

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

On Monday, February 2, 2015, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the COR Conference Room at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Thomas Stodola
 Board Member Bob Bentz
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Michael Hiatt (arrived at 6:35 p.m.)
 Board Member Larry Lewis
 Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent: Board Member Tara Pendergast

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 Community Development Director Tim Gladhill
 City Council Liaison John LeTourneau

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Stodola called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Bentz to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Bentz, Bernard, and Lewis. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt and Pendergast.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated January 5, 2015

Motion by Board Member Bentz and seconded by Board Member Valentine to approve the regular meeting minutes dated January 5, 2015.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Bentz, Valentine, Bernard, and Lewis. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt and Pendergast.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Tree Sale and Environmental Expo Status

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Hiatt arrived.

City Planner Anderson continued to review the results of the previous tree sales and the amount of staff time needed to facilitate the event. He also provided information on a tree sale program that is available through the Anoka Conservation District. He stated that staff has determined that based on the trend of declining sales and participation, that the City should no longer continue to offer this event.

Board Member Valentine stated that perhaps the information linking to the sale through the Conservation District should be advertised to residents.

Chairperson Stodola acknowledged that the Board has discussed this possibility in the past and is comfortable with this decision.

City Planner Anderson discussed the second portion of the case, the Environmental Expo. He provided background information, acknowledging that although combining the event with Happy Days did increase foot traffic, it was clear that some of that traffic was merely passing through and were not necessarily interested in the materials. He also acknowledged the declining participation of exhibitors and advised that one of the exhibitors from this past year stated that they would not participate in future events because it would not be worth it to them due to the limited exhibitors. He stated that there is a fair amount of staff time used to coordinate the event, as well as a cost to rent the tent and other equipment. He stated that perhaps the group should bring the focus back to environmental awareness and rather than attempt to have a whole tent could simply have a presence at other events such as Happy Days or the Business and Craft Expo. He noted that there are other ways to bring awareness, such as aiming to make Happy Days a zero waste event or sponsoring certain aspects.

Board Member Bentz stated that his concern is that the event was the only time the Board was able to interface with the public and did not see another opportunity like that. He stated that he would also be concerned that if the Board were to distribute literature that would simply add to waste for the event.

City Planner Anderson stated that the City has a presence at Happy Days and did not see a reason why the Board could not participate in that manner or staff their own booth. He clarified that the booth could be staffed by Board Members and there could be some large signs with information displayed on topics of the Board's choosing.

Board Member Hiatt stated that perhaps the EPB and Park and Recreation Board could share a booth for the event, as there are issues that relate to both groups and it would be a great opportunity for the two groups to interact. He stated that perhaps there would also be an opportunity to work with the elementary schools on an educational activity such as an essay contest or another environmental activity.

City Planner Anderson agreed that there would be merit to working with the schools to create that connection.

Board Member Bernard stated that his child attends Ramsey Elementary and there is an environmental club at the school with approximately 25 kids. He stated that could be a possible link.

City Planner Anderson stated that the Board has worked with the school in the past regarding messages on trees and tree planting.

Board Member Bentz stated that perhaps the Board would like to emphasize Arbor Day more.

City Planner Anderson agreed and believed that would make more sense for the Board.

Chairperson Stodola agreed that some of the funds that would have been used for the Environmental Expo could be focused on compostable materials to move the event towards a zero waste event. He stated that perhaps the Board could also reach out to sustainable companies that may want to be interested in having a booth at Happy Days and the EPB booth could then be placed near those booths. He noted that perhaps a portion of the booth registration fee could be paid by the EPB to encourage participation.

Board Member Bentz stated that perhaps each Commission or Board from the City would want to have a representative to answer questions available at the event.

Community Development Director Gladhill agreed that the City presence could be grown at that event.

City Planner Anderson summarized the consensus of the Board to eliminate the tree sale and the Environmental Expo.

City Council Liaison LeTourneau stated that perhaps the next step could be for staff to develop a list of activities that the Board could participate in lieu of participating in those events which the Board could review.

5.02: Consider Change of Regular Meeting Day to Third Monday of Each Month

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Stodola confirmed that the Board would not have any conflicts moving the regular meeting date to the third Monday of the month.

Board Member Bentz questioned if the Board would need to wait until April to change the meeting date or if that could begin next month.

City Planner Anderson provided additional information and believed that the best method would be to change the meeting date beginning in April.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to officially change the regular meeting day of the Environmental Policy Board to the third Monday of each month beginning April, 2015.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Hiatt, Bentz, Bernard, and Lewis. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Pendergast.

5.03: Distribute Chapter 13 (Environmental Protection/Resource Management) of the Comprehensive Plan

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He clarified that this is just informational so that the Board can have sufficient time to prepare and discuss this matter. He noted that the item will appear on a future agenda as a formal evaluation and discussion.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Statement of Purpose Update**

City Planner Anderson stated that based on the demand on the City Council Worksession schedules and the limit on time, it would be difficult to bring that item up in that format and he will instead bring the Statement of Purpose forward to a regular City Council meeting. He believed that could occur at the second City Council meeting in February and noted that once the date is solidified he will alert the Board so that all available Board Members could attend.

- **Other**

Board Member Bentz noted that MPR is conducting segments on climate change specific to Minnesota this week. He advised that the segment is played and replayed on the station but is also available for streaming on the MPR website.

City Council Liaison LeTourneau suggested that City staff advertise that link on the City Facebook page for residents that may be interested in the environmental topic.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Valentine to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.