

Minutes of the SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, July 24, 2013

Committee Members Present: Rodriguez, Van Eyll, Elkins, Brimeyer, Rummel, Melander, Kramer, Commers, Chavez, Wulff, Haigh

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the special meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:26PM on Wednesday, July 24, 2013. Prior to calling the meeting to order, Chair Haigh administered the Oath of Office to Council members who were not in attendance at the July 17 meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Van Eyll, seconded by Rummel to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

THRIVE MSP 2040

Introduction to framing presentations on Climate Change—Libby Starling
Libby provided a brief introduction to the framing presentations.

Overview of the Regional Indicators Project—Rick Carter, LHB Architects

Rick Carter is the Senior Vice President at LHB Architects. His presentation on the Regional Indicators Initiative (RII) illustrated an inventory of energy, potable water, travel, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions for 20 Minnesota cities from 2008 to 2011. As part of the project the 20 cities committed to increasing their overall efficiency and level of sustainability. The RII supports planning for sustainability by defining a baseline, tracking a business-as-usual trajectory, establishing targets, and measuring outcomes of sustainable strategies at a city-wide scale. The 20 cities are: Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester, Duluth, Richfield, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, St. Anthony, Edina, Falcon Heights, Maplewood, White Bear Lake, Coon Rapids, Oakdale, Shoreview, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Woodbury, and Lake Elmo. Carter stated that the major discovery of this project was a check-mark trend in energy use. Total energy use decreased in all 20 cities from 2008 to 2010 and increased from 2010 to 2011. The check-mark trend was consistent across all individual data sets, except electricity consumption (total energy, total energy normalized by population, total commercial/industrial energy, total residential energy, total natural gas). The majority of energy is commercial/industrial, not residential. Unlike energy, residential water consumption is greater than commercial/industrial water use.

The average vehicle miles traveled per capita per day has decreased only minimally over four years. Vehicle miles traveled increases at greater distances from central cities.

Total waste production decreased significantly from 2008 to 2009, but leveled off to almost no change from 2009 to 2011. Waste data is collected at a county-wide scale, so in order to calculate the city waste numbers, county data was prorated by city population. It is not specific enough to reflect the trends of individual cities, but the data showed that within the 7 counties participating in the RII 47% of waste was recycled, 29% was incinerated, and 24% was landfilled.

GHG emissions follow the energy trend closely because energy is the dominant contributor to GHG emissions. The breakdown of GHG showed that energy contributes to 64% of all GHG emissions, followed by travel at 29%.

Carter stated that the data collection helps cities establish a baseline to enable action, and a next step could be to encourage reporting indicators in city comprehensive plans.

Preparing for the Challenges and Opportunities of a Changing Climate—Pat Hamilton, Science Museum of Minnesota

Pat Hamilton is the Director of Global Change Initiatives (including the Future Earth initiative) at the Science Museum of Minnesota. For the last two years, Hamilton has been focusing on climate change and climate adaptation. There are 180 citizen volunteers in MN who regularly collect temperature, precipitation, and other meteorological data. A third of the areas have been collecting this data since the 19th century. Temperatures have been rising across the state for the last several decades, particularly during the winter time. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, and 9th warmest winters on record (since 1895) have been in MN, beginning in 1998.

Hamilton showed a map of the urban heat islands. The map was created because of the drastic differences in land use in the city and the surrounding countryside. The temperature in the inner city areas is 10 degrees warmer than in the nearby countryside. Dewpoint has also increased, which contributes to rising temperatures. Minnesota has also become wetter in recent decades. Since 2000 there has been a remarkable increase in 6" rainfalls in MN that have impacted more than 1,000 square miles.

Hamilton stated that trees are able to reduce effects of heat islands and reduce runoff from extreme rainfalls. We should be thinking about ways to increase and protect our urban forests.

Climate Change: Council Operational Responses—Jason Willett and Pat Jones

Jason Willett is the Director of MCES Finance and Energy and Pat Jones is the Assistant Director of Facilities Engineering at Metro Transit. The Council has a sustainability policy to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the regional services it provides. The policy of the Metropolitan Council is to conduct its own operations in a sustainable manner, when economically feasible, to increase energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations, conserve and protect water resources, and reduce solid waste generation. MCES has reduced its energy purchases by 20% since 2006. The goal is to reduce energy purchases in facilities by 50% by 2020. Willett showed an aerial photo of the Blue Lake wastewater treatment plant's solar power site.

Transit also has a goal to reduce energy purchases in facilities by 50% by 2020. Since 2008, Metro Transit has reduced its electric purchases by 13% and gas purchases by 66%. Measures have been taken to ensure buildings are also being operated more efficiently. The actions include lighting retrofits, installing activated switches, building automation systems, and shutting down HVAC systems at night and on the weekends.

The Council was a founding member of the Climate Registry, a non-profit collaboration among North American states, provinces, territories, and Native Sovereign Nations. The Registry sets consistent and transparent standards to calculate and report emissions. MN State law requires an 80% reduction in GHG emissions in the State of MN by the year 2050. Mandatory reporting of GHGs by certain facilities in the wastewater treatment industry is required by the EPA. The Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant does not currently meet the mandatory reporting threshold, but it is expected that it could be required to do so in the next few years. Willett and Jones described how the Council is dealing with storm water by planting gardens and installing detention systems. The Council has been collaborating with several partners: U of M Research, Metropolitan Energy Policy Coalition, State/Energy Climate Teams, and Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:50PM.

Emily Getty, Recording Secretary