

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**DECEMBER 10, 2007, 11 A.M. – 12 P.M.**  
**MSCS Conference Room 4**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**ATTENDING MEMBERS:**

Mark Armstrong	Susan Gorin
Steve Brady	Elise Howard
Jennifer Burke	Veronica Jacobi
Chris Carrieri	Frank Kasimov
Nick Carter	Jane Rozga
Barbara Firestone	Dell Tredinnick
Joy Gipson	Tasha Wright

**Introductions:** The Environmental committee members introduced themselves to the group, going around the conference table. Dell Tredinnick welcomed all of the attendees.

**Royal Petroleum Conference on Algae and Project Update:** Dell reported that he attended a conference on algae in San Francisco with Royal Petroleum on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of November. He said in attendance were people from all over the world, including expert Dr. John Benneman, He said that the City of Santa Rosa was the only participant that is a wastewater medium for the growth of algae, and that Dr. Benneman was very confident about the project at the Laguna Treatment Plant (LTP). Dell stated that algae has the highest oil content of any food crop, which peaks when the lipid content shoots up, much like the sugar content of grapes: it is necessary to harvest the algae when it ripens. Dell explained that our pilot program consists of two courses of algae with three pods each. Graduate student Catherine Hare is the student intern who will look at expanding the project, winterizing it, the kinds of algae that grow best, oil content, and how to harvest best. Dell said that an agreement was reached today to build a biodiesel facility at LTP for the production of biofuel from grease. He stated that Coddling Industries and Community Fuels are interested in participating: it will be presented to the Board of Public Utilities.

**Water Conservation Efforts:** Jennifer Burke, Senior Water Resource Planner, lead a discussion of the City of Santa Rosa's water conservation programs. She said that the City has had a Water Conservation Program since the 1976-77 drought and further established the program in 1988 with the formation of the Water Conservation subcommittee of the Board of Public Utilities (BPU). The role of the committee is to provide guidance on program implementation, including new water conservation measures, new technologies, and public education. She stated that the Water Conservation Program is a signatory to the California Urban Water Conservation Council's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Water Conservation and as a member is committed to implementing the 14 Best Management Practices outlined by the MOU. In addition, the Water Conservation Program implements programs per requirements of the State of California and per our agreement for water supply with the Sonoma County Water Agency.

Jennifer passed out pamphlets detailing the City's many water conservation programs and briefly reviewed them. Jennifer stated that there has been a saving of over 3.3 million gallons of water per day as a result of Santa Rosa's water conservation program, one of the most successful programs in the State.

Dell asked about the status of replacing the landscaping at City Hall. Jennifer stated that there have been many discussions on this, and, per the direction from the City Manager's Office, the Utilities Department is working with Facilities to develop cost estimates. She mentioned that the project could cost from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, because it involves removal of the current landscape, design, construction, irrigation, planting, and maintenance components. Chris inquired about the new irrigation system. Mark Armstrong stated that the sprinkler heads are more efficient, the system is managed better, and less water is used on the grass.

Councilmember Jacobi asked about the tiered water rate structure. Jennifer stated that the Utilities Department will be bringing information to the Water Conservation Subcommittee regarding the tiered water rate structure and asking for committee direction regarding the possibility of expanding the tiered water rate to Multi-Family residential customers. Dell stated that water efficiency standards are in place for the mandatory Green Building Ordinance. Chris opened discussion on residential car washing. Jennifer stated that the City recommends that cars are washed in car washes that recycle their water. Steve Brady added that businesses are restricted: they can't wash vehicles if the water goes to the storm drains. Chris said that it is important to educate the Public about washing their vehicles on grass or gravel.

