

CITY OF MONONA
Sustainability Committee
Thursday, February 11, 2021
Meeting Minutes – FINAL

1. Call to Order

6:30 PM – Meeting called to order by Alder Nancy Moore

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Alder Nancy Moore, Teresa Radermacher, Sue Vogt, Dan Costello, Pat Howell, Sarah Smith, Chris Conrad, Molly Grupe

Absent: None

Staff Present: Brad Bruun, Elisa Guerrero

3. Approval of Minutes from the December 10, 2020 Sustainability Committee Meeting

Motion to approve: First – Dan, second – Pat. Passed with no corrections.

4. Appearances

Devin Renner, director of MESBA, appeared before the committee to present and Earth Day event. He explained that MESBA would like to collaborate with the City and larger companies in Monona to create a community garden for residents to use. The garden would be in a public location and Devin would look to bring in corporate dollars, so that the costs of the garden do not fall on the City. Ideally, the garden would have a central location and would donate some of the produce grown to local food pantries. Additionally, MESBA is working with a member of the Ho-Chunk who is an expert in food sovereignty and might lead some educational programming for the garden.

Nancy said that Parks & Rec would be responsible for finding a space for the garden, but that Sustainability Committee members could advocate for this projects with other committees or council. Molly suggested that high school students and the senior center might be interested in getting involved. Dan said he would like to connect with Devin about connecting the garden to local food networks who would support the project. The committee members were in support of the project and agreed to vote to support the community garden at the next committee meeting.

5. Unfinished Business

Motion to take Agenda Item 5C out of order: First – Molly, Second – Sue. Carried.

a. Energy Campaign

Brad shared updates from a meeting with Will and Samantha from Community Media and Rebecca Fox Blaire from MG21. Rebecca will introduce students to the project and teach them about interviewing practices. Will and Samantha, possibly with the help of one MG21 student, will create a video about each project with the interview recording and other pictures, which will be hosted on the Community media YouTube channel. Brad will make the story map and will connect the videos to the map.

Pat and Nancy asked about City projects being featured on the map. Nancy suggested the Police Department's hybrid vehicles and brad said that Parks & Rec could talk about the prairie learning garden, and that he could speak about the City's solar arrays. Dan agreed to be interviewed about the local food network.

Sarah shared the talking points and graphic that she made to help with recruiting participants.

b. Earth Week Events Planning

Chris shared his idea for a kayak/canoe event for Earth Week, where people could come out and paddle from Olbrich Park down to Rutabaga, as a way to get people out on the water, since many people have never been out on Lake Monona. Nancy is working with Rutabaga and other kayaking instructors to provide boat rentals and safety kayaks to help at the event. The event could also be used to feature all the Monona parks along the lakeshore, since many of them are small and not well known. This event would take place on Sunday, April 25.

Sue suggested that some of the stormwater outfalls could also be featured as an educational component. Brad said that he could produce a map with all the points of interest along the lake, and that organizations like Clean Lakes Alliance might be willing to collaborate for promotion.

Brad updated the committee on the E-cycling event, explaining he signed a contract with Resource Solutions and that they will send out a postcard to their network to advertise the event. This event would happen in the morning on April 24 at Ahuska Park and might feature Styrofoam recycling. Resource Solutions has asked that the City provide a few volunteers to help direct traffic on the day of the event.

c. Forestry Challenge

Brad said that since Parks & Rec already has a memorial tree program, it would work best to merge that program with the Committee's idea for dedication trees. Staff will work together to combine to merge the programs so they can be promoted during Earth Week.

Teresa explained the idea of a tree purchasing and education event, where residents could see sample native trees, speak with master gardeners or arborists about caring for the different trees, and would be able to order trees through the City's purchasing program. It would also be nice to have a food truck or beer available, to make the event more fun.

Missy Kedzorski, the Recreation Supervisor for Parks & Rec, spoke about the challenges of having food at an event, saying that Parks & Rec is not having food at events for now, to comply with COVID-19 public health guidelines. She said that Parks & Rec would not hold large events with food until there is some herd immunity in the community. She said that the event can still happen, just not with food and beer.

The committee decided that the Earth Week work group will meet again to reevaluate options for a forestry-related event and will update the whole committee at the next meeting.

6. New Business

a. Monona 100% Clean Energy Action Planning

Brad briefly shared project ideas to move the City towards the 100% clean energy goal. Nancy asked that this item be moved to the agenda for the next meeting, so that committee members have time to review the project ideas before discussing them.

7. Actionable Items

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: First – Sarah, second – Molly. Passed at 8:05pm.