MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023, 5:00 PM
In person at City Hall, Room 310.
Virtual attendance also available via Zoom.

A. ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION.

1. This item contains Zoom information, instructions, and a link to the Virtual Comment Form.

B. ROLL CALL.

1. Chair- Seth Hoffmeister; Vice Chair-Ned Dorff; Alder Mark Steuer; John Arendt; Amy Kox; Kaurie Mihm-PRF; Julia Noordyk; Christa Kananen; Mark Walter.

Present: John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Mark Steuer, Ned Dorff, Amy Kox, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

1. Approval of the Sustainability Commission meeting agenda for February 8, 2023.

Moved by Mark Walter, seconded by John Arendt to approve the agenda.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

1. Approval of minutes from January 18, 2023.

Moved by Ald. Mark Steuer, seconded by Mark Walter to approve the minutes.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

E. REGULAR BUSINESS.

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a grant opportunity for USDA Composting & Food Waste Reduction cooperative agreements.

Mark Walter discussed a USDA cooperative agreement opportunity to increase food composting to reduce the amount of food waste going to area landfills. Public-private partnerships were discussed. The floor was opened to members of the public, representing the Green Bay Botanical Garden and the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross.

Moved by Ned Dorff, seconded by Mark Walter to open the floor.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

Moved by Ald. Mark Steuer, seconded by Amy Kox to close the floor.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

Moved by Ald. Mark Steuer, seconded by John Arendt to receive and place on file.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

F. INFORMATIONAL.

1. Work Group Updates

Aldo Leopold Celebration is February 25 at the Brown County Central Library. Volunteers from the Sustainability Commission include Alder Steuer, Kaurie Mihm, Christa Kananen, Seth Hoffmeister, and staff liaison Melissa Schmitz. Set-up begins at 1:30PM and the event runs from 2PM-4:30PM.

G. ADJOURNMENT.

Moved by Ned Dorff, seconded by Mark Walter to adjourn.
Motion Passed.
Yes- Mark Steuer, Amy Kox, John Arendt, Seth Hoffmeister, Mark Walter, Ned Dorff, Julia Noordyk, Christa Kananen, No- None, Abstain- None.

VERBATIM MINUTES

[Seth] All right, let's get started. Item A: Zoom meeting information, check. Item B: roll call. Chair, Seth, I am here. Vice Chair, Ned Dorff.

- [Ned] Present.

- All right, Alder Mark Steuer.

- [Mark Steuer] I am here.

- [Seth] John Arendt.

- [John] Present.

- [Seth] Amy Kox.

- [Amy] Present.

- [Seth] Kaurie Mihm is not here. Did you hear from her? Okay, not excused. Julia Nordyk.

- [Julia] Present.

- [Seth] All right. And Christa Kananen.

- [Christa] Present.

- [Seth] And Mark Walter.

- [Mark Walter] Present.

- [Seth] All right. On to approval of the agenda for today's meeting, February 8th, 2023. Is there a motion to approve?

- [Mark Walter] I'll move.

- [Seth] By Mark Walter, Is there a second?

- [John] I can second.

- [Seth] I think, all right, John, we'll give it to you. All those in favor of approving the agenda, say aye.

- Aye.

- [Seth] All those opposed say nay. Agenda approved.

- [Melissa] Who seconded?

- [Seth] John. On to approval of the minutes from last meeting, January 18th. Do we have a motion to approve the minutes?

- [Mark Steuer] So motioned. By Alder Steuer, do we have a second?

- [Mark Walter] I'll second.

- [Seth] By Walter, Marks with the motions. All those in favor say aye.

- Aye.

- [Seth] Say nay. That is approved. All right. On to regular business: discussion and possible action regarding a grant opportunity for USDA composting and food waste production cooperative agreements. Is that you?

- [Mark Walter] That would be me.

- [Seth] Take it away.

