

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, January 3, 2011, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Mississippi River Conference Room at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Max
 Board Member Thomas Stodola
 Board Member Bob Bentz
 Board Member Trent Hassett
 Board Member John Freeburg

Members Absent: Board Member John Enstrom
 Board Member Kathleen Riley-Daniels

Also Present: Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Max called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Freeburg and seconded by Board Member Stodola to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Hassett, Stodola, Freeburg and Bentz. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Members Riley-Daniels and Enstrom.

APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD MINUTES

Motion by Board Member Stodola and seconded by Board Member Hassett to approve the regular meeting minutes dated December 6, 2010 as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Hassett, Bentz, Stodola and Freeburg. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Members Riley-Daniels and Enstrom.

POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

Case #1: 2011 Work Plan

Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Max suggested that the Board consider and recommend topics for inclusion on the 2011 work plan but not finalize anything for City Council consideration until April, after any new members are appointed to the Board.

Chairperson Max asked to be kept updated regarding the EAB Management Plan status as he'd be willing to attend and even present the case to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chairperson Max suggested that the Board consider utilizing subcommittees, consisting of no more than three persons per subcommittee, to tackle items included on the work plan. This might reduce the length of the monthly meetings if subcommittees work on their items during the month and update and recommend Board actions at the regular meetings.

Board Member Hassett stated that he'd like to work on expanding the community gardens program.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that that might be outside the scope of this Board but that the Board could put together a statement of support regarding expansion of the community gardens program.

Board Member Bentz stated that he thought developing a map that highlights certain features that you may encounter on the City's trails, such as plants, wildlife etc.

Board Member Bentz suggested developing a policy that requires recycling bins in all public buildings within the City.

Chairperson Max suggested that an arboretum of sorts could be started somewhere in Ramsey as a demonstration project to showcase the tree species that thrive in the sandy dry soils typical of Ramsey.

Board Member Bentz stated that along those same lines, he would like to see the Board construct a rain garden that could also serve as a demonstration project.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed with the Board that there is interest in some sort of demonstration project.

Chairperson Max suggested another webpage could be developed to answer various 'did you know' questions regarding wildlife, plants, etc.

Consensus of the Board was that the work plan should include the environmental expo, Arbor Day planting event, revisiting the water conservation tool box and some sort of outreach.

Case #2: 2011 Environmental Expo & Tree Sale

Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

There was a lot of discussion regarding the venue for the event. Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he didn't feel that the layout of the Municipal Center was very conducive for any type of expo event. He stated that they have made the best out of the space but that a gymnasium or some other large open area would be much more accommodating for this type of event.

The Board identified other possible venue options and ranked them in descending order as the Boy Scout Camp, PACT Charter School, Central Park, and the Municipal Center.

Board Member Bentz inquired if there was going to be a Business Expo event this year.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he was not sure about that. But, if the environmental expo event were to be at PACT Charter School, than it would obviously need to be held separately from the Business Expo, if that event happens.

Board Member Hassett stated that he's already contacted somebody about possibly getting Ron Schara as a keynote speaker for the event. He suggested that Environmental Coordinator Anderson follow up with them once certain details are hashed out regarding event location and date.

The Board than discussed forming a few subcommittees to organize the event. The following subcommittees with their assigned members were identified:

- Venue—Environmental Coordinator Anderson
- Sponsors—Board Members Hassett and Riley-Daniels
- Activities/Exhibitors—Board Members Bentz, Stodola and Chairperson Max
- EPB Display/Booth—There was no one assigned specifically to this subcommittee

Board Member Hassett stated that maybe a formal/official invitation should be prepared and then have the Mayor sign it that could be used to attract possible speakers, exhibitors, and/or sponsors.

Board Member Hassett suggested that the Boy Scouts be approached about getting involved with this event, especially if it works out that the event is at the Boy Scout Camp. They maybe could lead some nature walks or other activities or sell concessions as a fund raiser.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that if the Board is contemplating holding this event possibly separately from the Business Expo, was it worth discussing whether this event should remain as both a tree sale and expo or could these two also be separated giving more flexibility to when the expo is held. Considering that much of the tree stock that is sold is bare root, the tree sale would always need to be offered in the spring (late April/early May), but if the environmental expo is held separately, than it could offered any time of year.

The Board discussed this matter extensively and ultimately thought that the two didn't necessarily need to be connected. The Board suggested that Environmental Coordinator Anderson discuss this possibility with the tree sale vendors to see if they would have any concern with offering the tree sale in the spring and the expo event at some other time.

The Board then discussed at length other possible dates for the environmental expo. October 1, 2011 was agreed upon for an environmental expo event. Consensus of the Board was that this could be an experiment of sorts to see how it turns out at another time of year and separate from the tree sale and depending on how it works out, could be a permanent change or may need to revert back to a combined event.

BOARD/STAFF INPUT

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that there will be a new City Council liaison to the EPB and that is Councilmember Randy Backous.

Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the City Council will be discussing funding for a commission appreciation/holiday party event tomorrow night. Should they approve funding, members should expect to see an invitation for the event, which would be held on January 21, 2011.

Chairperson Max wanted to give kudos to the Public Works staff for the great job they've done already this year with plowing. With as many snowfalls that we've already had, he thinks they have done a superb job keeping the streets, trails and sidewalks clear and safe.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Freeburg and seconded by Board Member Stodola to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
Environmental Coordinator