
Environmental Advisory Council
Tuesday, February 25, 2014

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council was held on the above date for the transaction of general business.

EAC members present –D. Beane, P. Ignozzi-Shaffer, A. Molteni

Others present – S. Katzenmoyer, D. Hoag, F. Denbowski, B. Twyman

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Beane called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public in attendance.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer, seconded by Mr. Molteni, to approve the January 28, 2014 meeting summary as written. Motion carried unanimously.

RECYCLING PROGRAM

Mr. Twyman stated that there were some areas that did not have pick up due to weather events. He stated that the program is keeping with business as usual and that others will determine if changes are made.

Mr. Beane noted the great timing of the decision in relation to the last BCTV program. He stated that the decision announcing the stay was released the same day as the program.

Mr. Beane stated that Council transferred funds to the recycling program to keep operations through the end of March 2014.

Mr. Beane questioned the commercial curbside collection program. Mr. Twyman stated that there are two businesses participating at this time.

Mr. Molteni questioned if there was a limit on the size of the business that may

participate. Mr. Twyman stated that it is a pilot program and that he hopes to be able to expand in the future.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned which businesses are participating. Mr. Twyman stated that it is Elk Environmental in Jamestown and Mi Casa Su Casa in the downtown. He stated that the Goggleworks Apts may be added in the future. Recycling collected from Elk Environmental is employee waste only.

Mr. Molteni suggested having recycling for demotion material in the future.

Mr. Beane stated that the original plan for the commercial recycling was for the downtown area only. He noted the need to collect data to determine the future of the program. He questioned if collecting from these two businesses was enough to collect the data. Mr. Twyman stated that it is not. He stated that the pilot program was put on hold and all items tabled during the recycling legal issues.

Kate Keppen from the Berks County Conservation District arrived at this time.

Mr. Beane questioned if businesses would be added to the pilot to enhance and expand the program. Mr. Twyman stated that the executive director of DID, Chuck Broad, is onboard with the program and is willing to participate and recruit new businesses.

Mr. Beane questioned if a follow up meeting was necessary to move the program forward. Mr. Twyman stated that Mr. Beane has been very supportive in getting this pilot going but noted that all sustainability issues have been placed on hold.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned when the pilot program began. Mr. Twyman stated that it began in October.

Ms. Hoag questioned what was being collected from Mi Casa Su Casa. Mr. Twyman stated that it is paper and comingled only. He stated that no organics are being collected at this time.

Ms. Hoag noted some of the benefits of recycling used oil. Mr. Twyman noted his understanding that there are several downtown restaurants recycling their used oil through a private business. He stated that Mi Casa Su Casa and Marvel Ranch are collecting and recycling their used oil.

Mr. Denbowski stated that bankruptcy court has provided a stay for the collection of a recycling fee.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned if there would be others who would sue and get the same result. Mr. Denbowski stated that the City is working to amend its regulations and repackage the billing process. He stated that there will be two options for curbside collection which is based on the program in Newberry. He stated that one option includes the City trash collection and the other does not. Both plans include recycling, yard waste collection and a spring clean up. He stated that the spring clean up is not the Great American Clean Up.

Mr. Molteni questioned if the City would be moving to a single hauler system. Mr. Denbowski stated that they would not at this time. He noted the need for residents who are not on the City trash system to verify their hauler. He stated that this new approach shows all the services provided to residents and that the fee covers costs that include recycling but are not exclusively recycling. He stated that Council received an update on the proposed amendments last evening.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the fee will seem to increase as the annual amount will be collected in eight months rather than twelve. He stated that there was no increase to the program fee. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the fee is increasing in addition to the eight month issue.

Mr. Denbowski stated that yard waste drop off locations are not practical or successful in urban areas. He stated that a task force has been formed to address the collection of grass clippings and that Mr. Twyman will be a member of the task force.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned the outcome of the hauler meetings. Mr. Denbowski stated that both meetings were very successful. He stated that the independent haulers will not be able to collect recycling but they now better understand their need to assist the City with verifying customers. He stated that he is working on a universal form to be used by all independent haulers to verify customers.

Mr. Molteni questioned if there would still be multiple haulers in the same neighborhood on the same day. Mr. Denbowski stated that there would.

Ms. Hoag questioned the percentage of properties using the City system. Mr.

Denbowski stated that it is 2/3. He stated that single family homes are the ones most likely to have an independent hauler.

