

**EARTH ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
JULY 6, 2009**

The Earth Energy Environment Committee meeting was held on July 6, 2009, at North Royalton City Hall, 13834 Ridge Road. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Committee: Chair Vince Gentile, Dan Kasaris, Mike Farrell; Council: Larry Antoskiewicz, Gary Petrusky, John Nickell; Administration: Mayor Robert Stefanik; Service Director Kris Kamps; Other Attendees: Don Harris, Anne Reinkober, Paul Rodjom, Ashley Broadwater, Amanda Trompak, Lisa DelRio, Annelise DelRio, Ivan Hack, Jr., Joanne DuMound.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Kasaris **to approve the June 1, 2009 Minutes**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Wind Turbines

Mr. Gentile emailed to Council a copy of a draft resolution dealing with wind power. He said that the percentage numbers do not reflect the actual percentages. He said he feels we can draft a resolution encouraging First Energy to develop wind power using the freshwater wind farm in Lake Erie and not include the percentages. Mr. Gentile said First Energy is an expert in making cheap electricity with coal and the federal government is looking to make it more expensive to make electricity with coal because they want to use wind power and want to make wind power cost effective. Mr. Gentile said it was suggested that the percentages be removed and we encourage First Energy that as a provider they will take a leadership role in the region in developing wind power. He said there is language added into the resolution encouraging First Energy along with our state and federal officials to start the funding for this under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. He said as a region if we do not attempt to get some of this funding, they will spend it somewhere else.

Mr. Kasaris emailed some proposed language to Council that he thought they might want to incorporate into this resolution.

Mr. Gentile said if we pass this resolution, he would like to ask Mrs. Haller to copy all of the cities in the region and ask them to consider this or a version of it. He said we need this done not only to lessen the carbon output of this region but also the creation of domestic jobs to build these windmills.

Mr. Gentile said if everyone is in agreement, the percentage numbers can be removed from the proposed resolution. Mr. Farrell said he believes we need to remove the wording and prepare a resolution.

Mr. Antoskiewicz agreed but he would like to review this once it is drafted. Mr. Gentile said he will remove Section 1 and replace it with the proposed language from Mr. Kasaris then ask Mrs. Haller to email out to Council for their review. He said he would like to have this placed on the agenda for the July 21st Council meeting.

2. Recycling Program

Mr. Gentile announced that Anne Reinkober from North Royalton City Schools and the North Royalton Service Director, Kris Kamps were in attendance to discuss the recycling program. Mr. Gentile said he and other Council members have received feedback from residents on how they feel about the current recycling program in the city.

Mr. Kamps said that he and Mr. Gentile discussed using a container system rather than the blue bag system which is currently being used for recyclables. He said that the truck the Service Department currently uses has sorting bins but residents still need to pre-sort items. Mr. Kamps said he found a company that manufactures 18 gallon containers which can be labeled with the City of North Royalton logo and the appropriate recyclable item. These containers will cost approximately \$5.97 each if we purchase them in

bulk. Mr. Kamps said if the city goes with 3 containers per household which would not include a container for paper the cost would be \$170,000. If the city goes with 4 per household which would include a container for paper, the cost would be \$226,000. Mr. Gentile said he would like to see the city recoup their investment of these containers by increased participation in this program. Mr. Gentile said if we can add another 3,000 tons in recycling tonnage, we could recoup the investment in 1 ½ years with 3 containers per household and 2 years with 4 containers per household. Mr. Gentile said he looked at other cities in Cuyahoga County to see what they are doing differently to get to a higher participation number than North Royalton. He said he found that most of those communities have a higher frequency pick-up and they all provided their residents with some type of container. He said the container alone is not the answer as there are some communities who provide containers and their recycling program is failing. Mr. Kasaris asked if there is any grant money available to help with some of the cost. Mr. Gentile said we received \$34,000 about 3 years ago. Mayor Stefanik said we still receive \$3,000-4,000 per year.

