

Green Team Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2023

Attendees: Patti Hamilton, Linda Frame, Rod Watson, Justin Marlowe, Jennifer Pawley, Dennis Strawn, Quenton King, Ted Armbricht, Rowan Zoeller, and Brent Webster. Guests: Lewis Payne, Councilmembers Joe Solomon, Emmett Pepper, and Beth Kerns.

Patti called the meeting to order at 12:00. Quorum established. Quenton moved to adopt the minutes from the December 2022 meeting and Rod seconded. Unanimous. Patti welcomed Jennifer Pawley as a new member of the Green Team. Councilmember Sam Minardi is the new Chair of the Environment and Recycling Committee. He could not attend today's meeting.

Pedestrian city code: Justin reported that the National Highway Safety Association has a guide on how a city can become more pedestrian friendly. He will share the link.

Bicycle Friendly Community designation: – Dennis said that 400 entities have this designation. There is a 25-page application with deadlines of February 15 and then again in August, renewed annually. Dennis asked if the Administration would be willing to put the designation into effect. Councilmember Pepper said that the Green Team's role is to make a recommendation to City Council and the Administration, via Councilperson Minardi, the City Manager, and Mayor Goodwin. Rod moved the Green Team reach out to Mayor Goodwin and Chairman Minardi about the application. Discussion included also applying for a pedestrian friendly application. Since they involve applying to two separate entities, Patti suggested waiting until Justin completes his research. Linda seconded. Unanimous. Patti will draft a letter with Dennis' input.

DC American Tour in Milton: Councilmember Pepper will discuss with Chairman Minardi and will wait until after March to schedule.

Environment and Recycling Committee: No updates as committee has not met.

Communications: Linda and Patti did some Christmas videos on recycling and will meet with Tomi Bergstrom future efforts.

Gorilla proposal: Director Webster said the proposal is still on the table.

Inflation Reduction Act: The recycling grant deadline is February 15. The US Environmental Protection Agency has announced new grants including an Environmental Justice government to government program and a collaborative problem-solving cooperative agreement program. Councilmember Pepper said he does not have any additional information about the City's role in applying for grant opportunities. Matt Ward is the City's grant person. Direction will be needed from the new City Manager. Quenton said that sometimes residents are not informed about the goals of the grants, so community outreach is important.

Yeager Runway extension project: Councilmember Pepper said nothing officially happening for a year and there is still for the Green Team to submit comments.

Sports complex green initiative: No update.

Tree City USA designation: Director Webster said that the Jonathan Storage did not want to apply this year and that the Green Team should follow-up with the new City Manager. The City/Green Team can still do something for Arbor Day. The new chair of Beautification Commission is Anna Forbes.

Recycling Program: Director Webster reported that there are still 750 blue bins available and that tippers will soon be installed on the trucks. He plans to expand into schools once trips to Beckley are no longer needed. Jennifer asked about continuation of clear bags. Patti asked if the City will take cardboard placed on top of bins. If the cardboard is dry, it will be collected. Linda asked if there was a way to calculate how much tonnage we are saving from entering the landfill. Director Webster will get those numbers.

Green Team members: We will elect a vice chair at February meeting.

Information community members: Lewis Payne, President of the City Center Business Improvement District, discussed the availability of e-waste pick-up and asked for Green Team feedback. Patti said that the WV DEP will occasionally sponsor a pick-up and it could be coordinated with South Charleston. Linda will reach out to SWMB/DEP/Mark Holstein/Tom Aluise and get back to Lewis Payne. Mr. Payne said any program could be opened up to a broader number of city residents and City Center park is a potential drop-off point.

Community Solar WV presentation: Quenton introduced Leah Barbor, WV State Director of Solar United Neighbors. He also presented a draft letter of support to share with City Council. A community solar bill (HB 2159) was introduced at the state legislature. If passed, customers subscribe to offset their monthly electric bill. It would also provide access to solar power for people who can't put panels on their roof for a variety of reasons. Community solar provides cheaper electricity, stabilizes monthly expenditures, enables fair access to solar for everyone, and promotes a wider participation in clean energy future. Landowners can diversify their operations by using their marginal land to install panels. It provides additional tax revenue for municipalities. Support is needed in terms of resolutions or sign on letters. Patti asked if other cities are involved. Morgantown has also been contacted. Quenton asked about any barriers. West Virginia has net metering but not virtual net metering. Councilmember Pepper asked who owns the panels if they are installed on a city property. Leah said the financial structure can vary and there can be an immense cost savings for a city. The City could lease the rooftops and receive additional revenue. Councilmember Pepper recommended a letter, not a resolution, to send straight to City Council. He noted the City recently had to allocate much more money for increased utility rates. Rod moved to send the letter to City Council with revisions. Jennifer seconded. There was discussion of in-person outreach to council members to explain the letter and Jennifer offered to do a short presentation at the February 6 City Council meeting. Nikki

said the Green Team could email to all council members and ask them to sign support letter. She suggested sending the letter to the Administration to ask them how to proceed. Councilmembers Solomon and Kerns will present to Parkersburg, Huntington and other municipalities. Quenton will send around final letter and can speak to the resolution after it's read at the City Council meeting. Unanimous.

Announcements:

- Check new Green Team contact list for updates.
- Rowan asked about Luna Park trash problem. Patti suggested Director Webster can help. Justin said there was a bill introduced by Councilmember Pepper to provide a financial penalty. Patti suggested Rowan reach out to him.
- Field trip to Glass, Smash = Sand postponed to spring. There is now a way to sign up for the cooperative.

Next meeting is Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at City Hall from noon to 1:30 PM.

Quenton moved to adjourn. Unanimous.