

**MEETING OF THE ELK RIVER  
ENERGY CITY COMMISSION  
HELD AT ELK RIVER CITY HALL  
ELK RIVER, MN  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2008**

Members Present: Todd Berreman, Bryan Adams, Stephen Rohlf, Denny Chuba, Rachel Leonard – Alternate for Arne Engstrom, Vance Zehringer, Susie Overholser, Jeff Gongoll, John Setala

Members Absent: Brian Burandt, Ed Stoutenburg IV, Mayor Stephanie Klinzing, Deb Walters

Others Present: Dan Jurkovich and Bob Nixon of ProProducts, Inc.

Staff Present: Nancy Anderson, Permit Technician  
Nicola (Nicki) Blake-Bradley, Environmental Technician  
Lisa Kelleher, Permit Technician

The regular meeting of the Energy City Commission was called to order by Chair Zehringer at 1:32 p.m. John Setala was welcomed and introduced as the newest commission member representing Great River Energy.

1. **Consider March 19, 2008 ECC Agenda**

Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley added two updates to Other, one from Commissioner Overholser on “Little People, Big World and one from staff concerning the City Council’s decision regarding changes to the ordinance (from last meeting). Chair Zehringer added several items to “Other” as well... an Energy House III update and a presentation by Commissioner Adams on Resource Conservation.

2. **Consider February 20, 2008 ECC Minutes**

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER ROHLF TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED WITH NO CHANGES. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **Election of Officers**

Commissioner Rohlf nominated Chair Zehringer and Vice Chair Stoutenburg for another term. Chair Zehringer questioned whether anyone else is interested in the position and questioned by-laws. He is willing to accept the position for one more year with the understanding that he will step down at that time. Vice Chair Stoutenburg was not available for comment on his position. Nominations were closed with no further commissioners being nominated. Commissioner Gongoll seconded the motion.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROHLF AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GONGOLL TO CONTINUE THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR POSITIONS FOR ANOTHER YEAR. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

4. **Presentation by Dan Jurkovich, ProProducts, Inc.**

Dan Jurkovich gave a demonstration of the ProProduct showing how the product saves energy and improves the customer cost. The demonstration explained how their product only uses what it needs to run, therefore being more efficient.

Commissioner Rohlf stated that Elk River Ford has the product and added that the software is what makes it stand out in his opinion. Elk River Ford is trying out the product prior to purchasing. The product makes motors approximately 40% more efficient by controlling “in-rush” (for energy savings of between 4 – 45% due to motor variability). Commissioner Rohlf commented that he may be able to report back to the Commission on energy savings once they have more data.

Commissioner Gongoll reminded Mr. Jurkovich that Elk River is Energy City and added an invitation to the company to choose Elk River as a headquarters for their operation. Mr. Jurkovich thanked the Commission and stated that they will certainly keep Elk River in mind when planning their final location.

5. **Energy Expo Update**

Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley discussed the memo attached with the packet. She informed the commission that 28 exhibitors are signed up (without the Energy City booths) and Walmart has pledged \$1,000 at the Watt level.

Spectrum High School students are midway through their projects and have some really interesting ideas (according to the school representatives) so it will be interesting to see the final results. The Energy City Commissioners will judge the Energy Innovations Contest at a special meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> at the school (at noon rather than the regularly scheduled time). Chair Zehringer questioned whether there should be a regular meeting the week before the Energy Expo (on the 16<sup>th</sup>).

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER GONGOLL AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER ROHLF TO ACCEPT THE SPECIAL MEETING AND MOVE THE REGULAR MEETING UP BY ONE WEEK. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

The subcommittee would like to make the gift certificate drawings a “must be present to win” situation, but the pads are already printed. Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley contacted the lawyer for the city to ask whether it is possible to make the change given that the City is a governmental unit. The lawyer said that it *can* be changed but the pads would have to be printed over again and his firm should review the changes to the rules. He added that the drawing pads are a necessity for liability reasons and the verbiage must be very clear as to where and when the drawing will be held (and then the schedule must be strictly adhered to). Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley stated that the subcommittee feels very strongly about this change and asked for feedback from the general commission. Costs were discussed.

Commissioner Adams expressed concern that the lawyers would respond in a timely fashion so that the drawing slips could be printed in time for the Expo. He also expressed concern about the legal fees for the review.

