

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Ficek called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m., and at his request, Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer called the roll.

Present: Chair Bryant Ficek and Members Daniel Fergus, Allison Luongo, Des Mueller, Carson Bauer, and Sarah Rudolf

Absent: Vice Chair Edwin Hodder, Member Jarrod Cicha, and Youth Commissioner Alexi Jendro (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer Jennifer Lowry, Environmental Manager Ryan Johnson, and Sustainability Specialist Noelle Bakken

2. Public Comments

3. Approval of November 26, 2024, Meeting Minutes

PWETC commissioners submitted comments and corrections to the draft minutes before tonight's meeting, which were incorporated into the draft presented in the meeting materials.

Motion

Member Fergus moved, Member Mueller seconded, approval of the November 26, 2024, meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Communication Items

Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated January 28, 2025.

Mr. Freihammer indicated that the City Council discussed the new maintenance facility and delayed the sales tax decision for further public input and review. He noted that an RFP will be presented to the Council in February for the license center, and a committee, including members from all commissions, will be formed to oversee the design process. A final assessment hearing for County Road B is scheduled for March or April.

Mr. Freihammer updated the Commission on the Hamling Avenue Project and explained it would include a mill and overlay, water main improvements, and a new pathway.

Mr. Freihammer indicated that the Twin Lakes phase two and the Lake Owassa lift station were moving forward. The sewer lining and booster station phase four were being re-evaluated, and the Wayfinding signage project was underway. Twenty-four locations were identified, and installation was planned for May. The lighting improvements on Dale Street Tunnel and the new street lighting policy have been implemented.

Mr. Freihammer updated the Commission on County and MnDOT projects, including Dale Street, new lights, and mid-block crossings. Hamlin Avenue project includes storm sewers with a shutdown expected in the summer. County Road D and C4 projects were ongoing with specific council instructions. He updated the Commission on MnDOT preliminary plans for the Snelling design project for 2026 and Metro micro Roseville area kickoff and G line planning progress.

Sustainability Specialist Bakken updated the Commission on the recycling contract with a new vendor that is expected to start in July. She noted that a solar and public buildings grant was awarded for the city's booster station update, and a 40-kilowatt array will be added to the roof. She indicated that three households were recognized for the 2024 Sustainable Steward Award Program. She noted she was serving on a couple of work groups for the Minnesota State climate action framework update, one for climate equity and another for local government implementation.

Mr. Freihammer updated the Commission on other maintenance updates, including hiring new staff and managing water breaks.

Member Fergus indicated he noticed utility lines being replaced and wondered what that was.

Mr. Freihammer indicated Xcel was replacing a lot of polls that looked like they were rotting after an investigation of the polls.

Chair Ficek expressed his disappointment with the County Road C trail decision. He thought it was short-sighted and did not follow the plans they reviewed and recommended.

Mr. Freihammer discussed the Hamlin Crossing and Snelling project status with the Commission.

5. Ramsey County Environmental Services Center Update

Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer introduced Mr. Daniel Schmidt from Ramsey County Environmental Health, who provided an update on the Environmental Service Center opening on April 1, 2025.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the new center will include recyclable materials, food scraps, Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), electronic waste, and fix-it clinics. He noted that the food scraps pickup program will be rolled out in phases, with Roseville expected to start in 2026. The center will also feature a reuse store, community education programs, and sustainability features like solar panels and geothermal energy.

Member Fergus indicated he was excited to use the environmental service center. He wondered if there would be a regular fix-it clinic on site and if that would be a regular event.

Mr. Schmidt indicated the County was still working out what that would be, but there will be staff currently running the fix-it clinics that move to different sites. He noted the plan was to operate similarly to how the County was running the mobile sites but have a permanent location and host on a regular Saturday each month. He indicated the county's goal would be to expand the hours of operation and make it more available with a consistent time and space for people to show up for higher participation.

Member Fergus explained he was also excited about the food scrap pickup program and wondered how that would work.

Mr. Schmidt reviewed the county's process for food scrap pickup at the Environmental Service Center.

Member Mueller asked the recycling drop-off if the county will be offering plastic bag and film collection. She would like to see that provided across areas, and only a couple of places currently offer that.

Mr. Schmidt explained that that service in the State was temporarily shut down, but there is a different way to recycle plastic bags and lighter films. The county will collect these.

Chair Ficek wrapped up conversations and thanked Mr. Schmidt for the presentation.

Mr. Schmidt indicated the County would like to be able to give a full tour of the new building once the certificate of occupancy is approved.

The Commission thought seeing and being given a tour would be great.

6. Sustainability Super Meeting & Green Team Update

Sustainability Specialist Bakken provided an overview of sustainability efforts and goals.

Ms. Bakken explained that her achievements in 2024 included maintaining Green Step 5, adopting the Green to Go ordinance, and winning various awards. She also updated the Commission on solid waste and recycling, including data from cleanup and shredding days.

Ms. Bakken indicated the Green to Go outreach included informational letters, listening sessions, and in-person business outreach. She explained plans for 2025 included increasing residential recycling rates, recognizing compliant businesses, and promoting the food scraps pickup program.

