

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Thursday May 6, 2021
TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm (Virtual Zoom Meeting)
PRESENT: Dan Hall, David Ruff, Julie Fassbender
GUESTS: Dicey Spring (WSU student)
STAFF: John Howard

1. **Call to Order:** Call to order at 4:33 PM by Dan Hall (Chair)
2. **Review and Approval of April 2021 Meeting Minutes:** Approval unanimously without alteration.
3. **Sustainability Plan Discussion:**

John provided a summary on engagement work. Over 500 people have taken the survey, and generally very supportive of sustainability focus. Topics of interest are all across the board. Focus of comments and interest are mostly local concerns, rather than global concerns like climate change. Survey will remain open through at least May.

John hopes for a July draft to share with the CEQC.

Dan asked about participant education level and demographics in general. Dan noted that about 40 % had college degree, which seemed higher than average. John agreed that the number is above the population average that he believed was 30% for Winona. Dan wondered if there were ways to engage more working class people. John suggested they could engage with people through businesses.

Julie said the work is pretty amazing, and thanked staff for their hard work. Dan said it is wonderful to have an organization like Engage Winona to do this work.

John asked if Dicey saw any notice of the survey? Dicey believes she took the survey after seeing it on social media.

4. **Noise Pollution Update:**

John relayed that the mayor spoke to the chief of police about noise issues. The state patrol does monitor for noise, and issues violations, yet these are occasionally thrown out in court since the driver cites the need to use them because of failing brakes.

Dan suspects the noise will be terrible for the Fastenal office building next to the bridge.

5. **Community Garden Planning Update:**

John provided an update on the community garden task force. Minnesota State Southeast is very interested in hosting a garden and has support from administration. John said there are some organization details to work out, such as how involved the city will be in running the garden. There is also a question about whether a second garden site should be pursued since MN State SE is on the edge of town and really only accessible by car. Dan suggests having sites more in town to serve populations that would struggle to get out to MN State SE.

6. **Commercial Shared Kitchens:**

Julie shared that the mayor is interested in the idea of having a shared commercial kitchen. The main priority would be entrepreneurial to help small household businesses grow. For instance, Julie said this can be useful for food trucks that need space for prep. John noted that a commercial shared kitchen may be included with the Mason Temple renovations, and that MN State SE has a commercial kitchen that they hope to use for community garden produce.

7. **Other Business:** Dicey gave a summary of her canopy analysis for EAB ash trees. Dicey explained that trees are often seen as having intrinsic and extrinsic values. Dicey found that a power function worked well to model out diameter at breast height and canopy cover. I-Tree was the program Dicey used. i-Tree showed Winona had 9.6 square miles of trees. Of these, about 0.66 square miles are ash trees.

i-Tree quantified air quality and pollution benefits of the ash trees, but the most significant benefit was from carbon sequestration and storage. The total value of Winona ash trees in 2017 was nearly \$2,557,291. Dicey's work also included a size distribution analysis. Ash tends to be concentrated in the 11 to 20 inch range, which are in the medium size range.

The city has been doing treatment for a decade to lower the impact of losing all of the trees in a short span. Dicey noted that currently maples are high in today percentage (40%) and face threats from the Asian Longhorn beetle.

Dan relayed his neighbor's experience with losing their ash in the boulevard, and how the City had a variety of replacement options.

David asked what the price per carbon was for the i-Tree program. Dicey looked it up to be \$170/ton. David's experience is \$7/ton in forestry work currently. Including the social costs probably leads to higher numbers.

8. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 5:13 pm. Motion by Julie, seconded by David. Approval unanimous.