Chair Zehringer expressed his opinion that if it can't be changed for this Expo, that it certainly must be changed for the next. Commissioners Gongoll and Rohlf suggested getting an estimate from the lawyers and creating a "quantity not to be exceeded" when deciding whether to re-print and make the change for this year. An arbitrary amount of \$400 was suggested.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ROHLF AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GONGOLL TO REPRINT THE GIFT CERTIFICATE DRAWING PADS IF THE ESTIMATED AMOUNT (FOR TYPE CHANGES, LEGAL REVIEW, PLATE CHANGES, AND REPRINTING) DOES NOT EXCEED \$400. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

6. **Focus Group Update**

The subcommittee has met twice to discuss the ECC pilot project and to prepare items to discuss with the focus group. The pilot project will be discussed with the focus group at the next meeting on March 27, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at the City Hall. Commissioner Adams will do a presentation to the group regarding why we need to get serious about resource conservation. It may be desirable to have it at the Expo as well.

The pilot project will be presented to the public at the Energy Expo during the Utilities Presentations in the afternoon. A question was raised as to whether a section on Transportation should be added. General consensus was that it should be added. Commissioner Setala volunteered to put something together and bring it to the Focus Group meeting. The public will be asked to fill out a form if they are interested in participating in the pilot project. This will last approximately one year. The hope is to have a total of 30 residences participate throughout the project. For comparison sake, the participants must all be Elk River Residents.

7. **LMC Case Study Update**

Commissioner Rohlf worked on a League of Minnesota Cities Case Study questionnaire, which was very detailed and time consuming. He stated that they repeated the same question several times but in different ways. Chair Zehringer thanked Commissioner Rohlf for his efforts and stated that he felt Commissioner Rohlf did an excellent job on the questionnaire. Chair Zehringer commented that he would take the information that Commissioner Rohlf put together, add his own comments, and turn it in by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.

8. **Other**

*Energy House III update:* Chair Zehringer stated that the Conditional Use Permit for Energy House III expires on March 20, 2008. Tours will no longer be possible. The SNBA has not quite dissolved yet.

The House will go back to the bank. The Bank of Elk River (Jim Gesser [?]) has made an offer to Energy City to keep the house open if Energy City will pay the interest on the mortgage (approximately \$12,000 per year). Chair Zehringer requested discussion followed by a vote per a request from the Mayor.

A question was raised of whether the Energy House can be rented. It likely cannot be rented due to covenants. Discussion regarding the possibility of paying the interest followed. A comment was made that the Energy City Commission does not have a lot of resources and it may not be the best use of funds given what the Commission wants to do for Energy City.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ADAMS AND SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SETALA TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING UP THE BANK OF ELK RIVER'S OFFER DUE TO LACK OF A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND NO FUNDS AVAILABLE. NO VOTES AGAINST. MOTION CARRIED. COMMISSIONERS ROHLF AND CHUBA ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE.

*Library Signs:* Commissioner Chuba discussed the recent letters to the Editor of the Star News regarding the signage for hybrid vehicles at the library and questioned why the signs are there. Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley stated that it was a way of gaining points toward the Gold LEED Certification for the library and that hybrid vehicles have been seen parking in the spots. A question was raised as to whether a city staff response would be made. Chair Zehringer stated that he could write something from the Energy City Commission if Bill Maertz (Park and Recreation Director) will not be writing a response. Discussion with Mr. Maertz is necessary to make a decision.

*City Council Update:* Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley informed the Commission that the decision regarding the amendments to the bylaws was tabled at the last city council meeting due to concerns by several members regarding changing the SNBA's spot to be "an area builder". The council questioned how information would be disseminated to all builders in the area rather than just one. Discussion followed regarding keeping the SNBA on the Energy City Commission or whether the SNBA should be made members at large. A suggestion was made to postpone discussion of the amendment changes until May (after the Expo). Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley will get the current ordinance and proposed amendment by the May meeting.

Because the decision regarding the SNBA was tabled, the City Council decided to table the decision regarding the School District as well (for Ron Bratlie). Commissioner Berreman stated that Dr. Bratlie is currently working with a school district in the region regarding a SEE program (which teaches the kids about energy conservation).

*"Little People, Big World":* Commissioner Overholser mentioned that this Discovery channel program contacted ECONAR because reality shows must include alternative energy initiatives if upgrading homes, etc. ECONAR participated in the program as a "trade out" (equipment for advertising). The show will air in April on The Learning Channel (TLC). Commissioner Overholser will contact Environmental Technician Blake-Bradley of the date so that she can forward the information to the Commission.

*Resource Conservation:* Commissioner Adams presented his talk on Resource Conservation to the Commission concerning why we need to get serious about energy conservation, which he will also present at the Focus group meeting and the Expo.

9. **Schedule Next ECC Meeting**

The next ECC meeting will be held at Spectrum High School on April 9, 2008 starting at noon. This will be a special meeting so no additions to the agenda will be allowed. Topics included will be Agenda, Minutes, Expo Update, and Judging the Energy Innovations Contest.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Kelleher  
Permit Technician