber of Commerce. She will want to hear from Shannon before reaching out again and to work on getting pledges from businesses.

Larry added the commission will do a press release about the Roots and Shoots business pledges and request a follow-up story with the Sun Sailor. They could send it get city staff for approval prior to sending it out. Larry made a motion that was seconded by Stefan to work on a press release in partnership with Roots and Shoots to announce a business climate champions program and have it approved by city staff prior to sending to the Sun Sailor. Bridget made an amendment that the ESC support a press release about the business pledge and Roots and Shoots related outreach after being vetted by the communications council and city staff. Larry seconded the amendment. The motion passed.

c. Other updates

- i. Julie presented an update on food sustainability and shared an EcoChallenge webpage that could be used as a template for the resource hub. Julie also noted that 900 signatures were sent to the city related to healthy accessible food. A USDA grant is also being looked at by SLP SEEDS and the community food project coalition. With the city agreeing to do a food assessment, this grant can be looked at as a match of \$400,000 would be over four years to help create infrastructure. Julie said the school superintendent is also interested in working on this with the city and asked if the ESC is interested in partnering on this issue.
- ii. Chair Rathsack asked what the ESC's responsibility would be on this issue. Julie is asking if the commission is interested in being involved or if individuals might be interested, the grant is coming out in November. She noted there were plans for a food workgroup previously in the ESC. Lauren added that the city is conducting a food survey to address what needs the city has for food equity resources before moving forward and it will be a high priority for 2019.
- iii. Niki stated she would be interested in working on this project with Julie as the point person. She added there is a connection with food sustainability and the Climate Action Plan, along with the comprehensive plan that can be tied in as well. Chair Rathsack said for those interested, please contact Julie directly. Nov. 12 there will be a team cook off at the high school and another on April 22, 2019.
- iv. Stefan stated the American Lung Association is doing events through September 2019 to promote electric vehicles, lawn care, bikes, motor scooters and ways to clean the grid. He attended two events in Bloomington and one in Edina that discussed the technical aspects of this concept. People presented their electric vehicles and why they like them. Businesses attended selling electric power tools and other electric products, which would tie into the Climate Action Plan.
- v. Stefan added he is pursuing the idea of having an event in St. Louis Park in May and include electric vehicles, lawn equipment and other electric products to help residents learn about cleaner air. There will be a need to find a location and talk to businesses about being involved. He said they

could do a stand-alone event or tag onto another city event. Stefan noted the American Lung Association has been working on these events all over the country. He'd like to move forward with a project team on this.

- vi. Stefan made a motion to move forward with the electric vehicle and lawn equipment event and form a project team. Ryan seconded the motion and offered to be a member of the project team also. The motion passed.
- vii. Niki and Claire noted the climate champions program is still in progress, and they are hoping to invite Emily Barker to a future meeting. They would still like to keep working on this program and create a project group and discuss it more at a future meeting also. Niki made a motion that a community outreach program team be formed, Claire seconded. The motion passed.
- viii. Julie made a motion that a project team be formed for a food coalition, Niki seconded. The motion passed. Additional members interested in the above programs/teams will reach out to the project leaders. Ryan pointed out to make sure the programs meet the goals of the ESC, not lose sight of them. Lauren said extra copies of the 2018-19 work plan are available.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.