Mr. Gentile said we need a public awareness campaign on recycling. He said the best place to start this program is in the schools so students can take this message back to their parents. He said as a community we need to decide if we are going to make an additional investment. Mr. Gentile said Mr. Kasaris sent his monthly newsletter to residents in his ward which included information on the recycling program. Mr. Kasaris received 80 responses from residents whose number one complaint was using the blue bags and the number two complaint was the bi-weekly pickup. Mr. Gentile said that when he spoke to Mr. Kamps about moving to a weekly pickup, Mr. Kamps said we would need to purchase an additional truck to be able to cover the city. Mr. Gentile said the other investment we would have to make would be to purchase the recycling containers. Mr. Gentile said we would need to budget an additional \$3,000 for extra recycling containers in the case of a lost or stolen container. Mr. Gentile said we are currently spending money on a program where we are not getting a lot of participation. He said we can either stay status quo or we can spend the money to make the program better. Mr. Gentile said the ultimate goal would be for the city to go from 30 percent to 50 percent of residents recycling. He said if this happens possibly at some point we can roll out a weekly recycle program. Mr. Antoskiewicz questioned whether the bin is any easier than the bag. Mr. Gentile said the communities that are reaching 45 percent plus in their recycling programs have provided some type of container to their residents. He said if we go to co-mingle, any value of the recyclables would plummet. He said we are currently in a co-op wherein we receive \$40 per ton on paper and said we do not want to give that up. Mr. Farrell suggested keeping the paper program the way it currently is and co-mingle the other recyclables. Mr. Kamps said co-mingling will cost more in a tip fee than we are currently paying. Mr. Gentile said if the city goes to a co-mingle program, we would have to liquidate the two sort trucks and purchase a rear compactor. Mr. Kamps said when he looked to outsource revenue recycling, the companies that wanted to pick-up the refuse, wanted the recycling program.

Mr. Farrell asked if our metals are segregated currently. Mr. Kamps said yes. Mr. Farrell asked if it would be cost effective if we handled our own recyclables, process them and sell them. Mr. Kamps said no. He said what we are using right now to separate our cans and what we are making when we take our aluminum in does not pay for the time and wages of the employees that are separating these items. Mr. Farrell asked where the product goes that is currently segregated. Mr. Kamps said we have someone pick these materials up then they get a percentage of the weight of that material. Mr. Farrell asked how increasing our recycle program by 20 percent would this pay for the cost of the program. Mr. Kamps said we would have to increase the participation by more than 20 percent. Mr. Kamps said according to Cuyahoga County, we were at 32 percent recycling that we did not put in to the landfill. He said that is about 55 percent participation throughout the city on average. He said we would have to get to about 100 percent participation in the city (households) in order to make this program cost effective. Mr. Farrell asked why the recycling facility will not take all of the plastic. Mr. Kamps said we used to get money for plastic, but we paid \$34,000 last year to get rid of the plastic. Mr. Farrell said there are companies who take muni scrap and pay people to take that material. He said he is going to find out where the closest recycling facility is to North Royalton and see if we can talk to them about taking plastic. Mr. Gentile said we need to make a decision if we are going to leave everything as is or put together a public awareness campaign to educate residents on recycling.

Mr. Gentile asked Ms. Reinkober for her thoughts on the recycling program. Ms. Reinkober said she feels using the bins will give this program more visibility in the community and residents will see that this is a priority in the city. She asked what kind of dollars the city takes in with the newspaper recycling. Mr. Kamps did not have an exact figure, but said it is quite a bit. Ms. Reinkober said the schools can help promote this program. Mayor Stefanik said he met with the new Superintendent of Schools and he said he will work with the city to get this information to the students.

Mr. Nickell said if we decide to go forward with this program, he would suggest purchasing these containers and also putting together some type of marketing program. He said we could possibly take an ad out in the newspaper for public awareness and get the information out in the schools. He also suggested placing signs on streets with the days the truck will be collecting on that street.

Mr. Petrusky is concerned that the bins may be too heavy for the elderly and asked if residents will still be able to use the blue bags. Mr. Gentile said the blue bag system will still be acceptable if we switch to bins, but the bins are there for those who want to use them.

