

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**FEBRUARY 11, 2008, 11 A.M. – 12 P.M.**  
**MSCS Conference Room 4**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**ATTENDING MEMBERS:**

Steve Brady  
Ed Buonaccorsi  
Jennifer Burke  
Chris Carrieri  
Nicole Dorotinsky  
Barbara Firestone

Susan Gorin  
Elise Howard  
Veronica Jacobi  
Frank Kasimov  
Dell Tredinnick  
Tasha Wright

**Introductions:** Dell Tredinnick began the meeting with a discussion of the Strategic Plan Meeting on Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 A.M. The conveners will go over the work plan, a status report for the City Manager.

**Action Item:** Steve Brady will send the Plan to Barbara Firestone: she will forward it to the Committee members.

**SR BIG:** Dell discussed the transition of Santa Rosa Build It Green (SR BIG) from a voluntary to a mandatory program. He stated that, at the direction of City Council, the nineteen member panel, chaired by Dick Dowd, meets every other Wednesday at 1 PM in the Manzanita Room at the Finley Center. They are addressing implementation, costs, and the existing housing stock issue. Dell said that a good partnership has been formed with the Home Builders Association (HBA): the HBA wanted consistent standards and endorsed the Green Building Guidelines, which are more affordable than LEED for homes. He added that there should be an ordinance in affect before June. Susan Gorin asked about research on municipal approaches to retrofitting existing homes. Dell suggested Berkeley.

**Zero Waste Update:** Dell discussed waste characterization: 60% of Sonoma County's waste is reclaimed and 70% of the remaining waste is convertible. He said that food waste is a good next step. Dell reported that the Director of the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency retired, they are in transition, and there will be more to discuss next month. Chris Carrieri suggested that zero waste be kept on the agenda.

**Action Item:** Elise Howard will forward the zero waste case study to the Committee members.

**Earthroots CSR Camp Update:** Tasha Wright stated that the Santa Rosa Charter School for the Arts has received a grant to work with Sonoma State University on their garden landscaping. She said that the Camp must apply for use of the facility and that there is a concern about the charges.

**Solar Projects Update:** Tasha reported that the PG&E rebate check for Station IV was presented to City Council. She discussed the Environmental Champs Award Program, recognition for City businesses and citizens who have succeeded at reducing Greenhouse gasses and improved the environment. Elise Howard said that certificates are presented at the last City Council meeting of each month. She stated that Nicole Dorotinsky is creating a webpage on the recipients. Veronica Jacobi discussed the Water Conservation Awards. She said that they are currently taking nominations, and applications are available at [srcity.org/wc](http://srcity.org/wc); applicants must be water/sewer customers.

**Plastic Bag/Polystyrene Ban:** Elise Howard discussed the work on waste reduction. She said that she is working with downtown businesses making sure that they have the new blue recycle bins and food vendors to propose the use of reusable, recyclable takeout food packaging. She is doing research on cutting back on plastic bags and discussing how to get a program in place and offer alternatives. Susan Gorin has been in contact with Tim Smith of Rohnert Park, who made a proposal to all Mayors for general support for a County wide program. Dell added that Oliver's market has a Bring Your Own Bag sign. He said that a City Council ordinance is needed.

**Environmental Management System (EMS) System:** Elise stated that the EMS desk audits are complete. She said that the onsite audit will take place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April, after which they will apply for the Third Party audit. She added that Biosolids will then receive an award from the National Biosolids Partnership (NBP), acknowledgement that Biosolids are handled in a safe and healthy way.

**Grant Update:** Dell announced that the Department received a \$75,000 grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) to build two digesters to produce biogas for the wastewater treatment process. He said that our application for the \$74,000 California Energy Commission (CEC) grant is in the third stage of the application process for the algae demo project: ours is the first municipal project using wastewater to grow algae for biofuel. Jennifer Burke stated that Water Conservation received a \$74,000 grant for the Community Washing Machine Change Out Program.

Dell reported that Tasha did a great job testifying before the State Senate regarding the impediments that municipalities have getting funding for solar projects. Ed Buonaccorsi added that this issue is being addressed in Washington, D.C. Dell discussed some problems with solar installations, including the need to increase rebates, the high cost of solar panels, businesses selling them overseas because of the value of the dollar, and the visual aspects of the placement of solar panels. He said that Station 4 Solar Project had an issue of glare off the roof top array: the City installed film on the neighbors windows to prevent it.

**Communication Outreach:** Tasha reported that the focus of community outreach is regarding rate increases, and that an information packet is being put together. She stated that the Utilities Department is purchasing safe bottles to help educate employees about the use of plastic water bottles: it is healthier to use tap water to fill personal bottles. She said that she is also working on a Bring Your Own Bag program.

**Announcements:**

Jennifer Burke stated that there are 15 bins for the collection of disposed pharmaceuticals in Santa Rosa, Cotati, Rohnert Park, and Sebastopol: all Longs are participating and Kaiser takes back their own prescriptions. She said Utilities partnered with the Water Agency on the Safe Medicine Disposal Program, and that the six month pilot program funding is spent. Jennifer explained that IWC does the pickups and all of the meds are incinerated. She added that the literature about the Program is both Spanish and English and lists all of the drop-off locations. She said that it has been successful.

Veronica Jacobi discussed plans for Earth Day in Santa Rosa on April 19<sup>th</sup>. She said that there will be a family art workshop at noon and a talk about sustainability. She added that the Sierra Club is cosponsoring. Steve Brady added that the Creek Cleanup will be in the morning on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Barbara Firestone requested that Committee members send her feedback regarding last month's minutes.

**Action Item:** Barbara will reduce the number of copies of the agenda and minutes made for distribution at Committee meetings to two each.

Steve Brady announced an April 4<sup>th</sup> event, the Power of Water, that will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Petaluma.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING: March 10, 2008 at 11:00 A.M. at the Municipal Services Center South (MSCS) in Conference Room 4.**