

Energy Plan Commission

Meeting Minutes September 16, 2020

Attendance: Commissioners: Fosam Foncham, Brian Hinderliter, Nate Lacoursiere, Alison Hoxie, Gary Olson, Cassie Theisen. Absent: Maria Jose Gomez Quijano

City Staff: Erik Birkeland, Property & Facilities Manager; Mindy Granley, Sustainability Officer; Mike LeBeau, Construction Project Supervisor; Alex Jackson, Energy Coordinator; Jennifer Ondrik, Administrative Specialist; Lily Strehlow, AmeriCorps Member.

Call to Order:

The meeting started at 2:35 pm

AmeriCorps VISTA member:

Lily Strehlow introduced herself to the commission and gave a brief overview of the projects she would be working on during her time with the City.

Sustainability Officer Updates:

Mindy Granley, Sustainability Officer, gave an update on her new position and initiatives. She explained that her role for the City is to (1) **Demonstrate:** The City pursues opportunities to address environmental challenges in sensible, responsible and equitable ways and to create a culture of sustainability within the City. (2) **Measure and communicate:** Track and share progress and challenges on sustainability and carbon reduction goals. (3) **Inspire:** Initiate projects and partnerships for change. Build partnerships and projects to help save resources, protect our climate, and make our City an even better place to live, visit, and work. In addition, she outlined her current work initiatives including a staff survey and the development of an internal sustainability leadership team. With the onboarding of two additional interns, she has been working to advance the [Energy website](#) and Instagram accounts. Coordination efforts continue with MN Power on solar sites within the City and advancing the building energy code. Lastly, she outlined a few grant opportunities that the City will be pursuing.

City Buildings and Energy Use:

Alex Jackson, Energy Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the different types and diversity of buildings located throughout the City. He included a breakdown of maintenance and operational costs associated with providing utilities to these facilities. Lastly, the group discussed energy reductions and consumption changes that have occurred during the recent COVID timeframe.

Municipal Energy Policies:

Lily Strehlow, AmeriCorps VISTA member, gave an introductory look at the common themes and policies included within municipal energy policies. She went through several examples of municipal energy standards and guides adopted by the City of Eau Claire, Minneapolis, and St. Louis Park among others. Lily outlined three main ways Duluth could approach writing our own internal energy policy. (1) Write our own policy (2) Reference external standards, such as LEED (3) Adopt SB2030 guidelines. The Commission discussed potential themes to include in our internal energy policy. City staff assured Commissioners that over the next weeks they will work diligently to prepare a draft energy policy for review in November.

Fall Meeting Schedule:

The Commission discussed the proposed meeting schedule for 2021 and any potential changes needed. At its next meeting the Commission will vote to adopt the proposed schedule.

Future Energy Projects & Priorities:

Solar sites within City of Duluth with Minnesota Power. Statewide Advanced Building Energy Code group. Duluth Energy / Steam.

Adjournment:

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:47 PM, M/S/C.