

## **SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION**

Thursday, April 26, 2012

City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room,  
400 La Crosse St.

4:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Marilyn Pedretti, R. Jean Salk, Sara Sullivan, Rob Tyser, Sharon Hampson, Wayne Olson, Dick Swantz

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Dan Bagniewski

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Shannon Havlik, Mike Pieper, Erica Black, Dale Hexom, Amy Peterson, Jacob LaRow, Brian Fukuda

### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Marilyn Pedretti called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Erica Black commented that the Earth Day event attracted between 4 and 5 thousand attendees. Bike to Work Week begins May 13 and runs through May 18.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF March 22, 2012**

**MOTION** by Sullivan/Tyser to approve the minutes of March 22, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **AGENCY REPORTS/ INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

- Nick Nichols reported that the marsh clean-up did not net a lot of trash as a professor from UWL had taken 60 students in the week prior to clean up. Approximately 1000 lbs was collected.
- Patti Balacek – Western Technical College. Western held a Sustainability forum, which attracted 50 attendees including representatives from the community, business, higher education, government, among others. Two main questions were asked: “What is going on in sustainability?” and “what are challenges moving forward with sustainability?” Further steps will be taken to pare down and prioritize the 42 pages of information and form a survey on what action should be taken.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

- Climate Change Forum Update: Amy Peterson said that the City of La Crosse, with DNR assistance, had submitted an EPA Green Infrastructure grant application for around \$95,000 to help develop some hydrologic models in the Johnson Basin addressing storm water issues. A Green Complete Streets work shop was took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April that brought together City Staff, National Complete Street Coalition and other stakeholders to discuss policy implementation and develop models on how to move forward. Peterson discussed the draft report on Climate Change Adaptation (handout). Peterson stressed that education in the community on climate change is important to ensure that the public are behind the effort when policy makers take action.
- Sustainable Business Cluster: Nichols mentioned a new name “Sustainable Business Practices to Improve the Bottom Line” and passed out some brochures with “Save the Date” with the exact times to follow. He went over a long list of businesses scheduled to attend the event and that a major component of the event will to illustrate to those businesses that sustainability can benefit their bottom line.

#### **CITY OF LA CROSSE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS SUSTAINABILITY – DALE HEXOM, DIRECTOR**

- Hexom presented a power point presentation on the different areas under Public Works that the City of La Crosse has made progress towards sustainability.
- Within City Hall, HVAC control updates have been completed to ensure more efficient heating and cooling of the building. Many lights and light fixtures have been upgraded to more efficient models and some occupancy sensors. The Public Works department is continuing to work with Focus on Energy (FOE) to make further improvements.
- In the Main St parking ramp, lighting upgrades allow lighting 24 hours for safety, but design allows different parts of the light fixture to operate at different times to minimize energy consumption. In the Riverside Ramp, LED lights were installed.
- Automatic hand towel dispensers, hand soap dispensers, and 100% recycled tissue paper is purchased for use throughout the city's buildings.
- The city has purchased a few hybrid vehicles in 2009 to replace standard vehicles for city business travel.
- Within the Water Department variable frequency drives have been installed to allow more efficient use of energy during off and on peak operation. The city received an \$80,000 FOE grant to assist in this. The water bubblers downtown have been outfitted with push buttons and thus ending the constant water flow during the summer months.
- Wastewater has replaced an aeration blower, a \$1,500,000 upgrade, with help from FOE in the amount of \$242,000.
- Refuse and Recycling has recently added #1 and #2 plastics to the recycling stream. Solid waste and recycling evaluations are being done jointly with the City of La Crosse, La Crosse County, and City of Onalaska. The city is also looking into revising ordinances dealing with trash and collection.
- The Street Department is using and recycling materials in the construction and repair of roads. The city is also increasing the level of enforcement on recycling along with education efforts. During the winter months, salt trucks have been retrofitted with digital controls to lay down a precise amount of material for every mile of road. Salt brine is being utilized to help reduce salt usage during the winter.
- Green Complete Streets is part of an effort to reduce negative effects of storm water. Implementation of bio cells is one part of the city's effort in this area.

#### **WESTERN'S SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE AND LETTER OF SUPPORT – SHANNON HAVLIK**

- Brian Fukuda drafted the letter of support from the Commission for Western's efforts and to promote cooperation in sustainability and the Angelo Dam Project
- Patti Balacek briefed the Commission on Western's Sustainability Policy. Western has a Vision 2020 Plan and two big parts that relate to sustainability. Western is committed to LEED Silver for all new buildings and to regional strategies in sustainability. The latter is meant to hold those they do business with to their standards and expectations in sustainability. The institute is meant to provide a forum to raise all efforts, align partnerships and resources to enhance offerings and grow sustainability. The institute looks to provide leadership in areas, but also play a support role where other organizations have taken a lead. Michael Pieper, Western Technical College, provided background information on the Angelo Dam located in Monroe County, near Sparta. WTC acquired the property from the county and will use, eventually, to provide power and water to their Sparta campus.

- **MOTION** by Swantz/Hampson to approve signing the letter to WTC. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **LIVING GREEN EXPO – OLSON**

- Wayne Olson informed the Commission that the date of the Living Green Expo will be Saturday, October 13, 2012 in coordination with Downtown Mainstreet. Olson sought Commission input on possible partnership or help for the Expo. The city and county are new partners in the expo.

[As City and County staff may be engaged already with LGE activities, we may be forced to have Commission members “man” the vendor booth. Offerings at the booth could include the excellent output of the baseline committee as well as other items deemed appropriate by the Commission.]

#### **LA CROSSE TRIBUNE ARTICLES – PEDRETTI**

- Nichols is looking for assistance in providing context and oversight in the creation of the articles. They are looking to do one every other month. Olson and Sara Sullivan volunteer to assist. The Tribune would like to have a couple of ideas ahead of time, prior to publishing.

#### **GREEN BUILDING WORK GROUP REPORT – PEDRETTI**

- Chair Pedretti said the group is still working and waiting for some feedback.

#### **BASELINE WORK GROUP: PRESENTATION AND REVIEW WRITTEN REPORT – TYSER/SALK**

- Rob Tyser presented the Commission the same report he gave on Earth Day. It was the first presentation by that group to the public and it was important step in starting the conversation. The presentation addressed the aspects of sustainability, the 4 Natural Step Principles and how they can be related to the sustainability indicators compiled by the group (20 indicators for government and 17 for community). The bulk of the report presented these different indicators and how they may have changed over time. The group interpreted the data to determine whether or not there were positive or negative trends, what factors might be playing a part in affecting that usage and what steps might be taken to further positive action on sustainability. Tyser indicated that a written report is on the “to do” along with putting the graphs online, possible inclusion of other indicators and to share with department heads and officials.

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Sustainability Report – On further action to take.

**MOTION** by Hampson/Olson to adjourn. **The motion carried unanimously.** Chair Pedretti adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.