**Solar Projects Update:** Tasha Wright announced that she received the \$91,000 rebate from PG&E. She explained that Solar Sonoma County is applying for a grant under the supervision of the City of Santa Rosa. She said that the

implementation plan includes the standardization of permits for solar projects, and community education designed to support residents that want to install solar to their homes. She stated that the goal of the group is the installation of 25 megs within the next three years: the long term goal is 250 megs. Tasha said that they are looking at Berkeley's solar program that provides residents with the funds to install their solar projects: the cost of installation is a main road block for most home owners. She said that she is working with IT on the expansion of the Kiosk, including the aggregation of the current solar projects and the additional access by the Public.

There was a discussion of the problems faced by cities that want large systems: building substations and other options were explored. Dell stated that the West College Storage Ponds would be a good location for a large, modular, expandable solar array capable of delivering a large amount of electricity. He said that costs and pay back are being considered. Dr. Lon House is doing a feasibility study and looking at the high energy usage of City of Santa Rosa street lights. Susan Gorin stated that one option being considered is the installation of solar array roofs on the top levels of parking garages. Tasha said that she is going to request the grant packet from Berkeley.

**Communication Outreach:** Tasha reported that Recreation and Parks plans to offer an Environmental Camp program in 2009. She said that she is meeting with Earthroots Field School, which currently runs their camp at Laguna Farms, to see how they feel about doing a half-day preliminary camp next summer. She added that the Outreach Committee is working on the employee packet idea, which would include stainless steel water bottles. Elise Howard reported that she is researching a ban on plastic bags and polystyrene products and that the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency is interested in it. She added that 30 cities in California have a ban on polystyrene. Dell advised that the City show leadership in the use of recyclable food ware at all official events. Susan suggested that Costco should be asked to sell alternatives to plastic and polystyrene.

**Environmental Management System (EMS) Update:** Elise reported that the EMS is up and running. She said that there is a meeting today with the internal auditors. She said that the internal audit is designed to discover and fix problems in preparation for the formal third party audit, which will cost approximately \$20,000. The result of the process will be the confidence of the citizens: they will know that the City is handling its compost well.

**Grant Update:** Dell announced that the City was awarded a \$75,000 grant to develop the Algae Project at the Laguna Treatment Plant. He added that he is talking with Miles Ferris about the development of a Grant Committee that could share common general information and budget items needed in grant applications, a clearing house organized in a rational way to share who's doing what. He suggested that Nicole Dorotinsky could set up this data on Sharepoint.

#### **Announcements:**

Frank Kasimov reported that the AT&T project is in development and that the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) site at Railroad Square will be a green transit oriented design. It was suggested that this should be an agenda item in the future when the studies are complete. He added that the committee should also plan a tour of both projects.

Joy Gipson said that she is working on the 511 survey of City employees to address how to get to work. She is working on getting awareness going and offering training. It was suggested that committee members use the bus to come to the monthly Environmental committee meetings. Joy said that those coming from Downtown would use the #3 to get to MSCS and the #6 to get back.

Nick Carter stressed the need to go solar in Sonoma County and the need to offer visitors electrical charges for their vehicles, adding that other cities are able to offer it. A discussion was held about providing free or at cost charges, and it was suggested that the policies of other cities be put on the agenda. He stated that parking garages could be used to expand the solar network.

Veronica Jacobi suggested that the City and the Sierra Club co-sponsor a "how low can you go" forum. She also recommended that a checklist of "things you can do" be inserted in the monthly water bills.

Dell Tredinnick stated that a new outreach website is in development. He added that event ideas should be brought to the committee. He said that the committee could announce, coordinate, and provide staff for them.

Chris Carrieri announced that Linda Christopher of the Grassroots Recycling Network (GRRN) will be doing a presentation on Zero Waste at next month's meeting. Chris shared North Bay Corporation's "we haul it all" advertisement, and a discussion was held about its mixed message.

**Action Item:** Elise Howard will show Dell the advertisement.

Meeting adjourned at 12:38 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING: January 14, 2008 at 11:00 A.M. at the Municipal Services Center South (MSCS) in Conference Room 4.**