

Sustainability Advisory Board  
November 16, 2023, City Hall  
Minutes

In attendance: Mike Carlson, Victoria Meier, Kate Jaspers, Dan Reesor (online)

Absent: Charity Hudnut (returning from business trip in Sacramento), Ranjini Kausik, Dylan Digby (attending funeral), Lou Groner.

1. Mike Carlson calls the meeting to order at 6:05 after successfully setting up the Internet connection and Web-Ex.
2. No members of the public in attendance in person or on-line, so no public comment.
3. Minutes from October meeting – Greg moves to approve. Victoria seconds. All in favor.
4. Member check-in:

Mike – Great pumpkin harvest.

Dan – Had a wonderful hiking trip in Southwest with brother.

Victoria – Autumn days so beautiful. Getting strength back after a bout of covid.

Kate – All is good with family crew. Hosting Thanksgiving next week- 17 people.

Greg – Coast trip on Sunday and Monday to Nehalem Bay. Is a member of the Waterfront Development Committee as representative of the SAB. Will send copy of Framework we are working from to other SAB members.

5. Resolution re: electrical appliances, landscaping equipment, furnaces. Victoria asks about the origin of the “whereases” in the resolution (see attachment). Mike said he revised a set located through Chat-GPT. She then indicated she is very much in favor of incorporating a section that focuses on staff training. Greg mentions meeting with Megan Big John, the new Parks and Recreation Director, earlier in the week. She was pleased to see revisions in the earlier draft of this resolution that allow for more flexibility on the part of Parks and Recreation staff. She said that reviewing that draft resulted in several useful conversations. Staff have also participated in a training focused on the use of electric tools. She indicated that she is very interested in moving away from fossil-fuel dependent equipment but that doing so will depend on the availability as well as suitability of vehicles and tools. For example, battery-powered leaf blowers weigh approximately 20 pounds. It would not be reasonable to expect one of her staff people who weighs 100 pounds to use this device. Megan is willing to meet with us in person about this and other issues related to the work of the SAB. Victoria moves that we send resolution to council. Kate seconds. All are in favor to give the resolution to Dylan to pass on to city.
6. Mike moves on to the request from the City Council to identify places where EV charging stations could be located around West Linn (see attachment). He presents a map highlighting the lot next to Parkrose Hardware, the Willamette business area (which already has the appropriate infrastructure for installing chargers), the vicinity of City Hall, Market of Choice, the TVFR station in Hidden Springs, and Walmart. After a brief

discussion, Mike moves that we send these recommendations to the City Council. Kate seconds. All are in favor of doing so.

7. Mike reports on the creation of an energy use dashboard using the baseline data he has been able to pull together regarding electricity and fossil fuel use by the city (see attachment). These data will be important in monitoring the city's progress toward reaching its carbon emissions reduction targets. The dashboard will require the creation of a webpage as well as assigning a city staff person to update it on a monthly basis. We move to a discussion of other things to potentially include in the dashboard: number of EVs owned by city, amount of solar energy being produced by city-owned solar panels, water use (important given the amount of electricity required to pump water to much of the city). Monitoring water use and number of electrical vehicles would be simpler to address. Tracking the amount of solar energy already being produced would require assessing this locally rather than relying on information provided by a utility.

Greg moves that baseline data we currently possess be sent to the City Council with a request that a city staff person update this on a monthly basis. [I can't remember who seconded.]. The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Compost – food waste data. Mike reports on a memo sent earlier to SAB members regarding the costs and impact of food waste being picked up by our local trash hauler (see attachment). Using a spreadsheet made available by the Environmental Protection Agency, Mike determined that compost pick-up would result in approximately \$100 K in benefit but cost the city's residents about \$500 K. The amount of carbon emissions reduced by this approach would be minimal. If the city were able to work with trash haulers like those in neighboring communities where this additional expense has not been incurred, it may make sense to move in this direction. Mike will speak with the mayor about this possibility when he meets with him the next day. Greg will speak with our METRO representative about options that are being explored regionally including more backyard composting or the use of worm bins.
9. Following up on the City Council's request that the SAB explore the possibility of a gas-powered leaf blower ban, Dan assembled a set of questions that need to be taken into consideration: (1) California has banned all two-cycle landscaping equipment including leaf blowers. The law was passed in 2021 but will not go into effect until 2024. If we were to draft an ordinance, we'd need to factor in length of transition period. A longer period would be more palatable for the public and private landscaping businesses. (2) Despite the fact that 150 U.S. municipalities have bans on two-cycle engines including leaf blowers, three statewide attempts in the Oregon legislature to do this have failed (in 2019, 2021, 2023). It would be useful to learn more about why this happened. (3) Making a switch to electric-power equipment can be both expensive and impractical (recharging while in the field would be difficult if not impossible) for small landscaping businesses. Whatever resolution is presented to the City Council must take into account equity concerns. Lake Oswego has passed a plan to electrify their landscaping

equipment by 2025 but they have found it to be more cost effective to contract with company that already has equipment to complete related tasks. Over and beyond a ban, it will be important to educate the public about problems over and beyond noise related to the use of gas-powered leaf blowers such as toxic air pollution and comparatively high levels of carbon emissions and suggest reasonable alternatives.

10. Review of annual report. Greg led the board through each section of a draft annual report, deleting some sections, correcting typos, and making small revisions. The final copy of the annual report is attached.

11. New business. No new business.

12. Action items –

- Mike will make minor revisions to his reports and get these to Dylan to share with the City Council.
- Dan will continue to research leaf blower ordinances.
- Greg will make suggested revisions and corrections to the annual report and get this to Dylan to forward to the City Council.
- Greg will send waterfront development framework to SAB members.
- Greg will contact our METRO councilor about food waste composting.
- Rather than meeting in December (the first Thursday is just four days before Christmas) we agreed to instead attend the December 11 City Council meeting to share our recommendations for the coming year. Mike will make sure we are on the agenda.

13. The meeting adjourned at 7:39.