

**West St. Paul Environmental Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**6:30 pm, February 1, 2023**  
**West St. Paul Municipal Center- City Council Chambers**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Committee members in attendance: Chair Jade Pennig, Nicholas Hager, Connie LaCombe, Ken Paulman, Joshua Przybylski, Laura Zanmiller

Non-voting members in attendance: Robyn Gulley, Dave Schletty, Emily Vergin

**3. Citizen Comments-NA**

**4. New Business**

**a. Approve November 2, 2022 Minutes**

The November 2, 2022 minutes were approved by the Committee.

**b. Committee Bylaws and Officer Elections**

The Bylaws were approved with the following amendments:

- Number of committee members to be changed from 7 members to 9 members;
- Maximum number of member in subcommittee to be updated appropriately.

Jade Pennig and Laura Zanmiller were voted in as Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

Schletty reported that Przybylski, Zanmiller and Pearson were approved by Council for next term. There is one vacancy on the Committee. The Council would like to focus on more representation from Wards I and II. Gulley added that council would like more representation from residents that live in apartments/different housing.

**c. Heritage Middle School Community Garden**

Brianna Hayward, STEM specialist coordinator and science teacher at Heritage Middle School spoke before the Committee. A foundation has granted the school \$10,000 to establish a community garden. The donor would like students (especially apartment dwellers) and the community to get involved with the school through the garden. Hayward is also writing another grant for Whole Foods Kids; she needs a community partner for the grant and would like the City of West St. Paul to be that partner.

**d. Environmental Explorers Fair**

Hager relayed that a Garlough School representative asked a former committee chair if they would like to participate in the Garlough Environmental Elementary Explorers Fair. Pennig said that the Committee used to be involved in the event pre-pandemic. Schletty elaborated; Garlough School holds an environmental explorers' fair every spring. Each classroom puts on its own environmentally themed [exhibit]. The exhibit is either a craft or an activity. Some classrooms have animals. The fair is open to school members and the community. The city got involved to promote its own Arbor Day celebration. Recently the city geared the Arbor Day celebration toward the Explore West St. Paul Days event. Schletty said the city could revert to the Garlough event. Hager said that he would contact the school to see what kind of involvement they would like from the city.

**5. Old Business**

**a. Arbor Day Planning**

Przybylski reported that Pearson has done most of the "legwork" for the planning. A truck in the parade will carry the Arbor Day tree. Some committee members will ride in the truck as well as bike alongside it. They will hand out goodies and so forth. They will plant the tree after they arrive at the park. There will be a

booth set up for the committee. Dodge Nature Center is participating in the event and taking the lead on the Migratory Bird Day component. One Ten Cycles will be at the event and they will have e-bikes. An organization called Compassionate Action for Animals, whose mission is to move people toward a plant based diet, is interested tentatively in the event. The Recycling Coordinator may have a booth at the event. An outreach has been done to hardware stores, especially ones that sell electric lawn movers and snow blowers. June 10 is the date for the event and Przybylski will need volunteers for extra planning and for the actual day of the event.

**b. Core Values Discussion**

Paulman volunteered to clean up the language of the core values for next month's meeting.

**6. Updates**

**a. Subcommittee**

- i. **Zoning Code Amendments-Continued Discussion-NA.**
- ii. **GreenSteps Cities Review**-Schletty reported that the city could budget money for a study. Now that a new recycling coordinator has been hired, she will be tasked with coordinating the effort for Steps 4 and 5.

**b. City Council**

- i. **Dodge Nature Center Winter Fun Fest**- Gulley announced that the Fun Fest would be on February 18.

**c. Staff**

- i. **Recycling Coordinator**- Schletty reported that Courtney, the new recycling coordinator started two weeks ago. She worked with the former Recycling Coordinator Cassandra for a week and she is now working the other four cities. She will have 4 hours that can be dedicated to non-recycling efforts such as the GreenSteps program and other sustainability efforts.
- ii. **Parks Master Plan**-The city has decided on a firm to develop the park's plan. It is going to Council for approval at the next meeting.

**d. Planning Commission- NA**

- e. Parks & Recreation Committee**- Vergin updated the committee on Parks and Recreation subcommittee work. The Art Park subcommittee has been discussing how an art component would be worked into the Explore West St. Paul Days' celebration. The Parks and Recreation Committee reviewed proposals for the new playground in Marthaler Park. The Parks Committee also discussed plans for their participation in the Explore West St. Paul Days parade. Dave Lynch and Bonnie Bellows were voted in as Chair and Vice Chair of the committee. The Parks and Recreation Committee member are being issued city T-shirts so that they will be recognizable at city events. The Parks and Recreation Committee will be discussing the Parks Plan at its next meeting.

- 7. Other-T-shirts for Committee members**- Committee members discussed having West St. Paul T-shirts made for their own membership. The T-shirts would be used for outreach efforts.

- 8. Adjournment**-The Committee adjourned at 7:40 pm.