

Indianola Sustainability Committee

Thursday, June 1, 2023

5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

Present: Kathie Farris, Steve Gray, Bill Howard, Susan Lathrop, and Jon Vernon

Absent: Anita Christensen and Rita Bresnan

Chris DesPlanques, IMU

Public: Al Farris, Kari Carney, Margaret Vernon, and Malcolm.

1. Call to Order: Bill Howard brought the meeting to order.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Old Business

A. Sustainability Fair: The group agreed that the fair went well. We patted each other on the back for the accuracy of our budgeting.

4. New Business

A. Kari reported that Jay Byers, the new Simpson president, would take over July 1, 2023. There was agreement that he will be agreeable to Sustainability. Kari hopes to get a future meeting set up with Mr. Byers. She would make him aware of this committee and test his interest in sustainability issues.

B. There was a great deal of discussion about solar. Al suggested that the committee can educate the council and ourselves about the advantages of solar for Indianola. Kari told of several nearby communities that are working on expansion of solar including Perry, Des Moines, Johnston, Urbandale, Fairfield, etc. The Indianola Methodist Church has plans for solar.

Group discussion about various other cities which have taken steps in the implementation of solar projects and other methods of energy conservation and the cost savings they are seeing as they purchase of EV's for their various departments, etc.

There was a discussion of the council and the bond issue which needs to be delayed because of changes in the state law. There needs to be discussion as the project moves forward.

Bill and Steve plan to visit with the city manager about solar and the new building and the best steps we can offer him and the council on sustainability issues. Also, the committee could encourage the Council to be open to sustainable design concepts which the architectural firm [OPN] might provide in their work on a new design.

Chris reported on the 4.1 megawatt solar field that will be going in at the old water plant. The electricity from this will go into the IMU grid. The city may be restricted in putting up more solar but individuals still can.

build any more solar, but individuals still can. There is a 30% grant to help individuals. No negative reaction by neighbors around use of solar at water treatment plant.

C. Potential Projects: It was decided that Kari would set up a visit for the committee to learn about the Perry program. Then the committee would set up a Webinar/ study session presentation for the city council illustrating potential savings for the city with solar.

5. Adjourn

Jon moved and Kathie seconded that the meeting adjourn. All agreed.

Next meeting: Thursday, July 6, 2023, 5 p.m.