

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION



Steve McGeehan
Commission Chair
sec@ci.moscow.id.us

Regular Meeting
~Agenda~

Kyle Steele
Staff Liaison
208-883-7133

<https://www.ci.moscow.id.us/551/Sustainable-Environment-Commission>

Tuesday
March 19, 2024

6:00 PM

Mayors Conference Room
1st Floor City Hall
206 E. 3rd St.

WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE

REGULAR AGENDA

1. **Approval of Sustainable Environment Commission February 20, 2024 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)**

Minutes presented for approval.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve the minutes as presented; approve minutes with amendments; or provide staff further direction.

2. **Public Comment and Response to Previous Comments (limited to 10 minutes)**

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Commission. Please state your name and city of residence for the record and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes.

3. **Sewage to Biogas**

A novel waste treatment to efficiently convert sewage to biogas. Professor Birgitte Ahring will discuss her research and a pilot program to more efficiently convert leftover sludge to biogas, an advance that could help communities lower their waste treatment costs while helping the environment. NOTE- Professor Ahring will present via Zoom.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Discuss and take action as deemed appropriate.

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4. Mayor's Earth Day Awards

The SEC will discuss nominations for the Mayor's Earth Day Awards.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Take action as deemed appropriate.

5. Booth at Art Walk

Sign-ups are open for commissions to have a booth at the Artwalk finale in June if the SEC is interested.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Take action as deemed appropriate.

REPORTS

1. City Sustainability Report- Kelli Cooper
2. Moscow High School Subcommittee Report – TBD
3. Climate Action Working Group – Tina Hilding

NOTICE: It is the policy of the City of Moscow that all City-sponsored public meetings and events are accessible to all people. If you need assistance in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability under the ADA, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator by phone at (208) 883-7600, TDD (208) 883-7019, or by email at adaordinator@ci.moscow.id.us at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting or event to request an accommodation. The City of Moscow is committed to ensuring that all reasonable accommodation requests are fulfilled.

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION



Steve McGeehan
Commission Chair
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Regular Meeting
~Minutes~

Kyle Steele
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208-883-7133

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Tuesday
February 20, 2024

6:00 PM

Mayors Conference Room
1st Floor City Hall
206 E. 3rd St.

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.

PRESENT: Victoria Seever; Gordon Wilson; Al Poplawsky; Julia Parker-Council Liaison; Asaph Cousins; Tina Hilding; Sam Gallaher; Sophie Gilbert

STAFF: Kelli Cooper; Tim Davis

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Approval of Sustainable Environment Commission January 16, 2024 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Minutes presented for approval.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve the January minutes as presented; approve minutes with amendments; or provide staff further direction.

Tina moved to approve the January 2024 minutes, and Al second to approve minutes as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. **Motion carried.**

2. Public Comment and Response to Previous Comments (limited to 10 minutes)

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Commission. Please state your name and city of residence for the record and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes.

Nick says his group has created a draft climate emergency declaration in resolution format and are waiting for more public input before presenting to SEC.

3. Sewage to Biogas

A novel waste treatment to efficiently convert sewage to biogas. Professor Birgitte Ahring will discuss her research and a pilot program to more efficiently convert leftover sludge to biogas, an advance that could help communities lower their waste treatment costs while helping the environment. NOTE- Professor Ahring will present via Zoom.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: discuss and take action as deemed appropriate.

Presentation postponed.

4. Food Waste/Composting Options (ACTION ITEM)

Update from Asaph on a possible letter to the council regarding food waste/composting options.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve the letter as presented; approve with amendments; or provide further direction.

Asaph reached out to University of Idaho on their compost program. While currently their facility doesn't have the capacity for more waste, they are planning on another proposal to the State of Idaho and federal funds to ask for a larger facility and are interested in partnering with the City on this. The U of I suggested SEC ask the City Council to do a feasibility study.

Inland North Waste does have the space and infrastructure to house a compost/waste program.

The group decided on scratching curbside from the letter and leaving it as just citywide composting program.

There are a few minor changes to the letter. Such as typos and updating the signature to reflect the whole group support and not just Steve.

Tina moved to approve the letter, and Al second to approve letter as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. **Motion carried.**

5. Support for Pollinator Summit Film (ACTION ITEM)

Kelli will discuss the Pollinator Summit Film and the potential for the SEC to sponsor this year's film. The cost of sponsorship (licensing) is \$200.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve financial support of the film; approve with amendments; or provide further direction.

Al moved to approve sponsoring the film, and Sam second to approve sponsoring film.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. **Motion carried.**

1. Mayor's Earth Day Awards

The SEC will discuss nominations for the Mayor's Earth Day Awards.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: take action as deemed appropriate

Kelli will nominate City of Moscow Community Development Department, Tammy Gray with Ecodriver program work, Paul Kimmel and John Kimberling. Steve would like nomination blurbs prepared for the March meeting so everything can be compiled to present to the Mayor for the awards to be presented at April's City Council Meeting.

REPORTS

1. City Sustainability Report- Kelli Cooper

Kelli is finishing up the 2022 greenhouse gas inventory. Conversations with U of I around their conservation plan. Meetings with Sarah Dawson at the U of I around sustainability. The city is receiving two rebates for the two electric vehicles recently purchased.

2. Moscow High School Subcommittee Report – TBD

None.

3. Climate Action Working Group – Tina Hilding

Tina will be working on a generic letter for builders and developers with how they can save money for themselves and clients with more sustainable options. Community news columns are continuing. The next few months will feature: Energy audits for dummy's by Mac in March, wisescape and water column in April, prioritizing where to start (with your sustainability journey) in May, June will be on saving gas or electric, and July is multi modal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion over the accessibility for biking and walking from the many new developments into town. The commission proposed talking to Pathways commission on this concern.

UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

1. Next SEC meeting set for March 19, 2024

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM



Steve McGeehan, Chair *(or stamped by Deputy City Clerk)*

Subject: Proposal for the Implementation of a City Composting Program

Dear Members of the City Council,

The Sustainability and Environment Commission (SEC) would like to request that the Moscow City Council investigate the opportunity of initiating a citywide curbside pickup composting program.

The SEC has heard support for this type of composting program from presentations by city employees and Inland North Waste as well as support from some downtown business owners. The city has investigated composting programs and even initiated pilot programs in the past. A composting program could provide significant environmental and economic benefits for the city, reducing costs of transporting trash to the Oregon landfill and providing compost that can be sold to individuals within the community and be used in city parks and open areas.

There are several examples of composting programs on that Palouse including at our two largest universities. The University of Idaho has recently invested in a bioreactor from Washington-based [Green Mountain Technologies](#). Similar technology from this company is also used by Washington State University's composting program for food scraps and agricultural waste. These large-scale composting systems provide local examples of successful programs that the city can potentially leverage.

The City of Moscow has much of the needed infrastructure to initiate this type of program including the collection, pickup, transport, and space to house a large composter. We urge the City Council to consider supporting a feasibility study to gain further insights and data on the potential cost and benefits of a curbside pickup composting program.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve McGeehan
Chair, SEC