Mr. Gentile said if we are going to introduce this program we need to spend the money and keep on top of this. He said we need to send out the message that recycling is a great thing. Mayor Stefanik suggested sending a message out with the quarterly water/sewer bill.

Mr. Petrusky suggested placing a display at Home Days to let people know we are going to be introducing this program.

Mayor Stefanik said BFI and some other companies sell the portable recycling cardboard boxes for special events. He suggested investing in these for this year's Home Days until the Boy Scouts have their recycling bins ready. Mr. Antoskiewicz showed the committee a picture of the type of recycling bin that the Boy Scouts want to make. Mr. Antoskiewicz said the Boy Scouts want to make 10 of these bins equipped with lids. Mr. Antoskiewicz said he is not sure if 10 will be enough, but said we may have the ability to move these from the soccer fields to the baseball fields depending on the season.

Mr. Gentile said he spoke with Mr. Kamps about containers for city property. He said the problem is that the Service Department does not have a piece of equipment to pick up a bin full of paper or glass or other recyclable material so we would have to invest in cans that sort these materials.

Mr. Antoskiewicz spoke to a representative from American Recycling to see if they wanted to help out with Home Days. The gentleman he spoke with said he was not sure if this is something they want to do because usually there is too much other garbage in the recycling bins at events like this. They are going to get back to Mr. Antoskiewicz. He also tried to call Republic, but he could not reach anyone. He will try Republic again at a later date. Mr. Antoskiewicz also spoke to a representative from Recycle Midwest who said he will bring out as many bins as we would like. He said they will recycle anything we would like them to. The only request they have is that we take the cans and empty the contents into the larger containers that he will drop off as well. The only charge we will incur is a \$35 pick-up charge.

Mr. Gentile said he feels that Home Days would be a great venue to kick off the recycling program.

Mr. Kasaris asked if this is something we can do as a pilot project beginning in one ward. Mr. Kamps said it would be difficult to choose which ward to start with.

Mayor Stefanik asked if there has been any thought to possibly charging residents for the bins if they want to use them for recycling purposes. He suggested selling them at Giant Eagle and Drug Mart. Mr. Kamps said the more bins we order, the better price we will get. Mr. Gentile suggested purchasing these containers and have them dropped at the Service Department and sell them at cost. He said this way they can be purchased at the Service Center as well as Giant Eagle and Drug Mart. Mr. Kamps said there are recycling programs in

communities where they are improving recycling participation by offering coupons from Lowe's and Home Depot. Mr. Kamps said he has been looking into this program. Mr. Gentile said there is a city in southern Ohio that uses this program and he said the bins are bar coded and when they are picked up the materials are weighed and recorded online. The resident can then go to that website and cash in their credits online and get their coupons in the mail.

Mr. Gentile said he feels Council has a lot to think about as far as how to move this program forward. He said if we are going to move forward with this it is going to cost money. He said we are going to have to invest money for public awareness and there will be incurred costs for weekly pickup and possibly a cost associated with the bins depending on which scenario we use.

Mr. Nickell suggested starting with the marketing materials and place the containers in the budget for next year. He said if we find the containers are working we can consider going to a weekly pickup.

Mr. Gentile suggested putting up a recycling display at Home Days. He said possibly having a survey available for residents so that we can get a better idea of how residents feel about the proposed program.

Mayor Stefanik suggested working closely with the schools and putting together an education program. He said possibly we can give the kids a pledge card to take home to their parents.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Watershed Council

Mr. Hack said the NEORS has given the Watershed Council the opportunity to apply for a \$20,000-30,000 grant which is to be used for operation funds and to help with coordinating projects. He said the Watershed Council is asking for funds from cities and government agencies. He asked Mr. Gentile to write a letter of endorsement on behalf of the City of North Royalton. Mr. Hack said the deadline to submit letters is Friday morning and the grant money will be rewarded in August.

Mayor Stefanik said he will ask the Engineering Department to write a letter.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Farrell to **adjourn the meeting**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.