

**West St. Paul Environmental Committee**  
**February 6, 2019**  
**West St. Paul Municipal Center-Administrative Conference Room**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 pm.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Committee members in attendance: Tara Wright, Jonathan Wagner, Polly Saatzer, Kristy Otte  
Non-voting members present: Dave Schletty, Bob Gausman

Guest: John Masengarb

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Minutes** The minutes of the November 7, 2018 meeting were approved by the committee.

**b. 2019 Bylaws and Elections**

Schletty reminded committee members that per the Bylaws the committee needed to vote for a chair and co-chair. The Bylaws do not need to be approved by the committee now; this is now done by council. The committee expectations' signature page has been changed. The signature page acknowledges the receipt of the expectations document, not an agreement to follow them. No other language has been changed in the Bylaws. Schletty said that all the comments from the committees have been reviewed by Council. Chair Otte said that she was glad about the change. Schletty said that the change was done under the recommendation of the city attorney. Regarding the elections, two committee members' terms are "up:" Otte and McCarty. Council will discuss the reappointments and will review applications for the committee vacancy.

**A motion was made to reelect Otte for Chair. Discussion followed. Wagner said that Otte did a fine job as chair. The motion carried. All Ayes.**

**A motion was made to reelect Wright for Co-Chair. Discussion followed. Wagner said that Wright did a great job as co-chair. The motion carried. All Ayes.**

Otte asked about the transparency regarding committee appointments. Schletty said that council will look at applications for the committee that have been submitted since 2015. This is usually done at an Open Council Work Session, (OCWS.) Council will appoint/reappoint members at their February meeting. New members will be invited to the March committee meeting.

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. GreenStep Cities Updates**

At its December 10, 2018 meeting, Council passed a resolution approving sustainable purchasing. With the resolution, Otte said that the city has completed seven of the GreenSteps program requisites. Otte added that the city has [unofficially] completed eight steps. The subcommittee will talk about the next step, which includes, "Bird City, Dark Sky Zoning and Climate Change Adaptions

The steps now have to be reviewed by the GreenSteps staff. Once the steps are approved, the city can move to the step three. All of the progress must be entered by May 1. The GreenSteps recognition banquet event is in June. Saatzer said that it would be nice for [GreenStepsCities] to

have a place in the West St. Paul Day's events. The subcommittee will meet before the next Environmental Committee meeting.

**5. UPDATES**

**a. Subcommittee**

**i. Arbor Day Event**

In the past, Otte met with Saatzer to coordinate the event. Otte would contact possible participants, (people from West St. Paul, the University of Minnesota or Dakota County.) by calling, emailing or through Facebook. Otte asked for another committee member to lead the subcommittee. Schletty said that he will send out an email to the absent committee members regarding the subcommittee. The Arbor Day event at Garlough is on April 26, 5:00-7:30 pm. Volunteers for the event should be there are 4:45 pm. Wagner and Saatzer volunteered for the Arbor Day subcommittee.

**b. Council Updates-NA**

**c. Staff Update –Schletty reported that there are no staff updates.**

**d. Parks and Recreation Committee**

Gausman said that things are "kind of slow." Funding for the Robert Street [improvements] is a "big thing." Gausman has spoken to Michael Orange, a retired planner for the City of Minneapolis. Orange told Gausman that West St. Paul is located in the perfect place for transit lines.

**e. Planning Committee Update- NA**

**6. OTHER**

**a. Boulevard Trees-** John Masengarb came to the committee to talk about boulevard trees. He started the committee years ago to stress the importance of boulevard trees. He said that the "street trees" add a lot to the environment. He lives in the 40 Acres part of West St. Paul. He is concerned about the trees on Annapolis Street; they are not faring well. The reason they are not thriving is because the trees are not pruned properly. He said that the city maintenance staff need to be retrained in how to prune tree branches. Schletty agreed. Schletty said that the tree pruning lessons were give four-five years ago and the city maintenance staff has had about fifty percent turnover since that time. Karen Zumach of Tree Trust performed the training years ago. She used to be on the committee as well.

Masengarb suggested the Annual Shade Tree course as well. Schletty said that he takes the course. He added that council is committed to Emerald Ash Borer(EAB) treatment and that every ash tree on the boulevard has been treated. The city has budgeted \$30, 000 per year for boulevard tree treatment. Schletty agreed that the city has not been replacing boulevard trees. There is no funding available after the EAB treatment. Schletty has applied for separate grants, but has had no success. Masengarb asked about Wright Tree Service. Schletty said that Wright works on trees near power lines, and the city does not contract them. Schletty said to his knowledge, the city has not contracted out to any outside service to prune boulevard trees. Only if "takedowns" are too big, does the city ever farm it out the work. The city does its own trimming.

Gausman mentioned his work on the Selby Avenue Task Force. He said there was a lecture that the university did on the value of the Urban Forest.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business before the Committee and with no objections, the Environmental Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:44 pm.