



**CITY OF ANOKA
WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES – JULY 12, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order by Member Hain at 5:05 p.m. in the Committee Room of Anoka City Hall.

ROLL CALL Board Members present: Members Jan Call, Marijo Hain, Eileen Rathbun and Sue Dergantz. Chair Cheryl Knapek arrived at 5:15 p.m.

Absent: VC Vicki Violet and Member Leslie Ganser

Staff present: Pam Bowman, Recycling Manager

Bowman said that Leslie Ganser had sent in her resignation today. The resignation will be officially accepted at a future City Council meeting. The vacancy will be announced once that resignation is accepted by the Council.

APPROVAL OF MAY 10, 2023 MEETING MINUTES – Member Rathbun called out an error in the minutes; last paragraph under Communications noting that “Bowman said as long as they don’t crinkle and stretch” should be changed to ...as long as they stretch...” With that noted change, a MOTION was made by Call, SECONDED by Rathbun to approve the May 10, 2023 minutes as presented.

5 Ayes – 0 Nays Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Subcommittee Reports.

- **Multi-Unit Program.** Bowman said she reached out in June via email to two properties; Elmwood and Rainbow Plaza. She said she has not received a response. Her suggestion from this point forward is to send out letters from the WRRB to all apartments offering resources. Hain said she agrees with that. Chair Knapek hoped it would generate responses. Bowman said she will send a draft letter to Members Dergantz, Hain and Call, since they are the subcommittee on this item and then send the final letter to properties in August.
- **Organics Program.** Call said she encouraged one of her neighbors to join and they did. Bowman thanked her for doing so. Bowman said she has about 8 of the kits left and when those are gone, she will begin using the new kits. She shared a sample of the new kits. Chair Knapek commented that they are smaller, but will still hold the bags. Bowman said they don’t lock as strong as the other ones, but they do remain closed when the handle is upright. Bowman said to date there at 168 participants. She said some are from Andover, Oak Grove, and Ramsey noting that all of them said the site location was convenient for them as they drive by the site often.

Dergantz said she has been watching the supply of bags. Bowman thanked her for her help. Dergantz also said that someone left a box of used fireworks and she removed them. Bowman said someone also left a large plastic tote on the side of the dumpster and someone put a large cardboard box in the dumpster. She said if this continues

she will send out a notice to all participants; however, she believes these items may not be from participants.

- **Soles4Souls Program.** Rathbun reported that Peterson Shoes is still collecting and all is still rolling along. They did not have a weight yet to report.
- **We Read & Recycle Books Program.** Chair Knapek said she saw the library installed behind City Hall and said it looks great. Bowman mentioned that Public Services preferred the door of the library face City Hall so those stopping to get books won't block bike riders and those walking.

Bowman said the Kindness Rock Garden group has offered to manage the library by keeping it stocked, making sure the books are family-friendly and coming up with themes on a weekly or monthly basis. They will promote it through their Facebook page.

Bowman said the Kindness Rock Garden group thought that the painter that is creating the mural in the tunnel may offer to paint the library. After discussion it was determined that the members preferred the wood not be painted, as it is cedar, and should remain natural. Bowman said she will pass that decision along to the group.

A plaque will be placed on the library post in late summer, early fall.

Updates.

- **Spring Recycling Event Follow-Up.** Bowman reported the following weights:
 - Clothing = 1 ton
 - Cardboard = 860 lbs.
 - Scrap Metal = 1.62 tons
 - Paper Shred = 2.13 tons
 - Scrap from tire rims = 1.6 tons
 - Appliances = 2.98 tons
 - Bulbs = 833 lbs.
 - Mattresses = 5.32 tons
 - Ballasts = 256 lbs.
 - Batteries = .503 tons
 - Electronics = 4.77 tons

Chair Knapek asked Bowman if she had yet received the tonnage from the garage sale reuse event. Bowman said Anoka County reps have not yet responded with the information.

- **Summer Curbside Recycling Event.** To date only three residents have signed up. Bowman said the rep at JRs Advanced Recyclers said it is typical for people to sign up at the last minute. Bowman said she continues to promote it.
- **Spring into Summer Event.** Bowman thanked Dergantz for volunteering her time and hosting a booth at the event. Dergantz signed up four people for the organics program that evening of June 21st.
- **Anoka Riverfest & Craft Fair Report.** Chair Knapek explained how the set-up of the containers was handled. Bowman thanked her for her and her husband's help noting that more volunteers had been needed.

Bowman said the results included only five bags of compost, each of which was not even ¼ full. She said the

organics dumpster she ordered was \$99. Recycling bags were clean and there were seven of them collected from the food vendor area, none of which were full.