- [Mark Walter] And yeah, so this is something that Melissa brought to my attention, courtesy of the mayor, and something that we've looked at for the last, that's been available for the last several years. But something that would fit in with our, our sustainability plan in terms of reducing food waste. So the last three years, US Department of Agriculture has had this composting and food reduction pilot project cooperative agreement program grant. It's, it's not technically a grant, it's actually cooperative agreement, which is, you can get into the details later, but it would help fund pilot programs with the goal of reducing well, generating compost, increasing access to compost for agricultural producers, reducing reliance on and limiting use of fertilizer, improving soil quality, encouraging waste management, permaculture business development, increasing rainwater absorption, reducing municipal food waste, and diverting residential commercial food waste from landfills. Those last two things are probably the most relevant for what we've talked about here and we've talked about before, that, you know, food waste represents about 25% of all the waste going into landfills, either pre-, you know, as part of agricultural production to stores to residential food waste that people are throwing out and institutional waste and so forth. So this program has a range of $45 to $300,000. The actual request notice of funding opportunity is not yet out for this year, but that was something that the mayor had brought up that it, he had heard from, what is it, the mayor's conference that they, that it will be released. It's typically in the past, it's been June to September application period. So the funding opportunity will go up at some point. There's a 25% match from the local level. It can be cash or in-kind and USDA is, is very involved in the process and that's where it's a cooperative agreement as opposed to a grant per se. So in a grant, they just give you money to do what you're going to do; in a cooperative agreement, there's a much higher level of involvement from the agency itself. They help you develop program, they make sure that it's, it's an ongoing program, that it's sustainable and there's some other criteria in here that would be relevant to, to a program that we might do. The other thing I took a look at, Melissa and I talked about this earlier, I didn't, didn't print it out on this one actually I saved it for myself. But we actually, they, they funded this for three years so far. And the programs that are out there certainly could form a model for us in terms of something that we might want to do. I know that one of the suggestions was looking at a pilot program, a pilot drop off program around the city. The county had a pilot drop off program for a couple years. They're successful programs in terms of getting people to, to actually contribute material. The problem that we need to explore and resolve is what do we do with the comp, the material at the end of the, at the end of the process. John and I have talked a lot about this because UWGB has spent a lot of time on compost. The county has actually done two regional compost feasibility studies over the years. So we have a handle on what it would take to set up a compost facility. The problem is, one of the goals of this program is what do you do with the compost at the end of the line, and how do you use it? How do you scale it up to a citywide effort or region-wide effort? I represent the county as well. I've actually reached out to my, my supervisor, my boss, and said, you know, is this something the county would be interested in? Well if we were participating with the city, and yeah, I mean it, it has goes through the same kind of approval processes that the

city does, but, you know, county executive, county board and the like-

- [Mark Steuer] Is there a budget kind of thing; would the city have to put some money out? Do you know if it's a cooperative agreement? So I'm just trying to figure out the funding of something like that.

- [Mark Walter] Right. Well so again, as a cooperative agreement, it's a little bit more flexible and I haven't real, I haven't delved into this in great detail, but it does allow for cost sharing, including in-kind. So it could be budgeted as staff time.

- [Melissa] Volunteer time.

- [Mark Walter] Volunteer time.

- [Melissa] And the two sources that we identified, I think in the grant document was volunteer hours can count towards match and HUD Community Block Grant dollars. I don't know if that's the only source, but those are the two that were listed within the guidelines that I, of what I read.

- [Mark Walter] Right. And there, you know, we'd have to come up with the project. We'd have to come up with- there, there's a fair amount of stuff. It's, it's, being a grant writer that's pretty typical of a lot of grants that I've seen, especially with at the federal level. So it's nothing onerous. One of the things that you do, you, when you write a grant, you score points based on, you know, how you're meeting their criteria. One of the things they certainly are looking at is partnerships. Public, private, the city, the county would be straight up eligible. Nonprofits would be eligible as well, for-profit are not eligible, but they could certainly contribute dollars, time, whatever to this. And I know that there are others in, in the area who are interested in programs like this. So we would have to develop a more program. The other part is where does this come through on the city side of things. I, I think Melissa and I talked about that and it's probably, and I, I may have a different view on how things could go through here because we're still at a pilot program basis, so you want to do an assessment and planning and so forth. And I think it kind of is a, a planning effort that they, they can evaluate this better than anybody else, but eventually it would end up being in DPW's hands. So there's-

- [Mark Steuer] So it might be at the drop off facility for brush and that kind of thing, maybe? Or another area?