Ms. Bakken discussed the participation in solar and non-solar rewards programs, noting a drop-off after the switch from Wind Source to Renewable Connect. She provided a graph showing solar and renewable energy permits year over year, which indicated an overall increase in solar adoption.

Ms. Bakken mentioned that solar energy was becoming more affordable and that more companies were offering services, which should continue to increase participation. Looking ahead to 2025, she emphasized the need to expand outreach to reduce energy burden and mentioned sending letters to homeowners about available programs and free home energy squad visits.

Ms. Bakken highlighted the partnership with Keystone Community Services to expand Mobile Food pickup areas and mentioned the continuation of the Energy Action Plan. She noted the city focused on business energy efficiency opportunities and working with partners to expand awareness. This was a key goal for 2025. She also stated that Roseville reached Green Step 5 for 2024 and was completing reporting for the Gold Leaf Program, which focused on climate action. She explained the bike plan was included as a community visioning project, and there might be physical awards for the work done.

Ms. Bakken discussed the shift from focusing on May for pollinator protection to a more sustainable yard care outreach throughout the year. To finalize the new approach, a meeting with the City Council is planned for some time in February.

Ms. Bakken indicated that climate action planning was a major focus for 2025, with the hope of receiving formula funding from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. A backup plan involves applying for a

Pollution Control Agency climate planning grant, and if received, the grant would be switched to an equipment voucher.

Ms. Bakken explained she served on several framework update groups for the State, including the Met Council Climate Natural Systems Technical Advisory Group and the Heat Pump Market Advisory Committee. She noted that the Heat Pump Market Advisory Committee surveyed contractors to understand barriers to adopting residential heat pumps. She explained she was also part of an electric vehicle charging infrastructure panel through the consulting firm SRF and the Great Plains Institute. The goal is to develop a climate equity advisory group with residents to ensure equitable engagement in the climate planning process.

Ms. Bakke explained she planned to assemble a staff work group to discuss climate action goals and ensure alignment across departments. A community survey will be developed to get feedback on climate change and the work being done. A climate action dashboard will be created on the city's website to show progress on goals and provide links to resources for residents. The dashboard will mirror the focus areas of the State climate framework to align with County and State goals.

Chair Ficek thanked Ms. Bakken for the information. He asked her to send the presentation to the Commission so he could review it.

Member Mueller indicated she was excited to see the dark skies topic listed because she felt people needed to become aware of the impact of light on circadian biology, wildlife, and everything around them. She thought it was very bright around the entire city and understood the value of the LED lights, but there were also flickers and other impacts to consider, such as how it impacted life forms. She thought it was essential to explore further.

Ms. Bakken indicated the city already has some dark sky-compliant policies in place. Still, most of the city's lighting policies address public and commercial lighting, so there is nothing for residential lighting. However, there might be some opportunities in the future. She noted she was also meeting with someone from the U of M to discuss potential student collaborations.

Member Fergus explained that the things mentioned were the goal of a fifty percent greenhouse gas reduction by 2050 and that Roseville was at thirty-five percent, which seemed great. Still, he wondered if that was for city operations or the city in general.

Ms. Bakken explained that most of these reductions come from electricity and energy usage. She thought the city had many opportunities for cuts in transportation and other areas. She indicated she was eager to get into the climate planning process because that goal is a little bit out of date, and they are now lagging behind the State's goals and many neighboring cities' greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. She indicated she would like to re-evaluate that goal, too, but also get more

up-to-date numbers because thirty-five percent is only as of 202, so there are not a lot of up-to-date numbers that cover the entire city versus city operations.

Member Fergus indicated that Ms. Bakken mentioned creating a landing page with a dashboard of things that have been done and things that residents could use. He thought that on the dashboard, if possible, there should be a sign-in and the ability to click the things the resident has done or will do or something that gives the person virtual pride, which could feed into the ability award.

Ms. Bakken thought that was a great idea. She did not know if it was technically possible, but she would check into it.

Member Rudolf congratulated the Commission on all the work done and the information given. She appreciated all that was happening and how Ms. Bakken emphasized the partnerships involved, either with other cities or community groups.

Chair Ficek concurred and thought the information was exciting. He also liked all of the data and the trends given in the report. He appreciated all the information.

7. Assessment Policy Discussion

Public Works Director Freihammer introduced the assessment policy discussion, focusing on abatement processes for public works projects.

Mr. Freihammer explained the current policy lacks specific guidelines for abatement, leading to a request for feedback on potential timeframes and income-based assessments.

The Commission discussed the pros and cons of different abatement models, including income-based assessments and fixed timeframes.

The Commission's consensus leaned towards a simple, year-based model with the option for property owners to request additional time if needed.

8. Items for Future Meetings

February 25, 2025, PWETC agenda:

- MOC Update
- Appointing PWET Member for MOC Engagement Committee
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Presentation
- Bike Plan

March 18, 2025

- Pavement Assessment Management

Future Topics

- Pathway Master Plan Updates

- Municipal Safety Plan

9. Adjourn

Motion

Member Mueller moved, Member Fergus seconded, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:51 p.m.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion carried.