

**City of Ramsey**  
**Agenda**  
**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**  
**Monday, September 19, 2022**  
**6:30 pm**  
**Council Chambers, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW**

Remote Attendance available at [www.cityoframsey.com/meetings](http://www.cityoframsey.com/meetings).  
Those joining remotely and requesting to speak are asked to use a webcam when speaking.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizen Input**
3. **Approve Agenda**
4. **Approve Minutes**
  1. Approve Meeting Minutes Dated July 18, 2022
5. **Policy Board Business**
  1. Lawns to Legumes Program
  2. Emerald Ash Borer Update
6. **Board/Staff Input**
  - **Fall Recycling Day Event - September 24, 2022**
7. **Adjournment**

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**4. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 09/19/2022

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Information**

**Title:**

Approve Meeting Minutes Dated July 18, 2022

**Action:**

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**Attachments**

Meeting Minutes Dated July 18, 2022

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**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Brian Hagen

Form Started By: Chris Anderson

Final Approval Date: 09/14/2022

**Reviewed By**

Brian Hagen

**Date**

09/14/2022 03:14 PM

Started On: 09/13/2022 10:44 AM

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

On Monday, July 18, 2022, 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 Laura Moore  
                          Board Member Todd Arts  
                          Board Member Reid Bernard  
                          Board Member Melissa Fetterley  
                          Board Member Michael Hiatt  
                          Board Member Jared Little

Members Absent:     None

Also Present:         Senior Planner Chris Anderson  
                          City Council Liaison Chelsee Howell

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

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

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

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated May 16, 2022**

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to approve the regular meeting minutes dated May 16, 2022.

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

**5.     POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

**5.01: Consider Request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Rearrange Areas Guided Low and Medium Density Residential (Project No. 22-126); Case of Green Valley Greenhouse**

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received a land use application from Green Valley Greenhouse for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Zoning Amendment, Plat, Site Plan, and Amended Conditional Use Permit related to their existing greenhouse operation. The request involves 6750 Green Valley Road and 17455 Nowthen Boulevard (together, the subject properties). Most of these actions are outside the purview of the Environmental Policy Board, with the exception of the requested Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Chairperson Moore commented that she reviewed this case prior to the meeting and did not have any questions or concerns.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that at this time there are no residential development requests, noting that this is solely to support the expansion of the greenhouse while insuring there is not a net loss of land use designations. He noted that any future development requests would go through the typical review process.

Board Member Hiatt commented that the land proposed for purchase is open farmland and asked what type of landscaping would be done.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that there would be landscaping along the road frontage and to buffer between the residential properties. He stated that the groundcover would be typical to the existing greenhouse property.

Motion by Board Member Little and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to recommend approval of the requested Comprehensive Plan Amendment as there is no net loss of either land use designation, contingent upon a landscaping plan for the area adjacent to Green Valley Road and along the western boundary of the site.

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

**5.02: Consider Natural Resources Aspects Related to the Proposed Water Treatment Facility (Project No. 22-104); Case of City of Ramsey**

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City is proposing the construction of a Water Treatment Facility that would be located directly north of the new Public Works Campus at 14199 Jaspar Street NW (the subject property). The Water Treatment Facility is designed to remove iron and manganese from the municipal drinking water system and will have the capacity to treat up to 10 million gallons per day. The Water Treatment Facility will not only remove iron and manganese from the drinking water, but it is estimated that approximately 6 millions gallons of water per year could be conserved as water main flushing will no longer need to be conducted in the spring and fall.

Board Member Litle commented that he supports removal of the Siberian elm.

Board Member Arts asked if the cemetery is private or maintained by the City.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that it is maintained by the City. He commented that it is a peaceful place with a long history.

Board Member Hiatt asked if any trees within the cemetery are planned for removal.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that there is fencing around the cemetery and none of this activity would encroach into the cemetery. He clarified the area that would have tree removal, outside the boundaries of the cemetery.

Motion by Board Member Little and seconded by Board Member Fetterley, to recommend approval of the natural resources elements of the plan set, contingent upon compliance with staff's review comments and to recommend removal of the invasive trees in the southwest corner of the project and/or seeding or replacement of trees.

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

### **5.03: 2023 Recycling Activities**

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of the case is to obtain feedback from the Board on potential recycling activities that could be offered in 2023. The City's recycling program is funded through the Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) program. Annually, the City must submit a funding request to Anoka County for SCORE funds for the upcoming year. Typically, each community is allocated base funding of \$10,000, plus \$5.00 per household. In 2023, Ramsey's base funding allocation is \$57,955.00. There are additional grant funding categories including: permanent drop-off center improvements, general enhancement (includes parks recycling, special municipal event recycling, special curbside recycling pick-ups, multi-family recycling outreach, and promotions), and organics. Ramsey is not eligible for the first category as the City does not have a permanent drop-off center. However, Ramsey is eligible for an additional \$9,591.00 for general enhancement activities and \$9,591.00 for organics activities (these equate to an additional \$1.00 per household).

Board Member Fetterley commented that there are residents posting on social media looking for junk haulers and therefore a curbside pickup offering may be popular.

Chairperson Moore agreed that it would be nice to have staff research that option if there is available time.

Board Member Hiatt asked for information on how this type of event would be marketed/organized.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that he spoke with a vendor the previous year and noted that there was flexibility in the options. He believed that the event would be one to two weeks.

Board Member Hiatt asked if the City would contribute funds towards the offering.

Senior Planner Anderson confirmed that the City would use SCORE funds but there would still be a cost to residents that chose to participate.

Board Member Hiatt commented that a reduced fee would be well received by residents, noting the high prices for typical junk haulers.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that they would be specific on the items that could be collected, therefore this would not be typical junk hauling. He commented that the materials would need to be recyclable.

