

1. Call to order – 6:30 p.m.

1a. Roll call

Members present: Chair Shaina Ashare, Vice Chair Tatiana Giraldo, Marisa Bayer, Ramil Goonetilleke, Abigail Oppegaard, Paul Zeigle, Eric Zweber

Members absent: Ryan Griffin, Shasha Shahidi, Andrew Willette, Dave Wilsey

Staff present: Emily Ziring, Sustainability Manager

Guests: Nancy Rose, resident

2. Approval of minutes – May 1, 2024 – The minutes were approved unanimously as presented, with 3 abstentions.

3. Business

4a. Commission administration

- Next step for advisory boards & commissions

Ms. Ziring presented a summary of the May 20 city council study session about boards and commissions.

She noted the following:

- The council wants to reimplement annual group meetings and hold separate 1:1 meetings with each board and commission yearly, and also offer members the opportunity to suggest study session topics by using an online form that goes to staff.
- The council wants staff to post, recruit and vet new members for all boards and commissions, and those who want to reapply can do so in the fall.
- The council wants commissioners to be compensated for their time.
- In August, the council, boards and commissions will hold one large meeting to discuss all the new and updated information and to understand any concerns from board and commission members.
- The council will make vacancy appointments in September and in October will hold board and commission orientation for new members.
- November will be the first annual meeting with council to discuss goals and work plans for 2025.
- In December the city's new community engagement coordinator, Pat Coleman, will collaborate with staff liaisons to discuss new work plans for all boards and commissions.

The commission members agreed they are happy to still be intact.

Commissioner Bayer added with all the feedback and input received from council, boards and commissions, it is a bit disappointing to see that things will basically remain as they were before. However, she added having meetings in August and November will be helpful, and communication with council will be good for giving feedback and input.

Commissioner Zweber stated with new members potentially starting in October it makes sense to wait on drafting a new work plan.

Commissioner Bayer added the idea of compensation is good for those who need it, but for those who do not need it, the funding should be allocated to someone who needs it in order to be able to participate. She added an “opt-out” option should be included for those that do not want compensation.

- ESC elections

Ms. Ziring stated the ESC chair and vice chair have served 6 months longer than they were supposed to, and nominations for new officers will be held at tonight’s meeting.

Commissioner Zweber nominated himself for Chair.

Commissioner Bayer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Giraldo, to elect Commissioner Zweber as Chair of the ESC. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention by Commissioner Zweber.

Commissioner Oppegaard nominated herself for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Bayer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Zweber, to elect Commissioner Oppegaard as Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

- Plan for 2024 work plan creation

Commissioner Zweber proposed that work on the 2025 work plan begin at the November meeting.

Ms. Ziring stated she will work with Pat Coleman, the new community engagement coordinator, about who will assist the commissions with their annual work plans.

Commissioner Zweber made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bayer, to cancel the July 3 ESC meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Ashare stated in summary, the July 3 meeting will be canceled, and as homework commissioners will be thinking about topics for the August meeting with city council.

Ms. Ziring added that with sustainability programs all in place now, she will not be giving the ESC work over the next few months. She added if the council does not have any work direction

for the ESC either, then the ESC may need to pivot and discuss what 2025 meetings and calendar will look like.

4b. July 3 ESC meeting

The ESC decided to cancel this meeting per the motion above.

4c. Public EV charging fee discussion

Ms. Ziring stated that staff are interested in getting feedback on the notion of charging a fee for use of the public EV chargers, noting that some folks are using the public chargers for over 2 hours at a time, and that giving away charging for free may not align with public purpose expenditure guidelines.

She noted in an effort to get folks to turn over stations more frequently and make things fairer for all EV owners who use chargers, these discussions about fees would only include the networked chargers at the Rec Center and the Nature Center because the City Hall chargers cannot accept payment.

Chair Ashare noted in past discussions about fees, there was talk of additional fees required to be able to accept payment and it would be more expensive to implement this vs. not having fees. Ms. Ziring stated she would look back at this to gather more context.

Commissioner Goonetilleke asked what other cities do and asked if the City Hall chargers can be retrofitted to be like those at the Rec Center so that fees can be charged. Ms. Ziring stated it is likely a \$10,000 upgrade, so it is in the long-term plan, but not currently. She added sometimes fleet vehicles are charged at the City Hall stations as well, so fees would not be appropriate. This would need to be discussed with the facilities superintendent.

