

**MEETING OF THE ELK RIVER  
ENERGY CITY COMMISSION  
HELD AT ELK RIVER CITY HALL  
UPPERTOWN CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008**

Members Present: Vance Zehringer, Mayor Stephanie Klinzing, John Setala, Ron Touchette, Denny Chuba, Susie Overholser, Todd Berreman, Bruce Sayler, Maureen Griffiths, Arnie Engstrom

Members Absent: Stephen Rohlf, Bryan Adams

Staff Present: Rebecca Haug, Environmental Administrator  
Nicola (Nicki) Blake-Bradley, Environmental Technician  
Jeff Gongoll, Community Development Director  
Lisa Kelleher, Permit Technician  
Cathy Mehelich, Economic Development Director

Others Present: Barton Wells, Ethanol Technology of Minnesota

The regular meeting of the Energy City Commission was called to order by Chair Zehringer at 1:33 p.m.

1. **Approve October 15, 2008 ECC Agenda**

Environmental Administrator Haug added several items to the agenda regarding an update on RRT (Resource Recovery Technologies), League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) update, and LMC State of Cities Report. Mayor Klinzing added discussion of anaerobic digesters and a photovoltaic contact from Germany. Chair Zehringer added an update on the fluorescent light bulb collection program.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TOUCHETTE AND SECOND BY MAYOR KLINGZING TO APPROVE OCTOBER 15, 2008 AGENDA WITH CHANGES. ALL IN FAVOR.  
MOTION CARRIED.

2. **Consider September 17, 2008 ECC Minutes**

MOTION BY MAYOR KLINGZING AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BERREMAN TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **Elect Vice Chair**

Chair Zehringer opened nominations for vice chair of the Commission. Environmental Administrator, Haug stated there are not a lot of obligations as vice chair unless Vance is absent. Chair Zehringer nominated Commissioner Setala for the position. Commissioner Setala accepted the nomination.

MOTION BY MAYOR KLINGZING AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TOUCHETTE TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED. CHAIR ZEHRINGER CALLED FOR THE VOTE. ALL IN FAVOR.  
Congratulations to Commissioner Setala for becoming vice chair.

**4. Presentation by Bart Wells-Ethanol Technology of Minnesota**

Mr. Wells gave a presentation regarding retrofitting existing vehicles to be able to run on ethanol only, mix fuels, or switch back and forth with gasoline. He has been in business since 2003 and provides a 3 year, unlimited guarantee on his invention. A typical vehicle running only E-85 receives approximately 25% less fuel efficiency than with gasoline. Vehicles using his retrofit require less oil changes and are able to have the same fuel economy or even slightly better gas mileage than that of gasoline. This is because an oxygen sensor is used to determine what mixture or blend is needed. The vehicles also run cooler and “more lean and clean” with ethanol.

The biggest issue facing this company is the size of the retrofit unit which sits under the hood (and has a switch for the interior of the car). An effort is being made to reduce the size of the unit as small as possible. It poses no problems for trucks, but cars are a challenge. Mr. Wells stated that he has a considerable back log of orders, but he’s interested in working with the City of Elk River for city fleet vehicles to use as a demonstration. Costs for retrofitting a 4, 6, and 8-cylinder vehicle are \$299, \$349, and \$400 respectively. Anyone is welcome to visit the shop here in town and may drive a demonstration vehicle if interested.

This company may be discussed with the Project Conserve group.

**5. “Project Conserve” Update**

Commission Haug informed us that there were 124 applicants for “project conserve.” Fifteen of the applicants were non residents and therefore cut from the group immediately. A total of 40 applications were selected and 30 will be used with the remaining 10 being held in reserve in case someone backs out. The kick-off meetings will be held on October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Uppertown Conference room. The applicants chosen included a variety of families in the number per household as well as the size of the home. Mayor Klinzing encouraged the commissioners to consider coming to the meetings to meet the participants.

**6. 2009 Energy Expo**

Chair Zehringer asked for volunteers for the subcommittee. A date still needs to be set for the Expo as well as the location to be held. A facility that can hold a larger number of people is necessary since the City Hall campus was not successful. Commissioners Chuba, Touchette, and Griffiths expressed tentative interest in participating.