- [Mark Walter] Yeah, well,

- [Mark Steuer] I don't know.

- [Mark Walter] When we did our, so when the county did our drop off program, we actually did an analysis of drop off sites for organic material around the county. We had one in our recycling transfer station on South Broadway. And we got roughly a ton a month, for almost three years. We were doing, it was very successful. We had 250 households that were participating, With one location. We tried a variety of other locations, but convenience really dictated whether people used it or not. We actually had the old UW extension office on Bellevue. We actually had that site as a second site and that worked really well until we sold it. The county sold it to the school district and then it, that went off tables. We had it at Allouez Yardwaste Center, but their yard waste center,

nobody can find. It's, you go down a dead end street and around the block back into the corner. So it, nobody used it. We were actually working with, with John and, and UWGB to actually cite a drop off location on UWGB campus near the STEM center, which would be a perfect place to put it. But then our, our hauler, the company that was taking our material down to the digester in Oshkosh notified us that they weren't going to do it anymore. They just got out of the business of doing that, so that kind of put a kibosh on the program.

- [Mark Steuer] What about restaurants, things like that. I guess I haven't read all into it, but you know, or stores. There, a lot of times there's so much food in the store and it's like, well you can't keep seafood for three, four. You know what I mean? Where does, Is that part of this thought process?

- [Mark Walter] Yeah, I would say absolutely. The program we were part of was working with UWGB. I think John, that's John, I can speak to that in a moment. But it was also, they were picking up material from the jail, the CTC, the Community Treatment Center. And I think they were picking it up from U- from NWTC as well. I thought they were doing food collection out there from the cafeteria. We approached Aurora BayCare as to, you know, looking at doing it there. So some of the institutions trying to get them to be involved in the process. Some are more open to it than others. But restaurants, we're actually working with our, our hauler was Sanimax and they already do like oil pickups at places. And so they had just expanded into food waste. Then they were hauling it down to the, the digester at Oshkosh, at UW Oshkosh. And it worked pretty well. It's not, one of the criteria of this program is developing a program that's sustainable and hauling food waste 60 miles one way is not exactly a sustainable effort. So yeah, that was part of it. So we'd have to, you know look, there, there are a number of things that have to be looked at and assessed in terms of what kind of project they're looking at. What is, how extensive is the pilot, what's the involvement? I know for a fact that if it was a drop off program like we had, County would definitely be, you know, involved in that because it's part of our long-term goal as well within our, I'm in the middle of writing our updated strategic plan and that's part of our, the County's strategic plan effort. So, and we, like I said, John, who throw in, I know John knows a lot about this as well. And then we have somebody from the botanical garden who would like to look at this as well.

- [Seth] Julia has had her hand up, Julia.

- [Julia] This all sounds really great and I'm complete, I'd be completely in support of a grant application. I, I feel like though the focus of the project should really be on the end of it, like a feasibility and site assessment for what to do with the material and how to in a location that could be scaled up. Because I don't, frank- I don't really see like- there's a big demand like from people wanting to compost. So I'm not like more concerned in the long term about there being like pilot drop off sites because I think the long term goal would be that actually it's not people driving to places to drop off anyway. So I just think the purpose of the grant program would really be to focus on how do you make this like a site locally, what to, you know, where and what to do with it.

