

The Prairie Village Environmental Committee met at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday March 27, 2024, in the Prairie Village City Hall Multipurpose Room. The recording secretary was Dave Huyett.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Members in attendance: Greg Shelton (chair), Magda Born, Amy Brooks, Travis Carson, Johanna Comes, Dave Huyett, Nathan Kovac, Melinda Lewis, Penny Mahon, Piper Reimer, Rick Wohlfarth and Ashley Freburg (staff liaison).

Approval of the agenda: Johanna moved to approve the agenda. Rick seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approval of the February 2024 meeting minutes: Rick moved to approve the minutes. Johanna seconded the motion. All in favor.

Greg announced that Terrence Gallagher, former co-chair, had rolled-off the committee to serve as chair of the Parks & Rec committee, and that a new vice chair would be announced after the vacant Ward 3 council seat is filled on the City Council.

Presentations

Greg introduced guest speaker Jamie Green of Plug-In KC. Jamie provided an overview of Plug-In KC's charter to drive down greenhouse gas emissions in the KC metro area with a focus on vehicle emissions through outreach and communications on the benefits of electric vehicles (EVs) to educate local stakeholders and to facilitate installation and propagation of necessary supporting infrastructure. Plug-In KC is an extension of Climate Action KC and is partnering with Evergy and local municipalities, with an initial emphasis in Johnson County, KS along with intent to expand into the Missouri side of the metro. Plug-In KC has received \$1.4M in Federal funds as part of an 80/20 match program in Year 1 of the initiative, with 2 years remaining in the current program. The only project being funded in Prairie Village in Year 1 is an EV charging station to be installed at the Corinth Library.

Future funding is available to support EV infrastructure construction costs for municipalities only. Municipalities with 'shovel ready' projects can apply for Level 2 charging stations and above, although expectations are that most future projects will be for fast chargers. Projects are reviewed and approved by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) based on scoring system criteria that favors multi-use installations, solar capabilities, low-income neighborhoods, etc. The window is open until sometime in April to submit letters of intent to MARC. PV is already currently pursuing associated funding as part of the upcoming city hall renovation project.

Jamie further expounded upon a variety of associated programs and initiatives including the National EV Initiative (NEVI), Federal tax credits, Evergy rebates, benchmarking other city programs including St. Louis, and efforts to work with Ford and GM to lobby for more EVs.

Old Business:

2025 Budget

Greg briefly reviewed the committee's 2025 proposed budget and asked for last-call input on any changes or additions. None were proposed. Greg also noted that the current city budget already includes Phase II of the city's climate action plan.

Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Greg reported that the mayor had once again signed-off on the monarch pledge for 2024 and extended a note of appreciation for the associated efforts by Johanna, Nathan, and Piper. Piper initiated a discussion about ideas to foster further education regarding the pledge. Input from the committee included suggestions for giveaways / incentives at Village Fest such as monarch habitat plantings and funds to cover costs for residential monarch weigh station certification fees. Other ideas included signage and/or a demonstration at Village Fest of what constitutes a monarch weigh station, which is a plot dedicated for milkweed and other native plants that support the monarch's migration. It was also noted that Prairie Hills in Ward 3 has a number of certified weigh stations and that the subdivision itself has been certified. Greg asked that the monarch sub-committee further develop proposed logistics for future consideration.

Village Fest

Greg presented an initial draft plan for 2024 Village Fest involvement based on the 2023 event and associated lessons learned including layout, activities, and volunteer staffing levels. It was noted that all stations and activities from 2023 were a big success with the exception of the EC information table, which received very little traffic and interest. Greg noted that the Tree Board had expressed an interest in participating with the EC at Village Fest in 2024, and Rick also mentioned that Plug-In KC has expressed a similar interest. There was general consensus in support of an integration with both organizations although ideally, they should sponsor an interactive activity and provide commensurate volunteer support. Greg indicated he would follow up with the Tree Board accordingly, and likewise, Rick mentioned that he would follow-up with Plug-In KC to see if they can provide such support and/or whether they'd be interested in hosting their own separate space. However, those future discussions with Plug-In KC would need to include the Village Fest committee. Further discussion regarding volunteer levels concluded that an increase was needed for the kid's craft activity to 3-4 volunteers per shift. Additional discussion centered on materials needed including added signage, seed-ball supplies and perhaps a mock-up demonstration of a monarch weigh station. The committee also discussed the possibility of providing 'Recycle Right' magnets or stickers to as a give-away to facilitate communication of recycling do's and don'ts.

Ashley indicated that she would not be available this year to coordinate supplies. Piper volunteered to create a SignUpGenius form to arrange for coordination of volunteer sign-up. The signup should first be circulated amongst EC members and their friends and family. If that doesn't yield enough support the committee will then consider a public solicitation for additional volunteers.

Greg noted that he'll send out an updated Village Fest plan to the committee members for review and feedback.

New Business

No new business

Announcements

The next EC meeting is on April 24th; Nathan is to serve as recording secretary.

The deadline for the May / June Village Voice is April 5th

The guest speaker for April is JoCo Commissioner Becky Fast on landfill capacity and waste diversion initiatives.

Piper announced that Tomahawk Elementary hosted a STEAM night on March 21, at which EC members presented a beekeeper demonstration and monarch photo prop, both of which were very well received.

Ashley announced she had updated the Environmental Committee's webpage. Committee members were asked to review and provide input.

Ashley reported that she promoted posts soliciting volunteers for the Overland Park Recycling Extravaganza. The promotion ran from March 22 through March 27 for a total of \$50. It reached 2,400 accounts and generated 268 link clicks.

Adjourn: Magda made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Penny seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.