

Sustainability Commission Meeting October 14, 2019

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by Vice-chairperson Judy Nelson.

Roll Call: Renee Ruchotzke, Judy Nelson, and Miriam Jackson

ABSENT: Nadine Gomez and Andrew Scholl

Staff: Harrison Wicks, Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to excuse Ms. Gomez. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruchotzke and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to excuse Dr. Scholl. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruchotzke and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of September 9, 2019:

Mrs. Ruchotzke made a motion to approve the minutes from September 2019. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and approved with a 3-0 vote.

Public Comment

None

OLD BUSINESS

Ad-hoc Committee Update- Mr. Wicks confirmed the ad-hoc committee met on October 3, 2019. Mr. Wicks provided an update of activities since the last ad-hoc committee meeting in February 2019. Andrews Boateng provided an update on the ICLEI Clearpath software and data gathering activities. Mr. Wicks and Ms. Susel are continuing to meet with Mr. Boateng to discuss the ICLEI Clearpath software. They are meeting on a bi-weekly basis. Mr. Wicks confirmed the next ad-hoc committee meeting has not been set but they are planning to meet again in November 2019. Mrs. Nelson commented she would like to continue to be a part of the ad-hoc committee as a resident.

Farmers' Market Update- Mr. Wicks confirmed he will contact market manager Andrew Rome to see about availability to table during the Holiday Market event on Saturday, December 7, 2019.

Informational Solar Energy Meeting- Mrs. Nelson confirmed she met with Portage County Solar Co-op members after the Green Energy Ohio (GEO) Tour on Sept 28th. Co-op member Mr. Albert Barber recently had a solar array installed. Mrs. Nelson commented residents in Summit County are hoping to start a solar co-op as well. Tristan Rader is the new coordinator for Ohio Solar United Neighbors (SUN) and Mr. Wicks confirmed he is planning to speak with him on the possibility of a local government solar co-op.

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Single Use Plastic Public Awareness Campaign- No update. Mrs. Nelson commented on efforts at the University of Akron and given their history with polymer, they would be a well-suited organization to initiate sustainable solutions to the plastic life cycle.

Community Outreach Update-

- a. Kent Environmental Council (KEC)- No update. Mrs. Ruchotzke confirmed the KEC Fall Forum speaker is not confirmed yet and the location is to be determined. KEC will have a planning retreat in December 2019 and Mrs. Ruchotzke commented her focus will be on encouraging new membership.
- b. KSU Office of Sustainability- Mrs. Nelson confirmed a wrap up meeting for the GEO Tour has not yet occurred. Leah Graham with the Office of Sustainability sent draft statistics to Mrs. Nelson. Mrs. Nelson confirmed there were 21 vehicles that took part in the Clean Transportation Cruise-In, including the University of Akron race car, a PARTA CNG bus, and the Kent State University zero emission golf cart. Feedback from the GEO Tour was good so far. Mrs. Ruchotzke confirmed 30 people attended the tour site at her home and Mr. Wicks confirmed 16 people attended the tour site at the Kent Police Station.
- c. Haven of Portage County- No update.
- d. Family & Community Services (F&CS)- No update.

Tree City Bulletin- There was a consensus to share the Tree City Bulletin (TCB) publication schedule so members are aware when articles are due. Article ideas for the Spring 2020 TCB include: 1) Information on the 2020 Environmental Film Series, 2) Top 10 recycling mistakes made by residents, 3) a history of the recycling program in Portage County. There was a consensus to gather additional information from primary sources, such as PCSWMD Director Bill Steiner, for accuracy.

2020 Environmental Film Series- There was a consensus to begin the film series in February 2020. Mrs. Nelson commented on the possibility of hosting one of the showings in the KSU KIVA or other location on campus. Mr. Wicks confirmed he can contact the Office of Sustainability to see if there is interest. Mrs. Ruchotzke commented on the format of the film series and advocated for short films with longer periods of discussion following. A tentative time for screenings was on Mondays from 6:30-8pm. Mr. Wicks will confirm room reservations at the Kent Free Library once the films are finalized. There was a consensus to submit film ideas at the next meeting in November 2019.

NEW BUSINESS

Waste Stream Reform- Mrs. Nelson confirmed she met with PCSWMD Director Bill Steiner to discuss concerns related to education materials highlighting what can/cannot be recycled.

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In addition, Mr. Steiner commented that some Portage County communities are opposed to the mandatory nature of the recycling program. Mrs. Nelson commented Mr. Steiner presented waste stream reforms to the Portage County Commissioners during a recent meeting but no affirmative decision was reached. Mrs. Nelson confirmed a resident committee may be formed by Portage County and she would like to participate on it if there is an opportunity.

Bicycle Friendly Community- There was a consensus to continue reviewing the materials for future consideration. Mrs. Nelson commented on the possibility of having the scorecard completed prior to the application and presentation to council.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Ruchotzke made a motion to remove the Haven of Portage County from old business. Motion was seconded by Ms. Jackson and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

NEXT MEETING

November 4, 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Ruchotzke made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and was approved with a 3-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.