Bowman provided the names of the volunteers that helped, including Member Rathbun. There were two volunteers from 8-12 (along with help from Chair Knappek and her husband for bin setup) and two volunteers from 3/3:30-5 p.m. The two in the morning and two in the afternoon monitored the bins for contamination. It was realized that the food vendors were not using the bins much and that the majority of the stuff collected came into the bins at the end of the event. Bowman said some vendors left their cardboard behind for the volunteers to handle, too, which was not part of the program. Bowman said she worked until 7:30 p.m. cleaning up, transporting bins back to city hall and hauling bags and cardboard. When Riverfest organizers were done with their clean up, they helped Bowman haul the items back to City Hall, which saved a lot of time.

With the use of Public Services to haul 38 bins to/from Anoka County Parks in Andover, plus staff time and volunteers' time and efforts, the results were not worth the amount collected. Chair Knappek agreed. Bowman said she hadn't planned to work so much with the recycling/composting because she was at Riverfest under her communications role and also had to assist the Heritage Preservation Commission with their booth set up and access to their supplies. She suggested next year if the board wishes to proceed with this effort, someone will need to volunteer to manage it from start to finish with the help of at least 6-8 volunteers.

- **RAW Newsletter – Summer Edition.** Chair Knappek told members they should have received their newsletter in the mail. It was mailed in late June/early July. Bowman said she also sent it through other communications tools and added it to the city website. Bowman said former member Diane Grinde suggested the next issue include that greeting cards are not recyclable. Dergantz said that is not true. Bowman said she would confirm before adding it to the newsletter.
- **Coats Donations Program.** Chair Knappek noted that Bowman shared the WRRB's response with Liz McFarland and that McFarland will let this idea rest due to the coat collection saturation.
- **Concerts in the Park.** Bowman noted that in the past the members had discussed hosting a booth at Concerts in the Park. Bowman suggested a better option would be the Farmers Market on the Rum because food scraps relate better to that event. Dergantz said she enjoyed hosting the booth during the Spring into Summer event which was located at the market simultaneously. She said she had good conversation with people and received a good response. Chair Knappek said if anyone wishes to host a booth at a future market to contact Bowman. Hain asked how far in advance they would need to notify Bowman. Bowman said by Tuesday of any week.
- **Night to Unite.** Dergantz said she is no longer able to attend Night to Unite at George Enloe Park. She inquired if anyone else would be interested in attending. No one present was able to attend. Bowman said she could try to get information out through the Police Department to share with the groups to encourage them to recycle and that bins are available through Anoka County. Chair Knappek said most groups will probably have their own recycling bins, regardless. Members decided it was not necessary to pursue this.
- **Plastic Bag Program.** Bowman said the two benches, one earned and one purchased, were both now installed at Rudy Johnson Park. Plaques were discussed and Bowman will move forward and purchase the plaques. Bowman said the Public Services/Parks Department purchased two additional benches which sit inside the warming house.

Recycling Center Discussion – Bowman presented one option of an area in the industrial park that the city owns and currently leases to a private company. In talking with the Community Development Director, this site might be worth pursuing if Council wishes to move forward with a recycling center. After some discussion, it was determined that this

topic will need to go to Council for direction on how to proceed.

NEW BUSINESS

Promotional Items

- Bowman asked members if they would consider contributing \$250 towards reusable bags for the Farmers Market on the Rum. MOTION made by Dergantz and SECONDED by Hain to contributed \$250 of SCORE funds to the reusable bags for the Farmers Market on the Rum.

5 Ayes - 0 Nays – Motion Passed

- Rathbun recommended the purchase of coloring books to give to children at events. Bowman said she still has some boxes of soy crayons which can also be handed out. MOTION made by Dergantz and SECONDED by Rathbun to purchase 250 coloring books at the price of \$160.

5 Ayes – 0 Nays – Motion Passed

COMMUNICATIONS

2023 Meetings & Activities Schedule. Chair Knappek reviewed the schedule with the members. No changes.

General Recycling Questions

- Chair Knappek asked about the can trailer at Better Values Liquor store. Bowman said it was just emptied by Public Services and earned about \$110 for the Waterfowl for Warriors program and collected 280 lbs. of aluminum.
- Rathbun asked if a recycling cart was placed at Akin Riverside boat launch. Bowman said the Public Services Department said there is one there.
- Call asked if pill bottles are recyclable; yes. Call asked if it is still true that any recyclable item smaller than a credit card should not be recycled curbside; yes.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m. on a MOTION by Hain and SECONDED by Dergantz.