Mr. Denbowski stated that any regulations can be litigated but that the proposed amendment puts the City in a better position. He stated that State Senator Schwank is working to amend Act 101 to allow the collection of a recycling fee this legislative session. He stated that there has been positive progression.

Mr. Beane stated that the EAC's BCTV program in March should also cover this topic to provide an update to residents. Mr. Denbowski agreed. The program will air on Thursday, March 27 at 6:30 pm.

Mr. Beane thanked Mr. Denbowski for all his hard work on this issue.

Mr. Molteni questioned if the City had obtained and begun using the baler. Mr. Denbowski stated that all programs will restart once the recycling issue is completed and that he hopes to have it running before the end of 2014.

Mr. Beane stated that the grant expires in April 2015.

Mr. Denbowski stated that there has been no movement on electronic recycling. He noted the need to work closely with purchasing.

Mr. Molteni noted the need to recycle cell phones. Mr. Denbowski stated that he is working with the County Solid Waste Authority on these issues.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Mr. Beane stated that the rain barrel flyer cannot be placed in the RAWA bills in time for a March workshop. Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that RAWA cannot place the flyer in the bills until June due to other City issues.

Mr. Beane noted the need to reach residents in other ways.

Mr. Molteni questioned the cost of advertising in the Reading Eagle. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it is very expensive.

Ms. Hoag questioned having a special interest story featured in the Eagle or on WFMZ. Ms. Keppen stated that she has been unsuccessful with this in the past.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer noted the need to reach new people.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the event can be placed in the City Council newsletter and on its Facebook page.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer noted the need for the EAC to have an identity. She suggested a bigger presence on the City's website, its own newsletter, etc.

Ms. Hoag suggested adding the workshop as an upcoming event on the Council agenda.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned getting information home through the School District. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that approval must be obtained from the superintendent, how many flyers would need to be copied, and the way they are distributed.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that the EAC does not have a budget.

Mr. Molteni volunteered to contact the local billboard companies to see if they would be willing to provide public service announcements and City events. He stated that he will also contact local radio, news, and BCTV to advertise.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer suggested targeting certain neighborhoods and placing flyers directly at people's homes. Ms. Katzenmoyer reminded all that flyers cannot be placed in mailboxes or mail slots as only US postal mail may be placed there.

Ms. Hoag suggested contacting the Merchandiser.

Mr. Beane questioned if there was enough time to accomplish all the advertising in time for the March 29 event. Ms. Keppen stated that it would be very tight.

Mr. Beane stated that the EAC may spend up to \$500 per year with Council permission. He expressed the belief that this may be difficult given the City's current financial climate.

Ms. Hoag questioned if there could be direct contributions to the EAC. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she was unsure but that RAWA and the Conservation District are currently directly supporting the workshops.

Ms. Keppen agreed with adding the rain barrel workshop information to the Council newsletter, Facebook and agenda. However, she stated that reaching the other venues in enough time would be difficult. She suggested rescheduling the workshop.

Mr. Beane stated that March may be difficult but that he did not want to wait until July. He suggested late April or early May. Mr. Molteni agreed and stated that the sooner it was scheduled the better for this summer's planting season.

Ms. Keppen suggested that it not be held during Easter weekend or near Earth Day. She stated that she would also be available to assist during an evening. Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that Amanda Stoudt would be available as a venue in the evening.

Mr. Beane questioned the advertising plan. Mr. Molteni stated that he will reach out to the organizations today and have an update to the EAC by tomorrow.

Mr. Beane questioned the elementary school closest to the Community Foundation. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it is Lauer's Park.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned if any member had a relationship with Mr. Hoodak to get his permission for the flyer to be sent home. No one has a relationship with Mr. Hoodak but Ms. Katzenmoyer will contact the District about a flyer.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that Lauer's Park has a garden area. Mr. Beane suggested targeting those students.

After discussion the workshop will be rescheduled to May 10th. A venue is needed and an advertising plan is needed. There will also be a workshop on July 12th. Details for this workshop will be addressed at a future meeting.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Mr. Beane noted the need to schedule a work group meeting within the next two weeks to move this forward.

TREE CANOPY

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that she was discussing this with Ms. Curran-Myers. Mr. Beane suggested adding this topic to the April agenda.

Ms. Hoag suggested inviting Dave Ruyak to discuss this topic.

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council will be held on Tuesday, March 25 at noon at the Public Works building conference room.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk