

Chanhasen Environmental Commission (EC)
Regular Meeting – Zoom Online Meeting
6:00 pm
January 13, 2021

Members Present: Bill Chappell, Kristin Fulkerson, Jeff Harken, Greg Hawks, Don Vasatka, and Markus Fischer.

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jill Sinclair, Environmental Resources Specialist

Minutes: December minutes were approved.

City updates:

- Recycling Days/Recycling Coupon: Jill explained that the county has asked to discontinue the special event Chanhasen Recycling Day at the Environmental Center due to COVID concerns and traffic. The city will instead increase the value of the recycling coupon and encourage residents to use it at their convenience. Since the coupon won't be available until the Connection is mailed in Feb. there will be a period of time when no coupons are available to the public. No complaints have been received. Markus wondered if a QR code could be used for access to the coupon when the printed version isn't available. Jill will look into it.
- Jill said she had talked to Bill Fouks, director of the Environmental Center, to see if he'd be interested and available for a virtual tour of the facility with the commission. He said he would be and that March would work best. The commission agreed that they would like to add that to the March agenda.
- Applicant interviews for the commission will be done only with the City Council on Feb 8 and 22. One commissioner is invited to sit with the council for the interviews. Jeff will be willing and available to do so with Bill and Markus as alternates if needed.
- There is a paper shredding event scheduled for May. The senior center is looking into scheduling a fall event as a fundraiser.
- Emerald ash borer was confirmed in Chanhasen on Monday, Jan. 11. The city has notified the public of the discovery on social media and the website. A press release will run in the paper next week.
- Xcel informed the city that they will be updating all of their street lights in town with LED this year. The commission wondered how many city owned street lights there are and how many have been updated. Jill will look into it.

2021 Recycling education event brainstorming: The commission agreed that it would be best to stick with one event in the fall, preferably in-person but with a back-up plan for a virtual event. October is the target month for the event. Ideas for presentations include:

- DemCon trailer. Greg will look into it and get back to the commission in Feb.
- Tracey Anthony – sustainability/climate change talk
- National weather service also a possibility. Contacts at the agency are known by commissioners.
- Off the Blue Couch – recycling education mainly focused for kid audience. Greg has forwarded emails with their latest education offerings.
- Stan Tekiela – micro plastics and birds

The commission decided to discuss again in Feb and narrowed it down to DemCom, Blue Couch, or Stan. Looking online during the meeting Don saw that the DemCon trailer is \$100/hour with a \$100 mobilization fee. The commission wondered if they were able to do a virtual presentation if necessary. Markus wondered if the haulers have any content that the EC can use. Maybe they should be contacted and see what recycling items are accepted by each since the haulers don't all accept the same items. Information should be shared. There's also a good video from DemCon on recycling that should be shared.

Arbor Day 2021: The commission brainstormed alternative event ideas since a group tree planting would not be happening. Perhaps city could do a film festival for Arbor Day similar to the movie event the watershed district did in the fall. Select a tree-themed movie to share. Jill will contact the watershed district to see how they planned their event. The commission would like it penciled in for May. The poster contest will be changed as well. The commission decided to open it up to anyone, not just 5th graders. Participants can submit their own original drawing. The deadline will be in April, maybe April 7 so that commissioners can look at posters before meeting. Jill can scan and send them to the commission. The poster theme will be 'Trees are Terrific in Chanhassen' to keep it simple. The commission would like the contest to be added to the February agenda to finalize the details. Advertising would happen throughout March.

General Discussion:

- Greg shared that the watershed district re-elected Sharon McCotter as chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The committee is always looking for volunteers. The CACs theme for 2021 is reconstruction of the lake shoreline. A major topic on the district board agenda was the Rice Marsh Lake water quality improvement project. A discussion was had as to how much the city will be contributing to the project. The plan was approved 3-2. The water quality of Rice Marsh is above the 10 year limit in spite of previous improvement in the watershed such as an alum treatment of Rice Marsh and the iron filings filtration system in Lake Susan which drains into Rice Marsh. This improvement project is separate and different from the project at St Hubert school.
- Jill shared that the Carver County Environmental Center is accepting plastic bags again. Kristin said that was good since the collection station at Target is overflowing. Don said that Target is working on some interesting reuse projects with the bags.
- Jill also noted that the Adopt A Highway sign on Hwy 5 in downtown Chanhassen doesn't have a volunteer name on it. Perhaps it's open? Don volunteered to look into it and contact MNDOT

to see if it's available. The commission agreed that they would be interested in adopting a section if available.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm
Minutes prepared by Jill Sinclair