- [John] I mean that's, I agree with you Julia, that that's a concern of mine. So we gather it all. So we, we set up a system where we can compost it. What do we do with the finished product? I mean that's one of the challenges that UWGB is, is faced with as well. We're, we are composting all of our pre- and, and post-consumer organics. There's only so many places that we can go with it on campus. So we're going to have to find ways to distribute it to the community, you know, could be- I- I'm thinking less on the student's side, but certainly the employees, that's a, that's a pic- part of the

picture, but we're generating a lot of compost, so we, we've got to find a home for it. And I think that's really what the City of Green Bay's got to look at. Not only having a, a composting operation or partnering with somebody that's already composting, but then the distribution. As we were talking about it, just a small piece came to mind. I know there's an NGO out there, New Leaf Foods that hosts the Green Bay Garden Blitz every year. And there they, they set up raised beds. Well, perhaps of all of the former raised beds that they've got over there, you know, after year one, maybe those are locations of, of folks that might take it to enhance those raised beds. That might be a market. But I think you really need to get creative on where is this going to go.

- [Mark Steuer] Thanks for that, John, I was going to ask, I mean there's, you know, a lot of citizens. I have 9,000 citizens in my district and I'm just wondering if, you know, if there's a way where people would, you know, because there's a lot of folks that are doing gardens and in our neighborhood, maybe not a ton, but you know, quite a few. And if it got to the point where, hey, we, we have some compost here. because I've tried to compost at home and I don't know, it's not as successful as I would like to see it. But if there was a product out there, if something, if you said, hey, we've got X amount here, you know, and I don't know if that's something that would be sold or if people would just come and pick it up like they do at the waste sites or you know, the drop, leaf drop off sites. People come in and get soil and, you know, different things. They'd pick things up for landscaping and that's just free if they're a city employee or city resident. So, I don't know, I'm just thinking that people might like that.

- [Melissa] Director Grenier and I did have a brief conversation about this and, and I don't know enough about the DNR regulations, but there are regulations surrounding food composting sites, that differ from yard waste sites. So as far as like co-mingling or even like co-locating those things, it, it requires, well just a lot more, you know, I, I think whatever we're talking about tonight with that possibility, there's people that know a lot more about it than us. So we really can't just, you know, go there at this point because we don't really know where, what's all involved with it

- [Mark Walter] So the DNR has a person who really, Casey Lamensky who used to be in this area, I think she's in Madison now. A friend of mine who's with DNR has a lot of knowledge on, organic waste programs statewide and the regulations that, that are governed by that we can certainly get her ear, ask her, you know, virtually or in-person to come and talk to the Sustainability Commission about what that entails and I can reach out to her and find out what other options are out there. The other thing that Melissa and I looked at was like I say the list of three years worth of, of successful applications and reaching out to some of those communities and finding out what their application was like. And that's always, it's always easier than reinventing the wheel is you borrow somebody else's application and you change the names, submit it as yours, right. But certainly just get some ideas of how successful the programs either are or are not, what's entailed in them, you know, what, what do we have to look at? How do they work with it so forth. You know, you guys are talking Eau Claire, Melissa reached out to Eau Claire County's, what's their title?

- [Melissa] Recycling and sustainability coordinator.

- [Mark Walter] Yeah. And because they are one of the grant recipients, one of the recipients in this program. And it looks like they're still just beginnings of that program.

- [Melissa] It's going to kick off this spring.

- [Mark Walter] There are other people around the state who absolutely are involved with this that I would be able to contact as well through my organizations. Like organizations I work with. Statewide Conference on Solid Waste is in two weeks at the Downtown? Downtown- Or there. But anyway, they say, that there are a lot of people there who would, who deal with this. There have been several successful programs in the state as initial pilots. They haven't gone out. Madison's done something, Milwaukee's done something. Stevens Point has done something. Eau Claire's got people, you know. There, there's a lot going on with it, but nothing long-term comprehensive at this point within our state. And it's, it's coming. It's something we got to deal with. So I think this is a, a really good opportunity.

