

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 14, 2007, 11 A.M. – 12 P.M.
MSCS Conference Room 5
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDING MEMBERS:

Mark Armstrong	Sam Pierce
Chris Carrieri	Dell Tredinnick
Nicole Dorotinsky	Tasha Wright
Barbara Firestone	Jane Rozga
Susan Gorin	

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

Environmental Camp Update: Tasha Wright reported that she is in conversation with Kelley Magnuson, Recreation Coordinator from Recreation and Parks. She recommended that Kelley be invited back for a discussion of the environmental camp ideas that have been suggested.

Algae Project and Grant Update: Nicole Dorotinsky reported that Sonoma State University (SSU) biology graduate student, Catherine Hare, has been hired to by the City of Santa Rosa Utilities Department to work on the Algae Project at the Laguna Treatment Plant (LTP). Dell stated that she started today and will be working on winterization of the ponds; she will be seeing if a cover will affect the growth and what we have to do to the ponds in the winter. Nicole said that secondary water is being used for the Project. She stated that it started with tertiary water, but the chlorine in it kills algae.

Dell announced that he will be attending the Royal Petroleum Conference in San Francisco on algae growth. He added that we are the only ones growing algae in wastewater. He said that he will report on the Conference next month.

Nicole said that she submitted an application for the California Energy Commission (CEC) \$75 thousand grant for use of digesters in biofuel production. She said that it was cleared to go to the second round: it looks good. Nicole added that she spoke with a grant coordinator and submitted an application for the \$75 thousand Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) grant last Thursday.

Solar Projects Update: Tasha Wright reported that she is waiting for the final Station IV rebate check from PG&E. She said that she has joined Solar Sonoma County, a community effort to find ways to help make solar arrays available to all by drawing together players, developing programs, and applying to be named a Solar America City by the Department of Energy (DOE), which would mean receiving funds to further the adoption of solar technologies. Dell reported that Miles Ferris wants to install 10 acres of solar panels that would produce 4 MEGS of energy and cost \$24 million. If new regulations are passed allowing the City to use all of the energy produced, it could be used to reduce the cost of the City's street lights. Susan Gorin suggested the use of solar arrays in the corporate yard used to protect the vehicles and asphalt. Tasha explained that they are going thru the options, working with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and weighing what is the most cost effective.

Sam Pierce stated that the City of Sonoma included street lights by PV in their greenhouse gas reduction plan and requested a list of solar projects that Santa Rosa is considering.

Chris Carrieri stated that the Community Action Board (CAB) submitted its recommendation for projects to be funded by City Council. He said that \$5 thousand was approved for 2 extra security lights on the new bike path: the first would be installed at the path entry on Petaluma Hill Road and the second further up the path.

Action Item: Tasha will send Sam a list of the City's potential solar projects.

Communication Outreach: Tasha reported that Connections, the flyer that is mailed quarterly with the water bills, is four sided now and includes information on the City's green projects and site maps of projects around the City to let people know what the City does and how we are managing their assets. Susan asked how expensive the flyers are. Tasha answered that the write ups are done internally and costs are addressed. Chris stated that the improvements are impressive: it is more attractive and inspires people to open the flyer. He suggested asking those who pay at the drive through window if they read it. Jane Rozga suggested that those who pay electronically could be sent a flyer back electronically, as well. Tasha stated that What's On Tap will include teaser questions for employees from different divisions in Utilities for sharing information.

Chris Carrieri read about the City moving toward a mandatory Green Building Program in the Sonoma County Community Action Committee newsletter and wondered how the City Council's Green Building Task Force interfaced with the Environmental committee. Dell explained that the final task force meeting is this afternoon: they met each Wednesday afternoon at Finley Center. He stated that the Mayor put together the committee for those with vested interests in a mandatory green building program which will be implemented in the next few months. Dell said that Build It Green came through the Environmental Committee and is now transitioning to Community Development in order to flourish. Susan added that Dell is the liason, the one who moves ideas to reality: he makes requests of City Council. Dell said that he and Steve Brady are the co-conveners of the Environmental committee and that we need to expand the forum to more departments, including Parks and Recreation and Parking and Transit. He suggested asking departments to host a meeting; he would like to have meetings at Ridgeway, the Transit Facility, and City Hall. He announced that the next meeting is the 10th of December.

Action Item: Dell will send an email to Jeff Kolin requesting the OK to write to heads of departments asking them to identify members within their departments that will attend the Environmental committee meetings.

Environmental Management System (EMS) Update: Dell stated that Elise Howard and Zach Kay are the coordinators of the EMS. He said that first there will be a precursory audit, a look at the value chain of Biosolids through the system. He added that next there will be a call for a formal, third party audit and potentially recommendations will be made for improvements. He stated that the goal is to move to 50% compost and 50% land application; we don't want to use the landfill.

Announcements:

Mark Armstrong provided a handout that outlined the City of Santa Rosa facilities' water conservation program and its accomplishments. He said that water usage in City buildings has been reduced by 28%, which can be expressed in terms of pollution prevention: for each gallon of water saved, three ounces of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, the major component of greenhouse gases, are kept out of the air. He added that many factors contributed, including reductions in irrigation around City Hall, improved toilets and faucets at the Municipal Services Center South (MSCS), and buying better urinals.

A discussion of water conservation ideas took place. Mark recommended having a demo event to replant the berm at MSCS. Susan suggested changing the turf at City Hall, saying that the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) requested a demo garden there. She advised that we meet in the Mayor's Conference Room at City Hall to look at it. Chris Carrieri suggested a demo garden around the Grandfathers near Luther Burbank Gardens. Jane Rozga stated that signs advertising the landscaper and maintenance personnel could be installed and putting out a request for proposals would be a good idea. Tasha suggested that Denise Cadman could become involved in school projects and competitions. Dell suggested getting businesses to participate in environmental projects the way they participate in the Hall of Flowers at the County Fair, as an advertising opportunity. Chris suggested a program modeled after the adopt-a-space program and that Recreation and Parks could be invited to a meeting to talk about it.

Sam Pierce said that he is happy with the Water Conservation document that Mark shared.

Jane Rozga recommended that members Google San Francisco's solar projects to see their site that helps their citizens find out the solar potential of their roofs.

Barbara Firestone said that she will schedule a meeting at City Hall.

Nicole Dorotinsky announced that the Environmental Webpage will be up on the 5th of December.

Action Item: Nicole will send the link to committee members.

Chris Carrieri announced that there will be many Cinco de Mayo activities at Finley Center and in the Roseland area on May 3rd, 4th, and 5th.

Action Item: Chris will email his revision about tax credits to the garbage industry to Barbara for the October meeting minutes.

Susan Gorin stated that City Council passed water and sewer rate increases and bike lanes on Sonoma will accommodate more people on bikes.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: December 10, 2007 at 11:00 A.M. Location to be announced.