

## **Sustainability & Energy Commission Minutes 4/13/23**

A regular meeting of the Sustainability & Energy Commission was called to order by Brittany Goode at 6:03 PM Thursday, April 13, 2023, in the Grand Haven City Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Brittany Goode, Dan Small, Patti Nelsen, John Kinch, Nancy O'Neill, David Mann, Pamela Blough, Bob Monetza, Jim Matthews, Pam Blough, Jean Madden and Erin Turrell.

Absent: Christian Miller, Addy Knoth-Miller, Ryan Cotton,

Also present: Eric Law and two members of the public

1. Call to audience: Peter Wilson and Jan O'Connell introduced themselves.
2. Previous Meeting Minutes (3/9/23) approved unanimously.

### **Agenda**

Item 1: Introduction of newly added SEC members Jean Madden and Erin Turrell. They will be working with Jim Matthews on the Forestry Management task force.

Item 2: Guest speaker presentation. Jeff Burks of Key Green Solutions presented on a software program that tracks sustainability data for municipalities. Once the municipality identifies their data needs, Key Green collects and reports on the data, including how the municipality is saving money through energy efficiency programs. Rockford has been using the software. Burks recently met Danielle from Michigan Green Communities. Currently the software doesn't align with MGC to provide data, but it sounds like this is a possibility in the future. Small made a motion for the SEC to recommend that City Manager Latsch consider the Key Green Software program for the City. Blough seconded the motion. Passed on unanimous vote.

Item 3: Community Energy Plan Update. Nelsen provided a summary. On March 20, 2023, Ferrysburg City Council approved \$7,500 for the CEP in their 2023-24 budget. This brings the total funds raised to date for the CEP to \$82,500 (Ferrysburg, City of Grand Haven, EGLE grant, and

GHACF grant). The task force anticipates that there will be additional funding from another grant, and potentially from Spring Lake Township and Grand Haven Township. At the April 6th CEP task force meeting, Cotton presented a draft Scope of Work document to be bid out. Cotton and City Manager Latsch created a draft RFQ (Request for Qualifications) and RFP (Request for Proposals) document. CEP task force members provided feedback. The next step is to create a new Steering Committee that will oversee the the selection of the CEP consultant and provide oversight. The Steering Committee will be comprised of representatives (2 council members, City/Township manager, citizens) from all participating BLP service area municipalities, and also representatives from the BLP. Nelsen made a motion for the SEC to recommend to City Manager Latsch that City Staff move forward with the the RFO/RFQ process for the Community Energy Plan. Blough seconded the motion. Passed on unanimous vote.

Item 4: Michigan Green Communities and MiHealthy Climate updates.

Goode provided a summary. The City of Grand Haven is participating in the accelerator program through MGC. City Planner Urquhart, Goode, O'Neill and Nelsen met to take an inventory of Grand Haven's progress on MGC Action Items. We scored enough points to earn **Gold Certification**. Goode is working on a document that provides evidence (progress or completed) for each MGC action item. Goode, Urquhart and Kinch attend the MiHealthy Climate in Detroit earlier in the week. Urquhart was on a municipal panel and talked about Grand Haven's progress on MGC goals and objectives. Goode stated that they engaged in networking with other MGC communities and the experience was inspiring.

Item 5: Land Use Update. Kinch provided a summary.

Kinch met with the Forestry task force and and they discussed how the SEC can help promote Forestry Management Programs. He is also considering how the MGC goals/objectives regarding Sustainable Development relate to Zoning Ordinances. Monetza attended the most recent Planning Commission meeting. The topic of development of environmentally sensitive areas on private property, or the elimination of such areas, came up. There is a chapter in the Zoning Ordinance which includes maps of locally-regulated environmentally sensitive areas on which development is restricted or not allowed, and the Planning Commission has the ability to recommend the removal of specific sensitive areas from the map. The Planning Commission may benefit from scientific

advice from members of the SEC in making a determination. Monetza wanted the SEC to be aware of this and will follow up with Urquhart.

Item 6: Forest Management Update: Madden presented on "The 3-Year Forest Management Action Plan" spearheaded by Larry Burns who is the founder of Adopt a Hemlock. The forests in Mulligan's Hollow, Duncan Woods and the GH Cemetery are seriously threatened by invasive species (Hemlock Wolley Adelgid, Oak Wilt, Garlic Mustard and more), deer over-browsing, and associated erosion. The Forest Management plan has been approved by the City Council but is "contingent on funding". Madden identified what's needed: Committee formation, education, fund raising, time-line and plan implementation. The SEC will assist this process.

Meeting adjourned 8:00 PM

Other:

- On April 5th, Goode, Monetza, Nelsen, Blough, Matthews, O'Neill, and Urquhart went on a tour of the Water Treatment Plant provided by Eric Law.
- On April 14th, Urquhart, Goode, O'Neill, and Kinch will be meeting with a MGC representative regarding Green Stormwater Infrastructure.
- Goode will be providing a SEC update to City Council on April 17, 2023.
- The Beach Clean Up (sponsored by the SEC) is scheduled for April 22, 10AM-Noon.
- Earth Day Events are scheduled for April 29, 12:30 Parade and Earth Day Fair 1-4 PM.
- Blough suggested that for future meetings we may want to put "business" items first on the agenda, with approximate time frames for each discussion. Guest speakers could be asked to come later in the meeting to give their presentation.
- Eric Law requested that all agenda items be submitted at least one week in advance for all future meetings.