- [Seth] Julia, and then Ned.

- [Julia] Thanks, thanks Seth. I was just going to build on to what John had said too. It, you know, like thinking about the end of potentially even, you know, different types of models that could be, maybe it's a public-private partnership type model. And then also it made me, reminded me, you know, like Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District, you know, they set, they produced, and marketed, and branded Milorganite, and I'm pretty sure they use that like as a revenue product too. So I think being creative too, and not just, yeah.

- [Seth] Ned?

- [Ned] Thank you. To piggyback on what Julia mentioned, the public-private partnership. I know we had the gentleman from Greener Bay Compost a few meetings ago and, and he said, you know, he wouldn't be able to scale up to service the whole city, but if there are, you know, people like him around that, that are able to help out with this project, then this might be an area for us to reach out. The, the other thing I wanted to mention was, and I'm not sure, but I think we have members of the public who would like to speak to this or were interested in hearing what kind of partnerships the city could have with, with what they're doing. So if we do have, have anyone that likes to speak to this from the public, I'd like to suspend the rules to open up the floor.

- [Mark Walter] I'll second.

- [Seth] All right. We have a motion by Ned, second by Mark Walter. All those in favor of opening the floor, say aye.

- Aye

- [Seth] Opposed, say nay. All right, welcome.

- [Melissa] If you want to, you sit here. Sit here, state your name and your address, and your affiliation.

- [Karen] So my name is Karen Kohlbeck. I'm with the Green Bay Botanical Garden. My address, do you want the Garden's address? It is 2600 Larson Road, Green Bay. And I just showed up for your meeting tonight just because the Garden itself is starting to look at our waste. And we brought in Cory from Greener Bay Compost to have a conversation of, you know, some of the products that we're seeing in our garbage and maybe how we can help reduce that quantity. Primarily right now we're looking at like paper products, maybe some cups. We're hoping to do something maybe with

events. We do weddings, we have concerts, other social, we're opening up the children's garden this summer, this spring, summer. And so we know that that's going to- areas probably going to be heavily used and as such will probably be having a little bit more waste in that area also. So we're kind of just curious what others in the community are doing with their waste and maybe what opportunities there might be for us to partner with other entities, whether it be the city, county, businesses such as Cory's, just to see what's, you know, available to help address the issue of our landfills. Well, thank you for letting me have a ear, the meeting.

- [Mark Walter] I know that I've talked to the Garden in the past, so I'm Mark Walter, the Brown County Board Resource Recovery Department. So I'm a recycling educator. I mean, that's one of my roles in the county and I've done several presentations out there, but also took a look at, did an evaluation a few years ago on what you were looking at in terms of, of waste and what could be recycled, what could not be within the given system you have right now. Actually still have a water bottle I refill constantly. That's my -

- [Karen] Yes, you did go to a -

- [Mark Walter] Yeah, so, you know, certainly there's other aspects of, of, you know, waste reduction that that's, that falls under my bailiwick there, beyond the composting stuff that you might want to look at, but certainly within this program, partnership with a nonprofit would strengthen any application that comes through here. Especially if you have a focus on what you, you have an answer to the question we've got, what do we do with the compost? You probably have a better use for right now than.

- [Karen] You know what, we probably would have a pretty good use of it. I'm assuming now, you know, I don't know to be honest what the needs are in our horticultural, you know, for the garden. I, I think right now they're purchasing compost to amend the soil. We do a little bit of composting on site, but certainly I think there would be use to maybe integrate something that was locally produced into the gardens.

- [Melissa] I have a question. Does, so as far as land space at the botanical gardens, you're doing some composting now?

- [Karen] Yes. It's, it's probably, when I say composting, it's probably one of those very passive where we have a bin where we're putting, you know, coffee grounds, some paper products, leaves, what have you, and letting it sit and percolate.

- [Melissa] Okay.

- [Karen] So it's not something that's actively worked on.

