

# Brookings Sustainability Council

Nov. 4, 2020

Present: Jennifer McLaughlin, Betty Beer, Stephanie Aure, Shelly Brandenburger, Robert McGrath, Mike Lockrem, Robin Buterbaugh, Paul Peterson, Luis Hesler, Paul Briseno (City Manager), Russ Halgerson (BMU), Lawrence Novotny (Community member)

Absent: Jane Hegland, Anna Barr, Norma Nusz Chandler

- 4:04 we started the meeting
- Welcome new member
- Approve the agenda.
  - Bob motioned to approve. Robin is the 2<sup>nd</sup>. No opposition.
  - Agenda is approved.
- Approve minutes
  - Motion to Approve Bob, Mike for the 2<sup>nd</sup>. No opposition.
  - Minutes are approved.
- Open Forum- Nothing.
- BMU discussion: Russ Halgerson
  - BMU just commissioned solar Panels in Lindemear subdivision. They are seeing increase in residential solar energy.
  - Bright Energy-Residents to have option to purchase 100% clean energy. BMU's energy source is currently 82% carbon free. 37% is renewable. BMU does have wind but mostly hydro. This year they are planning on rolling out the program that would allow residents to pay an extra amount each month to ensure the energy from their home is from carbon free sources. They would pay an extra .16 cents a month to be environmentally conscious. Roll out January 1<sup>st</sup>. BMU would like to work with the sustainability committee to help gain interest in the program.
  - BMU applying for Volkswagen grant to install EV chargers. The grant will pay 80% of the cost. BMU is looking at putting in 8 charging stations between the I-90 and I-29 corridors. Grants are due November 13<sup>th</sup>. They are still looking at a number of sites.
    - Discussions, few sites identified but nothing yet. Suggestions from the sustainability council included: over the hotels by Applebee's, Swiftel, near a restaurant so that you could leave and eat somewhere else, one in between SF and Brookings. BMU is looking at placing stations in Mitchell, Chamberlin, Wall, Rapid City, Brookings, Watertown, SF and Murdo. Betty: are you aware that Tesla has one. Russ: I know some in SF and Pierre. The issue is that they only work with Tesla's. What we are proposing is something that works on all EV. Paul: This is a great program and a good way to bring this in fast and maximize a grant. Normally they are 35K. Russ: We are proposing a DC fast charger with 2 plugs. One fast and 2 DC plugs. Cost for everything is 80K; our utility cost is about 8500.00 dollars. Jennifer: Let us know as a committee if there is anything we can do.

- BMU is planning on putting on a learning drive event with car Dealers, talk about our rebate opportunity sometime in 2021 and they want the committee to partner with the event. Sometime in August or September in 2021. Betty: We had a similar event at McCrory Gardens about 4 years ago. Good timing to do it again. Jennifer: Is there some help in purchasing an EV car. Russ: Yes, we have a 500-dollar rebate for the charging unit themselves. 50-dollar rebate just letting us know you have an EV car. Paul P.: On the 500 dollar rebate how many people are taking advantage of it? Russ: No one has purchased a level two charger. Betty: we purchased one in 2012. Russ: We could do a better job in advertising a rebate. Paul: In Nebraska building owners were installing them as a selling mechanism.
- Jennifer: Question on the Bright Energy Choice. Is there an option for renewable or only carbon free? Russ: Yes but our provider wants us to choose one or the other. Renewable is more expensive. Nuclear is considered Carbon free. The generators have to accept the responsibility for the carbon then it can be considered carbon free. That is how the market works. If you want to be 100% free it would have to be renewable. It's considered free once they pay it but it is not a tax. It is a fee. 32% hydro, solar and wind would be 100% carbon free. Robin: It's not money we are taking responsible, so that sounds interesting. Russ: With that in mind maybe it is best to do the renewable route. You would just have to pay the fee on 53%, so \$1 per month to be renewable. Robin: IS that for people who choose the option or the decision across the board. Russ: you would have to choose if you want to participate and which route. Jennifer: I propose going the renewable route. It is not that much different cost wise. Paul B.: Are you looking for a vote? Russ: Just communication, just knowing that we would have support sounds great to me. Betty: If we went 100% renewable we would not have market purchase. The ones in the program would not have energy from market purchases: Russ: We would just make sure that they are market sources. The generators also take responsibility for the renewable energy sources. It goes both ways.
- Jennifer: We purchased an ad in the Community for 2021 and include resources and tips. This program will be up and running by Jan. 1 would there be enough information to include it in that article. Russ: We have a board meeting on 11/9 so I will get back to you to see if we can promote it. Jennifer: We can add the EV rebates.
- City Update – Paul B.:
  - I still require all department heads to have some sustainability training. Encourage more sustainability efforts. We also examine how we can incorporate more Sustainability. Called Sustainable development. Create a sense of place and best practices. It impacts our environment. We are doing that with all of our positions. In the next few weeks I'll have an update.
  - Also looking at a Park Master plan. In January we will have some dialogue around this. Also discussions of additional gardens, trails and improve transportation.
  - We are looking to update the building codes. Mike is looking at that. Mike did get approved to the buffer yard.
  - \*\*We require land between businesses. We have looked at reducing that and best practices. We are also looking at overlooks and landscaping in main corridors. Also looking at parking.