**7. Energy House Make-over**

Commissioner Chuba informed the group that the Energy House III was sold. He added the first question regarding remodeling an existing house in place of building a new energy house is “who’s paying for it?” with the next questions being whether there is a decent lot and if a loan can be procured. He questioned whether a Project Conserve participant may be interested in remodeling. Commissioner Chuba would be willing to discuss possible reasonable alterations with Project Conserve participants. Commissioner Engstrom concurred that

retrofitting an existing home may be an “easier sell” in the future rather than a completely new construction project.

**8. Zenn vehicle update**

Community Development Director Gongoll and Environmental Administrator Haug test drove a ZENN (Zero Emissions No Noise) vehicle in the Twin Cities. It is a completely electric car which is smaller than a Ford Focus but larger than a golf cart. They’re made in Canada. The only potential drawback is that they are designed for inner city driving since the maximum speed is 40 mph. Commissioner Sayler stated that the company is working on a “fast” version. The cost is approximately \$16,000 - \$20,000 per car. A representative will be invited to a later meeting (possibly December).

**9. Home Depot Display**

Environmental Administrator Haug gave a reminder of the Energy Fair that Home Depot will be hosting on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. The Energy City display will be set up. Any commissioners with materials to place at the booth should give them to Rebecca or Nicki. If there are further questions regarding this you can contact Margaret Johnson at Home Depot.

**10. Other**

*RRT:* Environmental Administrator Haug stated that a person named Marty has been appointed temporarily by RRT to be their representation on the Commission. He was unavailable for this meeting but will attend future meetings. RRT will also be highlighted on “Eye on America” (CBS channel 4 during the evening news) throughout October.

*LMC:* Energy City was filmed and will be highlighted in a documentary on TPT channel on October 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. (depending upon the cable provider, this may be channel 17 or channel 2). Both Mayor Klinzing and Chair Zehringer were interviewed for the program.

*LMC State of the Cities Report:* Elk River was highlighted in the report. Environmental Administrator Haug stated that there were a few misquotes, including one that the City of Elk River doesn’t need money. Unfortunately, she was not allowed to proof the report before it went out to cities so there was no way to correct the mistake. However, she noted that Energy City is finally being recognized on a larger scale for the efforts that have been done so far.

*Anaerobic Digester:* Senator Jungbauer contacted Mayor Klinzing and asked whether there is any interest on the part of Energy City in installing an anaerobic digester. Discussion followed that a response should be made from Energy City. Chair Zehringer and Environmental Administrator Haug will work on a response.

*Photovoltaic Reporter:* Mayor Klinzing mentioned that she met a reporter for a photovoltaic magazine in Germany. This reporter would like to come to Elk River next May to visit and see what has been done. She extended an invitation, but informed him that the City would not be able to host him during the visit. This gentleman also works in conjunction with the United Nations (environmental section). His visit could be a way of getting more international recognition for Energy City.

*Landfill smells:* Mayor Klinzing stated that she brought information regarding a method of removing bad odors from the landfill. Commissioner Griffiths stated that the landfill would be interested in seeing or hearing about the method.

*Little People, Big World:* The edition featuring ECONAR will be aired next Monday, October 20<sup>th</sup> and will continue to have some component or comments for several episodes.

*Fluorescent light bulb program:* Chair Zehringer stated that Walmart has begun the collection and has placed boxes near the compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFL) and paint aisles. All bulbs 4' or smaller can be collected and Elk River Municipal Utilities will pay for the proper disposal. He added that he checked the box when he was there and there were only two bulbs in the box. Chair Zehringer encouraged the commissioners to bring in all their CFLs for disposal.

**11. Schedule Next ECC Meeting and Identify Agenda Items**

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. in Uppertown Conference Room. There will be two speakers, Jamie Burrell (with the photovoltaic company that installed the system at the newest demonstration site) and Maggie Mattacola from the RecycleMORE campaign.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Kelleher and Nicki Blake-Bradley