- [Melissa] So is the garden interested in making a larger effort on site for composting or having it, the waste, the garden's waste, food waste, and paper plates, and things like that hauled off and dumped somewhere else?

- [Karen] So I think we're open to a couple of different ideas right now. We are looking at the waste side of how do we address what's coming through for some of our events and guest services. But we, and, and we really haven't had the conversation with our court staff to like, what are your needs

for compost and is this something that maybe we could, you know, expand upon? It was basically looking at how can we address our waste.

- [Melissa] Sure.

- [Karen] Per se. So that would be a conversation to be had.

- [Melissa] Right, right. And I know one of the, the targets is reusing the compost in community gardens. Doesn't specifically say botanical gardens, but there is a children's garden there and you know what I mean, I think that would qualify as a community garden. Is it non-profit? I can't remember the

- [Karen] Yes, we're non-profit.

- [Melissa] So.

- [Mark Steuer] Yeah, I- I'm just thinking out loud, I'm, I'm on city council so I, I mean, I'm just thinking about some options here as well. So I think over time I think we could come up with some, some good things. I don't have any, Ned, we had a six hour and 45 minute council meeting last night, so I'm not all here. I'm trying to be. You remember those days.

- [Ned] Oh yes.

- [Melissa] Is there other members? Who do you want to ask? Before we close the floor.

- [Seth] Are there, are there any questions for our guest or any other members, staff, Sister Sally Ann or Jay Martin that would like to speak before closing the floor? Amy?

- [Amy] Yeah, I, I just wanted to mention, I actually, the, and I know NWTC would be interested in something too. I, I don't have all the details and I'm in the similar spot that the botanical gardens is, but I actually just got a survey from our internal sustainability group today asking about how far, if there was a compost location spot that you could drop off at the college, how far would you be willing to walk with your stuff? So I know we're looking at it, so I know, you know, I think that there would be some connection there as well, that we could work on. And just wanted to add that.

- [Seth] Any other folks? Sister Sally Ann or, or yeah. Go ahead just state your name and address for the record.

- [Sally Ann] Okay. Sister Sally Ann Brickner 3110 Nicolet Drive, Green Bay, Wisconsin. We do collecting of our organic materials, particularly breakfast and not so much other meals, but, but in the kitchen they do as well. And I think we bring them to the yard waste site. We bring the materials to the yard waste site in Green Bay.

- [Mark Walter] The one on east side near the-

- [Sally Ann] The east side one, along East Shore Drive.

- [Mark Walter] And if you haven't seen the city's compost facility, the actual, the backside where

everything is windrowed and, and churned and everything else is, it's actually pretty- the city has- the city on the west side for sure, I haven't seen the east side one, but the west side compost facility is very impressive. I mean, they've got a lot of material that they're churning all the time. So there's, there is precedent for this type of facility. There would be a, to take this, to the next step that this grant is looking at in terms of addressing food waste and reduction in food waste would take it a little bit different as well. There would have to be more, as Melissa had noted, there's some more controls that have to go into play from a municipal standpoint and there's some, some things that you have to look at. But we, again, the studies that were, John, one of John's graduate students did a study for the County and municipalities a few years ago on a regional compost facility. And the west side compost facility is actually a perfect spot for a big composting operation. So that's already there. Scaling it up to do food waste is another aspect. And then at the end of the day, what do you do with that compost? And that's, I haven't had, I haven't come up with an answer to that. So it would have to be something that would have to be analyzed as part of a, a part of a project. Unfortunately, John, it it says it, this grant will not support research. So you're outta luck there.

- [Seth] Any other comments or questions from our guests before we close the floor? Or we could entertain the motion to do that?

- [Mark Steuer] Motion to close the floor.

- [Seth] Honored by Alder Steuer. Is there a second?

- [Amy] Second.

- [Seth] By Amy. All right, thank you. All those in favor of closing the floor, say aye.

- Aye

- [Seth] Opposed say nay. Dissent. Thank you so much for joining us in person here. Cool. Other, other thoughts, questions, discussion?

