

**MEETING OF THE ELK RIVER
ENERGY CITY COMMISSION
HELD AT THE ELK RIVER CITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2007**

Members Present: Ron Bratlie, Jeff Gongoll, Ed Stoutenburg IV, Mayor Stephanie Klinzing, Rachel Leonard, Todd Berreman, Steve Rohlf, Gary Connett, Maureen Griffiths for Deb Walters

Members Absent: Bryan Adams, Vance Zehringer, Sharon Kampa, Susie Overholser, ,

Staff Present: Rebecca Haug, Debbie Huebner, Nancy Anderson

Others Present: Paul Motin, City Council Member
Judy Thommes, Center for Energy & the Environment

Meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by Vice Chair Ed Stoutenburg IV

1. Consider, February 21, 2007 ECC Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda:

- Mayor Klinzing – Report on Committee Hearing regarding Energy City Designation
- Jeff Gongoll – Handout from Minneapolis Star Tribune regarding energy
- Ron Bratlie – Item regarding membership

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KLINZING, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GONGOLL TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 21, 2007 ENERGY CITY COMMISSION AGENDA. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Consider January 24, 2007 ECC Minutes

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KLINZING AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BRATLIE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Presentation by Judy Thommes

Judy Thommes of the Center for Energy & the Environment discussed the history of the organization as follows:

Neighborhood Energy Project, - Workshops were conducted using CIP funds to provide weatherization and energy conservation options to residents. She noted that supplies were provided by Minnegasco.

She noted that in 1992, the organization branched off as a non-profit and since 1979, has provided energy audits for single family, multi-family, and commercial buildings. She cited Thrivant and a metro hospital. She stated that by investing \$185,000 Thrivant realized \$190,000 in savings in the first 10 months. The metro hospital invested 208,000 and saved 180,000 in one year.

Ms. Thommes noted that they have completed over 100 research projects. They were involved in XCel Energy's small business lighting program which saved 6,000kw. They no longer can do research for private companies using CIP funds. She stated that the average "payback" for energy investment is three years. Ms. Thommes noted that they also work with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in Neighborhood Revitalization (NRV), as well as doing policy work for the legislature on energy conservation issues.

Minnesota Energy Challenge – Ms. Thommes provided information on utilizing the website program to save energy. She noted that the program can be used by businesses, as well as individuals. She stated that the residential component offers rebates and programs to save money and energy. The site provides educational information for students. Ms. Thommes explained how the website promotes challenges, noting that over 3,700 residents and businesses have taken the challenge. Ms. Thommes explained that teams can include churches, schools, businesses and neighborhoods. She stated that the challenge addresses energy and cost issues such as home/business heating and cooling, driving, CO2 emissions, and suggests actions that can be taken to reduce energy use. She stated that the Challenge is constantly being updated when energy calculations are completed for items such as ground source heat pumps and appliances.

Commissioner Rohlf arrived at this time (2:05 pm.)

Ms. Thommes stated that they would be happy to work with the City in their Energy City efforts. She stated that the goal is for it to become natural to “just do it” when it comes to saving energy. Commissioner Klinzing stated she would like to see the number of Elk River participants increase (15 currently). She felt it would be helpful if users could get information off the website regarding how/where to get energy saving items, such as light bulbs.

4. Energy Expo Update

Environmental Administrator Rebecca Haug reviewed her February 21st memo, which provided an update on the April 21st Energy Expo. She noted that Doug Lien with Tri-County Solid Waste Commission will not be able to attend. Commissioner Gongoll suggested that Bill Hudson be contacted to speak at the Expo. She stated that twelve exhibitors have signed up. Ms. Haug noted that there will be no charge for non-profit exhibitors. The corn plastic travel mugs will be purchased, and staff is waiting for quotes on other materials. Ms. Haug noted that \$2,500 has been donated by Waste Management; \$250 from CenterPoint Energy; and a \$25 gift card from Target.

Commissioner Bratlie stated he has given two vendors' names to Ms. Haug.

Commissioner Klinzing noted that Councilmember Gumphrey has a friend who specializes in “green roofs”.

Commissioner Rohlf questioned how the vendors contact list was generated. Ms. Haug stated that the names and addresses were obtained from the Chamber of Commerce mailing list. Commissioner Rohlf suggested that the Energy City participants be contacted to exhibit at the Expo. He also suggested contacting Greg Holst of the Northwest Suburban Builders Association to see if he would be interested in a booth to provide information on the three Energy Houses in Elk River.