- Jennifer: Norma looked at the building codes. Asking about the codes with regards to that Building update. Paul: Will follow up and have Jake give an update next month.
- 2021 Strategic Plan Update: Jennifer: We just want to bring this back up and have a starting conversation and make plans in the December meeting. We will finalize next month.
  - Ideas: Betty has two thoughts: Look at a greenhouse at the gardens to extend the growing season and work with the drug court to help with the greenhouse. The second goal was affordable housing.
    - Paul: A task force looked at affordable housing. We did have someone apply for a tax credit. 42 units south of 20<sup>th</sup>. We are looking at updating the housing master plan. Not all the landlords do not participate and that Sku's are number. It's only available until January. We still continue to push and there is something happening on 15<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. Betty: How close does it come to tackling the problem? Paul: difficult to say. We have a ton of rentals open. This could go in at a lower price point. Workforce housing project in about 2 months. We are chipping at it year by year. I know there is a project to bring on 20-30 ICAP and habitat for humanity homes. There are 3 habitat homes being built. BMU and the city and others look at code.
  - Jennifer: any other thoughts or ideas just think about it in the next couple of months.
- Marketing and Advertising Plan Update:
  - Approval to do the community guide and 8 ads in the register that can be done between now and through 2021. Jennifer showed the draft of the community guide. We tried to give tips on how to be sustainable but also promote resources on how we are sustainable in Brookings. Stephanie: Bubbles instead of a lot of verbiage. Betty on three not using Plastic. Reduce your use of Plastic. Luis: Promote an alternative. Betty: add Pet waste. Jennifer: check with storm water on that. Betty: look at residents to limit pesticides and fertilizer. Paul: Add information about where to resale items. Habitat, home again, goodwill, trends. Country peddler. The domestic shelter is something to look. Stephanie. Jennifer: Can we call out businesses? Paul B.: No I don't see it as a problem but contact them to see if they are okay being listed. Betty: Hy Vee takes back plastic bags. Jennifer: On the sustainability website can we list more resources. Paul B.: Will have Jake check with Chelsea regarding a website. Paul: This would be a great one stop shop. Stephanie: Link to BEDEC live in Brookings. Bob: It was on the city website that different places took like Lowe's, waste oil locations and so on.
  - Register Ad Holiday Tips: Stephanie, Jennifer and Mike: Thoughts and suggestions on how to be sustainable. Which one do you like and phrasing? Stephanie: I like 2 better short, sweet and to the point. Mike: Option two better than one. Could we have a mix of the two. Betty: The first sentence and then option 2. Robin: Likes the donate: Jennifer: I will combine and send it out.
- Business Plastic Usage update and Project assignment: Downtown Brookings is still interested in the program, but needs to wait until the pandemic subsides. It will stay in our 2021 plan. Similar to that Downtown Brookings liked the idea of Plastic Score helping with waste audits and resources but it needs to wait until after COVID. It will stay on our to do list.

- Committee Structure: Committee structure will stay the same, but we will assign tasks better to each committee.
- Subcommittee Updates:
  - Waste Committee: no update. Plastic bags efforts mentioned above should go to the waste committee for follow up when the time comes.
  - Energy: no update
  - Local Foods: no update
  - Bikes: We are working on easements at SEXAUER park to connect the recreational trail. We are holding until winter and the Pandemic. It involves some foundation of SDSU. Also across from Medary across from the soccer field. Discussions around that. Paul B.: We added more bike path, south of 20<sup>th</sup> north on Main.
- Call for future agenda items. Nothing.
- Jennifer thanked Bob McGrath for his years of service.
- Bob motion to adjourn. Betty says second.