

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
APRIL 14, 2008, 11 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
MSCS Conference Room 4
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDING MEMBERS:

Mark Armstrong	Rita Miller
Steve Brady	Frank Kasimov
Chris Carrieri	Jane Rozga
Barbara Firestone	Dell Tredinnick
Elise Howard	Tasha Wright
Frank Kasimov	

Introductions: Dell Tredinnick welcomed everyone and members introduced themselves, going around the conference table.

Action Item: Barbara Firestone will include Mayor Bob Blanchard on the committee distribution list for receipt of meeting minutes.

Strategic Plan: Steve Brady explained that the City Council Study Session on the Strategic Plan was rescheduled for April 22nd. Dell expressed the need for a consistent format for submitting and reviewing goals. Chris Carrieri stated that the zero waste topic was not highlighted and suggested that it be put in the Education section.

Downtown Recycling/Zero Waste Update: Chris stated that the key issues before the Sonoma County Joint Powers Authority on Solid Waste and Recycling include composting and organics. He complimented the Environmental Committee for reflecting community issues. He suggested that the Downtown Market is an opportunity to use clear stream bags. Elise Howard reported that the Waste Management Agency table will have clear stream bags. Chris explained that Becoming Independent will be involved this summer: they will get them out and pick them up. He said that the bags must be requested and after the event the bins must be set out all night for pick up. Elise added that Northbay Corporation supplies the bins. Dell stated that this process can be coordinated by Tracy Pugh, Downtown Market Manager, and suggested that she be invited to attend the Environmental Committee meeting.

Promote the Tote: Steve Brady discussed the City of Healdsburg's effort to promote reusable totes instead of paper or plastic shopping bags. He said that the educational program includes voting on the slogan that will appear on the bags and choosing the types of bags. There will be two types of totes, plastic and canvas and voting on four slogans through April 14th. The bags will be sold at selected local shopping outlets, at community events, and at City Hall, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Healdsburg Senior Center.

GreenFire Festival: Steve discussed the GreenFire Festival sponsored by the Associated Students Cabinet at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC), on Thursday, April 17th from 11 AM to 2 PM, at the Pioneer Patio and Doyle Library Lawn: it features Sustainable Organizations, Climate Protection Campaign, and Sonoma Mountain Village.

Earth Day Outreach: Dell discussed a flyer that City Council member Veronica Jacobi emailed to him about the Earth Day events on Sunday, April 20, 2008, in Olive Park in Santa Rosa: it will include cake, a discussion on Transition Towns and Sustainability, an art contest, and the annual Creek clean up

Action Item: Dell will forward the flyer to committee members.

Solar Sonoma County: Tasha Wright reported that Solar Sonoma County received a \$200,000 Department of Energy Grant. She explained that one of their goals is to address the permit process, to make it free. She said that educational outreach is another: what's happening around solar. Tasha stated that Solar Sonoma County supports the installation of 25 MGWs of solar in the next few years and will track how close to the goal they come and the reduction of greenhouse gasses that are achieved. Dell stated that the majority of homes in the County were built before 1978: they need to be audited to make sure that they are energy efficient before installing solar hot water and PVs. A discussion on the recent photovoltaic failure in China took place.

Action Item: Frank Kasimov will circulate the New York Times article on the failure if he can locate it.

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy: Elise Howard said that she wants the training program with Corporate Express to gain momentum this summer. She said that representatives from each Department will be identified and will integrate the program in their Departments. Elise stated that she is researching hiring a Bay Area professional trainer. She stressed the need for City wide program.

Communication Outreach: Steve stated that the Green Living Expo was on Saturday. He said that Public Works, Water Conservation, and the Project Development Team tabled together. Tasha reported on the progress made by the Utilities Department to provide recyclable bags to its 1600 employees. She said that stainless steel water bottles that say "Take it from the Tap" were ordered. She stated that the bags will have the City Logo on them, say "Shop Santa Rosa", and will also contain a CFL, and a survey of employee priorities: in partnership with Risk Management, they will be distributed during Employee Orientation and Safety meetings. Dell talked about a Laguna Restoration event suggested by Veronica: it will be cosponsored by the Laguna Foundation and the City of Santa Rosa sometime in September or December and will address the areas around the Laguna Treatment Plant for carbon sequestration maximization in addition to water quality and flood prevention.

Biosolids Environmental Management System (EMS): Elise stated that the majority of the internal audit took place last week: this week she will meet with Miles Ferris. She reported one nonconformance having to do with training in a 24 hour facility. Elise said that after the report is complete there will be an external audit and certification by the National Biosolids Partnership. Dell pointed out that it is good to have a nonconformance to demonstrate how we resolve problems. Chris said that certification guards against frivolous concerns about land application. Elise stated that certification assures strong tracking, good document retention, and no holes in the process.

Grant Update: Nicole Dorotinsky announced that the second phase of the Algae Project has begun and is funded by a new \$74,000 grant. Dell stated that an important part of the process is to request City Council permission to apply for a grant and go back to Council to ask permission to accept it. Jane Rozga pointed out the value of knowing how many grants have been applied for. Dell stated that the second phase is the digester part which will be built across from Mello Dairy to extract methane. He further explained the pilot project: the algae will be harvested and trucked to a biofuel facility, the extracted methane will run the engine, and exhaust in the channels will increase yield. He stated that Bob Blanchard wants to take a tour of the digesters when they are completed. Steve reported that an Open Space District grant was received for a 40 acre park on Irvin Street and is part of the Roseland Creek Plan: it will be on the April 22nd City Council Agenda.

Action Item: Nicole will email an Algae Project Brochure to committee members.

Announcements:

Rita Miller said that May is Bike to Work Month: May 15th will be Bike to Work Day. She added that teams will represent their Departments and will be rated higher for new riders.

Chris Carrieri stated that he sent out Oakland's Zero Waste Strategic Plan to the membership. He said that he would like to work on a local format for zero waste and know how to support the Project Development Manager Team.

Frank Kasimov discussed a Dockside Green Conference in Victoria, British Columbia. He described a triple green system with free marketing and streamlined permitting for social and environmental equity.

Steve Brady announced a Creek Clean Up on Sunday at the Greenway: food will be provided by Community Market and Vegan Voices.

Meeting adjourned at 12:40 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: May 12, 2008 at 11:00 A.M. at the Municipal Services Center South (MSCS) in Conference Room 4.