Ms. Ziring noted in Edina all public chargers cost nothing for the first 2 hours and 15 minutes of charging, and then \$6 per hour after that. She added Fridley is free for the first 3 hours and then charges \$2 per hour afterwards and other cities have other fee structures.

Vice Chair Giraldo commented it is frustrating to go to charge your car and find there is a car that is done charging but taking up the space, so it is fair to charge fees and to compensate the city for this public use. She added she likes the fee structure of free the first 2 hours and then charging fees after that.

Commissioner Goonetilleke asked if any of the other cities charge at peak-time or high-demand hours. Ms. Ziring stated she was not aware of any, but thought that could potentially be programmed in. She noted the Rec Center and Nature Center don't really have high-demand hours given their uses.

Commissioner Bayer stated Edina was not charging for parking and noticed people left their vehicles for long hours, so they instituted fees for over 2 hours. She noted that a warning is sent to owners when they have 15 minutes left so they can go move their vehicle.

Commissioner Bayer stated following the trend for the first 2 hours free and charging thereafter is best because it will not discourage those who only charge their vehicle for under 2 hours.

Commissioner Goonetilleke asked how long it takes to charge a vehicle that is on empty. Vice Chair Giraldo stated about 4 hours for a total charge, and at 2 hours there is enough of a charge to get around the Twin Cities area.

Ms. Ziring stated her recommendation is to keep it at 3 hours and then start charging fees, which feels consistent with current policy. She stated it can always be lowered to 2 hours at a later date if needed. She also recommended the \$6 per hour charge after 3 hours.

Chair Ashare agreed with Ms. Ziring's recommendations and stated it feels appropriate.

Ms. Ziring stated this is most likely an issue that can be addressed at a staff level, but since public fees are involved council will need to be informed.

4. Staff updates

Ms. Ziring updated the commission on the following items:

- Successful Wheelie Fun Bike Ride with lots of families and ESC commissioners present
- Environmental Stewardship system kick off began
- Council would like to sunset the city benchmarking program after another year. An ordinance amendment will be brought to council later this year for sunsetting the program in Dec. 2025
- Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant program – collaborating with city facilities department to install fast closing garage doors
- New Climate Champions for large commercial and industrial buildings – a few businesses have signed up
- Applied for the assessment phase of the Dept. of Commerce solar on public buildings grant for the Rec Center
- Environmental Stewardship dashboard which will show sustainability efforts – will be presented to council at a future meeting
- Planning for Ecotacular- pls sign up for a shift on Signup Genius, or plan to come to the June 15 event from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.
- Doing outreach to large businesses for energy assessment program and ongoing grant applications for solar

Commissioner Bayer asked for the dashboard to be sent to the ESC commissioners when completed. Ms. Ziring stated yes and added it will be completed this week.

5. Work plan update

5a. Expand our outreach – events work group update – nothing to report

5b. Share our voice – state policy summary

Ms. Ziring described the links sent to the ESC prior to the meeting that summarized the energy and waste legislation that passed the legislature this year.

5c. Measure our progress – Staff and volunteer reports – will do this at August meeting.

6. Environmental justice and current events open discussion

Ms. Ziring noted she sent out several links to articles recently.

Commissioner Opegard noted that Gov. DeSantis in Florida removed all climate change policy from his state policies, and noted other states are starting to do that.

Chair Ashare added she has read information recently on the insurance industry, and that states are negative in their insurance revenue – with MN among those states.

Commissioner Bayer noted that NY had approved congestion pricing for driving into NYC, with the funding designated to assist with public transportation, but today the Governor put a hold on implementing it. She added some have come out against the policy, and some are noting it is related to politics and not implemented so as to get votes in the November election. She noted in London it is used heavily and the zones have been expanded as they are seeing positive effect from it.

Commissioner Goonetilleke noted the MN E-bike rebate application was a disaster and crashed, so it was postponed until their system is repaired. There was a system that created a demand and only the first 10,000 people were allowed.

7. Upcoming/proposed events

- Ecotacular, June 15, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. at Wolfe Park – see Signup Genius to volunteer
- July 3 ESC monthly meeting cancelled

8. Adjournment – 7:32 p.m.

Emily Ziring, liaison

Shaina Ashare, chair member