

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

On Monday, August 19, 2019, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Council Chambers at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Valentine
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Jane Covart
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Michael Hiatt

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Council Liaison Debra Musgrove

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Valentine called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Bernard, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Fetterley and Hiatt.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated June 17, 2019

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the regular meeting minutes dated June 17, 2019.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Bernard, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Fetterley and Hiatt.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Review of MN Brightfields Workshop on the Potential of Solar Development at the Closed Landfill Site

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He reported that the City hosted a workshop on July 17-18 focused on development of solar energy systems on Closed Landfill Sites across the state and more specifically, the Closed Landfill Site (CLS) in Ramsey, located west of Sunfish Lake Boulevard, north of Sunwood Drive, and south of Alpine Park. The workshop was organized by Metropolitan Council staff in response to Ramsey's Closed Landfill Site being selected by the Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) Brownfields Technical Assistance Program for further analysis (at no cost to the City). The intention of the workshop was to explore what potential obstacles there may be to develop solar on a CLS and identify possible solutions. The workshop also included a site visit to Ramsey' CLS.

City Planner Anderson stated that overall, the workshop seemed very well received with a lot of enthusiasm from all attendees about the possibilities of utilizing CLS across the state for solar energy development. There is a broader study that has also been funded by the state legislature for the State of Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) to conduct further analysis on siting solar development and greenhouse gas mitigation on CLS across the state. The study should be completed sometime in 2020.

City Councilmember Musgrove stated that the CLS is within her Ward and asked if there would be notice provided to residents in that area prior to a possible rezoning.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that any zoning amendment would require publication in the local newspaper to alert the residents of a public hearing conducted by the Planning Commission prior to moving to the City Council. He reiterated that currently there are no projects proposed for the site.

City Councilmember Musgrove stated that there are some new concerns arising with toxic waste generated from panels used in solar energy. She stated that she would also be interested in possible runoff from the site into the nearby lake.

Chairperson Valentine stated that if there is anything the Board can do to assist in moving things along, should a possible project arise, staff should bring that to the Board.

5.02: Consider Opportunity to Apply for Grant Funding for Water Efficiency

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the Metropolitan Council is offering grants from \$2,000 to \$50,000 to municipal water suppliers to help increase water efficiency in their communities by lowering the cost for residents to purchase and install products that reduce water use including toilets, washing machines, and irrigation sprinklers and controllers. Municipalities may use grant funds to fund rebates to residents who replace inefficient water-using devices with approved devices that use substantially less water, or for irrigation system audits. The Metropolitan Council administered a water efficiency grant program during the 2015-2017 biennium using \$500,000 from the Clean Water Fund, which yielded an estimated total savings of 52 million gallons of water per year. This grant program requires that products be labeled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program or, in the case of washing machines, by the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Star program. Grant funds can only be

used for appliance replacement, not for first-time purchases for new developments. Municipalities are responsible for developing and operating their own rebate programs. The grant funds will cover 75 percent of program costs, with a required 25 percent local match of which residents must pay a portion of the cost for any device or water use audit they purchase. Grant applications will be accepted through September 30, 2019. Staff would propose that the local 25 percent match come from the City's water enterprise fund, with a portion being reimbursed by payments from residents for any device or water use audit they purchase.

Councilmember Musgrove asked the anticipated dollar amount of the grant.

City Planner Anderson stated that staff has not attempted to begin a grant application or an outline of what the program would look like.

Board Member Covart stated that the Board work plan identified attempting to incentivize water and irrigation efficiency and asked if this program would be similar to the rebate program Elk River has.

City Planner Anderson stated that staff has not yet attempted to draft a program but confirmed that other cities including Elk River and Plymouth have similar programs. He noted that staff could reach out to cities that have participated in a rebate program in the past to gain input.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to recommend that the City Council authorize staff to prepare and submit an application for water efficiency grant funds from the Metropolitan Council.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Bernard, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Fetterley and Hiatt.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Review Summer Recycling Event**

City Planner Anderson reported that the summer recycling event took place in July and noted that the event seemed slower than the normal recycling events. He provided comparison data from the past three years, noting that the material collected at the summer event was lower than previous years, with the exception of comingled materials. He stated that staff will need to do an assessment on the effectiveness of a summer event versus the cost to hold the event. He noted that he will also monitor whether the summer event has an impact on the upcoming fall recycling event. He stated that based on the numbers, perhaps in 2020 Ramsey will go back to offering spring and fall recycling events.

Chairperson Valentine asked if the recycling events have been impacted by weather.

City Planner Anderson commented that he has yet to be rained out at a recycling event. He stated that he could not pinpoint weather as impacting any of the past events. He noted that another municipality in Anoka County held a recycling event in April on a day that received snow and that city still had a lot of participation.

Board Member Moore stated that she noticed this year that there were two or three big events in this area around the same time as the summer recycling event, and perhaps some people chose to attend other events.

Councilmember Musgrove asked how this event would impact the total amount of recycling tonnage set as a goal by Anoka County.

City Planner Anderson stated that he reports to the County twice per year, once in January and once in July. He stated that the summer event tonnage will be included in the second half of the year report provided to the County in January 2020. He noted that the costs to hold the events are reimbursable by SCORE funds through Anoka County.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there would be consideration to promote the fall event more because of the lesser amounts collected in the summer.

City Planner Anderson stated that the City consistently promotes the different events and reviewed the different methods used for promotion.

Board Member Covart asked about possible signage for the events.

City Planner Anderson reported that the City is in the process of updating its dynamic display sign on Highway 10 and once completed, the City would be able to use that for the events.

Chairperson Valentine stated that he and Board Member Moore have been involved in the group composed of Environmental Boards around the metro, noting that the group is attempting to setup webinars that could be viewed by Board Members. He noted that he will pass on the information to City Planner Anderson.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*