Board Member Hiatt commented that he believed even the option for recycling appliances through curbside pickup would be well received by residents. He commented that he does support the pause on investigating the micro drop off center at this time but wanted to ensure that remains on the list for the future.

Chairperson Moore asked for details on the fix-it clinic.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that the County hosts fix it clinics monthly throughout the County at different locations. He stated that volunteers that like to tinker are available to attempt to fix items that may not be working properly. He stated that Ramsey will host one of these events in the coming year. He commented that it would be focused on reuse.

Chairperson Moore commented that is a great idea and she is curious to see the turnout for the event.

## **6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT**

- **Summary of Rain Barrel/Compost Distribution Event**

Chairperson Moore commented on the distribution event, noting that there were some leftovers after the event. She asked if the City was able to sell those.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that he has received a few inquiries and one additional sale has occurred. He noted that he was out of the office for an extended amount of time after the event which may have caused delays. He stated that he will continue to work with the organization and interested residents. He noted that 20 to 25 compost bins remain, and the rain barrels have been sold. He provided a general update on the event.

Chairperson Moore noted the upcoming deadline of July 26<sup>th</sup> for a member of the Board to submit an article for the newsletter.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

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Nicole Laubach  
Planning Administrative Assistant

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

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**5. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 09/19/2022

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

**Information**

**Title:**

Lawns to Legumes Program

**Purpose/Background:**

The purpose of this case is to highlight a program known as Lawns to Legumes and to seek support to promote this in an upcoming issue of the Ramsey Resident newsletter. This program is offered through a partnership between the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Metro Blooms, and Blue Thumb - Planting for Clean Water and is focused on creating pollinator friendly plantings in residential lawns.

**Observations/Alternatives:**

The Lawns to Legumes program includes an opportunity for Individual Support Grants for Minnesota residents to be reimbursed up to \$350 in costs associated with establishing pollinator habitat in their yard. Current funding applications will be accepted through January 18, 2023. Priority areas have been identified and the majority of Ramsey is within Priority Area 1 (highest priority). If the Environmental Policy Board is supportive, Staff will work to include information about this program in the November/December Ramsey Resident as well as on the City's website. There is no direct involvement by the City and no cost to the City either. This would simply be to promote the program and provide information to the residents.

Attached to this case is a document containing links for additional background on this program.

**Funding Source:**

This case is being handled as part of Staff's regular duties.

**Action:**

Based on discussion.

**Attachments**

[Lawns to Legumes Program Links](#)

**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Brian Hagen  
Form Started By: Chris Anderson  
Final Approval Date: 09/14/2022

**Reviewed By**

Brian Hagen

**Date**

09/14/2022 03:14 PM  
Started On: 09/06/2022 02:54 PM

## **Lawns to Legumes Links of Interest**

[Program Overview](#)

[Lawns to Legumes Introductory Webinar](#)

[Online Application](#)

[Eligible Expenses for Individual Support Grants](#)

[BWSR Lawns to Legumes Website](#)

**Meeting Date:** 09/19/2022

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Information**

**Title:**

Emerald Ash Borer Update

**Purpose/Background:**

The purpose of this case is to provide the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) an update regarding Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The first confirmed EAB infested trees in Ramsey were found in December of 2019. Over the next two years (2020-2021), Staff did respond to multiple inquiries/concerns about ash trees, but only identified a couple of suspected EAB infested trees. But, in 2022, there is now widespread evidence of EAB infested trees throughout the community.

**Observations/Alternatives:**

In 2013, the City of Ramsey adopted an EAB Management Plan. The intent of the plan was to outline expectations for ash trees on both public and private lands. While the City was to actively engage in identifying and removing EAB infested trees on public lands (street trees, maintained park areas, etc.), the approach for EAB infested trees on private land was focused more on education. Generally speaking, Ramsey's street tree program is still relatively young and therefore, most ash trees in boulevards are not very large. As such, it was determined that it would likely be more cost effective to remove and replace infested trees rather than initiate a treatment regimen for street trees.

After initially discovering EAB, the mortality rate is relatively flat (e.g. low mortality rate) for the first couple of years. But, beginning about year 3 or 4, the mortality rate increases rapidly. This is what is being observed currently. EAB infested trees are now evident across the city, on both public and private lands. This follows suit with what has been observed in most communities that have confirmed EAB infested trees.

Addressing EAB infested trees on public lands will have an impact on the City's budget and resources. Actively managing infested and dead ash trees on public lands is important to reduce the City's liability. After dying, ash trees become rather brittle, much quicker than many other species. This can create a safety and liability concern. After seeing the growing number of infested trees, Staff is attempting to get out and conduct 'windshield inspections' of our boulevard trees.

Communities are taking different approaches to managing EAB. Some are marking and requiring removal. Some are actively removing healthy ash trees to simply spread out the cost over multiple budget cycles. At least one community has implemented a treatment program to incentivize private property owners to initiate chemical injections, with the intention of both providing assistance but also to potentially slow down the impact on public trees.

Ramsey is following our EAB Management Plan. As time permits, Staff will be attempting to contact property owners with EAB infested trees by letter to inform them of the concern and encourage proper management. As initially noted, the purpose of this case was to update the EPB on the current status of EAB in the community. Additionally, if the EPB desires, this would be an opportune time to discuss whether any sort of program enhancements may be appropriate.

**Funding Source:**

This is being handled as part of Staff's regular duties.

**Action:**

No specific action is necessary.

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**Attachments**

*No file(s) attached.*

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**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Brian Hagen

Form Started By: Chris Anderson

Final Approval Date: 09/14/2022

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