- [Ned] I'll pick it up from, we've heard from two community members who both work for nonprofits, so I think that's an encouraging sign right now. So if nonprofits are going to be a part of this, that we have at least have two, two folks who've showed up today interested in working possibly, I don't know if, if Sister Sally Ann was saying she'd be interested in the Sisters. I know they're a nonprofit as well, but we, you know, if we need those community partners, I think we're lucky to have the folks who showed up here tonight. So thank you for showing up.

- [Seth] I mean, it sounds like an incredible opportunity and, and like Ned said a lot of interest. My question, I guess either for you or for you, Melissa, if we wanted to pursue this, what would, what would like the next steps be?

- [Mark Walter] You know, I can't speak to the city side of things. I, I can speak for the County, at least to my department, where we have, we definitely have an interest in this. Again, it fits within something we've been looking at for a number of years. It's where do we go next? And I, I guess what I would say is, I'd like to bring it back to Sustainability Commission next month with some expert input on this. A better background on the details of, you know, what are the, these other communities doing so that we have some models that we can talk about in more detail and get a

better handle on how extensive do we want to make something like this. Because it can be, like I said, the granting is $45,000 to $300,000. Are we at the $45,000 end right now, or are we at the $300,000 end? And I, I don't have an answer to that one. And you know, some of the stuff, like I say, I'm just digging through my files today and I found these two yard waste. I knew we had one of them, I didn't realize we had two of them, feasibility studies that had been done by the County for regional compost facilities. So, some of that legwork is out there as well. But neither these addressed the, the end, the end of the process when we were as a county working with UW Oshkosh, their bio digester, they were taking that material, they bring it in, they treat it for 28 days, then they pull it out, mix it with City of Oshkosh's yard waste composting material and then turn it into titan gold, which you buy by the bag as compost.

- [Mark Steuer] So is that a revenue generator for the city then, or how for the college or how?

- [Mark Walter] John, do you know, I don't know offhand anymore.

- [John] My understanding is that it was a revenue generator for the college. They had it bagged and finished because 28 days isn't enough to completely finish the product. But a third party I think hauled it from there, finished the product and then bagged it and sold it. And I suspect there was a percentage of the profits helped UW Oshkosh.

- [Mark Steuer] Wow, you know, more than being a city alder, you know, we, you know, we do services at the city but you know, if we do have a few things that generate revenue, then I'm just looking at if there's any ways to generate revenue, I think that would be something that, you know, I would be interested in. So definitely look at some of those possibilities.

- [Mark Walter] Yeah, certainly part of, any food waste collection program is avoided costs. You know, I'm, again speaking for the County, we own a landfill and we're going to charge you 40, 50 bucks a ton to take garbage. If you don't have, if you, if you were able to take 20 or 25% even, though that waste out of the waste stream and not have to pay that tipping fee, even if you pay the same amount per ton, you're not burying it, you're getting a, a product from that. So, there's certainly an avoided cost on not landfilling this material.

- [Mark Steuer] well, that needs to be brought out too. Different ways of looking at saving.

- [Seth] Melissa, would there be any like pertinent next steps for the city if we wanted to, I guess pursue this or and move forward?

- [Melissa] Well, I mean definitely in between now and the next time this is discussed at Sustainability, there needs to be, you know, a deeper discussion with, you know, if this grant is even going to be an implementation grant at this point, you know, the types of regulations that would that surround food, you know, a drop off site. But that would, I would say be the, the, the first, the first next step would be to get more staff involved in the discussion. But then if it's decided to move forward with applying for a grant, whether that's in partnership with a nonprofit, or in partnership with the county, you know, exactly who is going to be responsible for the grant. And I think I did write this in, I put this, this was in the agenda that if this is decided to move forward, that grant writing assistance and reporting assistance would be, the Sustainability Commission members would need to help out with the grant writing and some of the reporting to follow.

