

CITY OF MONONA
Sustainability Committee
Thursday, January 14, 2021
Meeting Minutes – FINAL

1. Call to Order

6:35 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

Absent: Molly Grupe

Staff Present: Brad Bruun, Elisa Guerrero

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

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

4. Appearances

None

5. Unfinished Business

a. Staff Update

i. MSBI Logo

Elisa shared updates to the MSBI logo and window decal design. Nancy asked if the City’s logo would be used in conjunction with the MSBI logo, and Brad confirmed that they would both be used in all MSBI related outreach and marketing.

ii. 2020 Outreach Summary (Verbal Summary)

Brad said that, similar to 2020, most outreach in 2021 would need to be done online and via social media. To increase the effectiveness of posts in the future, he suggested using some of the budget to pay for boosting posts on Facebook, to broaden their reach. Two boosted posts in 2020 got 3-10 times more engagement than non-boosted posts. Dan agreed that this was a good idea for online outreach and asked it be involved in decisions about which posts to boost.

iii. Smart Metering and Building Automation Systems (Verbal Summary)

Brad summarized his meeting with the Energy Manager from Sun Prairie School District, explaining that while Monona’s buildings are not energy intensive in the same way that the school district’s buildings are, there are still steps the City can take. City Hall and the Community Center could get Building Automated Systems (BAS), which would send notifications about spikes in energy use, to help troubleshoot energy efficiency issues. The next step will be a cost benefit analysis for installing BAS in both buildings.

b. Energy Campaign

Brad said that MG21 has permission forms for participating students to sign, and that staff are working on a City release form to cover students and residents interviewed for the Story Map. Brad and Elisa will provide onboarding and training for the students, to explain the interview process to them and introduce them to Will and Samantha from Community Media. Ideally, students could begin conducting interviews in February, if there are resident signed up. Ideally, the project will be far enough along to promote during Earth Week.

Nancy and Teresa asked for clarity on the role of committee members, and Brad said that the committee members should start reaching out to residents on the spreadsheet, who have sustainability projects in their homes, to gauge their interest in participating in the Story Map. Those who are interested should be put in contact with Brad and Elisa, to schedule interviews. Sue asked if staff could create a few talking points about the project that committee members could use when talking to residents.

c. Earth Week Events Planning Discussion

Nancy said that she would reach out to Teresa and Chris to discuss Earth Week planning. Pat and Sue said they could help with Earth Week programming if needed. Brad shared that Resource Solutions has been hosting recycling events that follow COVID-19 public health guidelines and can coordinate an event for the City during Earth Week.

Teresa moved to hire Resource Solutions to host an Earth Week e-cycling event. Chris seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

d. Forestry Challenge

Brad summarized discussion from the previous committee meeting about improving fundraising for the Forestry Challenge. He suggested that the City could take orders for trees from residents and buy them in bulk, at a discount, which might incentivize more tree planting. The trees could be staged for pick up at a park and the City could hand out information about tree planting best practices and Emerald Ash Borer when residents pick up their trees.

Nancy brought up the idea of memorial trees, cautioning that the committee should avoid thinking of San Damiano as a location for planting memorial trees until there is a master plan for the site. Brad suggested using Waterman way, or potentially the right-of-way in certain locations, as places to plant memorial trees. Nancy asked if there were parks where trees were being removed that might be good places to plant new memorial trees. Pat volunteered to talk to Jake Anderson about putting the memorial trees idea onto the Parks Board agenda for their next meeting. Teresa suggested broadening the idea to include trees for birthdays or in honor of someone, not limiting it to memorial trees. Nancy said it would be ideal to have this information in place by Earth Week, to start promoting it then.

6. New Business

a. Monona Grove School District Letter of Support – Energy Innovation Grant Application – (Teresa)

Teresa shared that the Monona Grove School District is applying for an Energy Innovation Grant to help fund their solar project for Monona Grove High School. The project would be the largest solar array on a K-12 school in Wisconsin, and could supply 50% of the school's energy needs. To supplement their grant application, Teresa asked if the committee would support a letter of commitment, which would explain why the committee thinks the project is good and how it could support the project. The Committee members agreed to contribute to the letter of support and shared their thoughts on the project.

7. Actionable Items

Nancy asked that a discussion about creating a road map for the future, based on the Office of Energy Innovation Grant report, be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Teresa asked that a discussion about recruiting committee members with expertise in areas of sustainability be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: First – Pat, second – Dan. Passed at 8:07pm.