Ms. Haug noted that more brochures are available if anyone would like them to distribute.

Commissioner Bratlie asked if a ribbon-cutting ceremony would be included at the Expo, for the opening of the new school. Ms. Haug asked that he attend the March 6th meeting to discuss this item.

5. Federal Trademark Update

Ms. Haug noted that the application for the federal trademark was filed February 15, 2007. She stated that processing will take 18 – 24 months. Ms. Haug stated that it has been suggested that the City should then apply for an international trademark, as well.

6. Other Business

MN Great Award Ceremony

Ms. Haug stated that Elk River Energy City will be receiving two awards. Commissioners Klinzing and Kampa will attend the ceremony and accept the awards.

Commissioner Klinzing Item

Commissioner Klinzing stated that she and Commissioner Rohlf were present when Senator Jungbauer/Representative Hackbarth's bill to establish Elk River as Energy City was introduced, along with a huge Energy City bill package. She stated that the bill went to local review and there was a debate as to how many cities should be allowed the status of "Energy City". She explained that the designation would be in the same category as the state tree, state flower, etc.

Commissioner Rohlf stated that they did not have a chance to explain why the City was making the request, or what efforts the City has made, such as establishing an Energy City Commission, and the dollars that have been spent on Energy City projects.

Commissioner Klinzing stated that if Elk River is designated Energy City, the city needs to take responsibility as the place the state looks to for expanding energy efficiency.

Commissioner Connett suggested that the Commission do a "Google" search on energy conservation. From his searches, he has learned that the average household continues to use more and more energy. Also, the state of California has achieved "no growth" in energy use, and that Elk River as Energy City needs to work on achieving this same result. Mr. Connett stated that Elk River needs to be a leader in renewable energy, and the citizens need to be encouraged to make Elk River a leader in purchasing renewable energy. He stated that the legislature sees being a leader in energy as risky and controversial.

Commissioner Klinzing stated that the City Council has discussed at a worksession taking actions to promote energy conservation and renewable energy.

Commissioner Rohlf stated that he feels they need to develop a presentation to the legislature, providing the history and accomplishments. Commissioner Klinzing stated that the City Council will discuss this item at their March 12 worksession, and that the Council should be notified if the bill comes up with the legislature before then. She stated she felt it was important to inform them what the City has done and is willing to do to "earn" the Energy City designation.

Commissioner Connett stated that he feels everyone is becoming aware of global climate changes, and that cities are taking an interest in energy. He stated he feels the federal government needs to take the lead, but that they are not really doing anything. He stated the Energy Expo is a unique opportunity and he would like to show what a small city can do.

Commissioner Klinzing asked if the City of Elk River has ever had an energy audit. Commissioner Berreman stated that CenterPoint Energy and Elk River Utilities do energy audits for a small co-pay. The challenge is to fix those things that need to be fixed and this can be very expensive.

Commissioner Leonard stated that she had concerns with the thermal energy pumps and was unsure if she should push for the County to use them, when they construct their expansion. Commissioner Connett stated that the goal should be for LEED certified construction. Commissioner Bratlie stated that this type of system does not cost more, and saves in energy costs. Commissioner Rohlf noted that the LEED certification must be planned ahead, and the County would need an engineer that is familiar with this type of design.

Commissioner Connett noted that a \$42 million dollar grant was awarded to build 14 windmills.

Commissioner Bratlie Item

Commissioner Bratlie stated that he will be moving the Detroit Lakes area and will no longer be able to serve on the Energy City Commission. He noted the May meeting will be his last meeting. He asked if the Commission was interested in continuing representation from the school district. Commissioner Klinzing stated yes.

It was noted that Greg Padden of Target Corporation and Brian Burandt of Connexus are also interested in serving on the Commission.

Commissioner Gongoll Item

Commissioner Gongoll distributed copies of an article from the Star Tribune regarding the SeaDog System which uses the ocean's power to pump seawater to shore to turn hydroelectric generators or for desalination.

7. Schedule Next ECC Meeting and Identify Agenda Items

The next scheduled meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. at Twin Lakes Elementary School**. The May meeting will be a recap of the Energy Expo.

8. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Debbie Huebner
Recording Secretary