- [Mark Steuer] Yeah, I like writing, but I haven't done grants.

- [Melissa] Yeah, I'm speaking more from, you know, the staff perspective, the staff opinion as far as constraints on staff time to start a new, a new program for the city and, and all of that, all that's involved with that. And that's why I'm really excited to hear from some members of the public because there might be a different way of approaching this where it would still benefit the city and the community, you know, another community organization as well, so.

- [Mark Steuer] So are you looking for folks to raise their hand? You know, do a few things before next meeting?

- [Melissa] Well, I think Mark Walter would, it would make sense for Mark to be involved with this for sure. I think John Arendt because he has past experience in this as well. Amy, if there's any input from NWTC as far as what, you know, if there could be a partnership just and just brainstorming in general, I think that would be very helpful. So those would be I guess the top I, you know, as far as people involved at this point, we don't need to make, you know, the first meeting too big.

- [Mark Steuer] Good point. They're all nodding their heads.

- [Melissa] So, I don't know if there's, we should, this was an action item. So what would the appropriate motion at this point be?

- [Mark Steuer] Receive and place on file?

- [Seth] All right. A motion to receive and place on file by Alder Steuer. Is there a second? By John. Alright. I believe this is some controversial. All those in favor say aye.

- Aye

- [Seth] All those opposed say nay. All right. Received and placed on file and sounds like we've got a team to look into this. This is super exciting.

- [Mark Walter] I got some action items for myself.

- [Seth] Excellent. Great. Very good. Look forward to the next discussion on this. Alright, onto informational. Are there any work group updates from folks? What month is this Mark? Or email?

- [Mark Steuer] Oh geez. Are we going to, do you want to use any of those? Director Grenier liked it.

- [Ned] Yeah, I'm waiting for you to email those to me so I can put them on Facebook.

- [Melissa] I did.

- [Seth] Yeah. Yeah, they're they're in the inbox.

- [Melissa] Yeah, I sent them, I sent them out.

- [Ned] What? Ah, that's my bad then. I totally missed that.

- [Mark Steuer] Yeah, go ahead and run with it.

- [Melissa] I sent a note with the meeting reminder. because this meeting came a week early. But I think all ideas, his really brilliant monthly themed ideas are near the, the bottom of the email.

- [Ned] I didn't read to the bottom. That was my problem. Thank you.

- [Mark Steuer] I did talk to Director Grenier about it. He liked the concept of just, you know, even if we don't get really in depth each month with this, it would just be points that, you know, you can put links in there, you could talk about different things about how to cut back on water, you know, I know some of it's common sense, but there might be some things out there that, you know, people would read on our website, city website or what have you. So I, I'm, I'm cool with that. Great.

- [Melissa] This isn't really a work group update, but I'm going to put it in here. Just a reminder that February 25th is the Aldo Leopold Conservation Day outreach event at the Brown County Library downtown. We do have some volunteers already lined up from Sustainability Commission. We have Mark Wal- Mark Steuer, Alder Steuer, Kaurie Mihm, myself, and then Christa is going to be at a different table, but right next to our table representing Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council.

- [Christa] Nailed it.

- [Melissa] Yeah. So if anyone else would like to attend that, there's a lot of great tables that we set up at 1:30, so please be there for 1:30. And then it's only about an hour and a half of being at the table. And then afterward there is a, a Aldo Leopold film about his, his writings and land ethic. So that's in the theater down in the basement level of the downtown library.

- [Mark Steuer] Are they going to have rain barrels?

- [Melissa] There'll be a rain barrel there. I don't know about the other, I don't know about that. No one's been working on that yet. So, and we'll have the energy survey as part of the comprehensive energy plan available for people to take. And anything else that the Sustainability Commission would like to talk to members of the public about and promote.

- [Mark Steuer] This would be too early with your, with the project that you're talking about.

- [Mark Walter] Oh yeah, yeah.

- [Mark Steuer] Yeah, it's too early.

- [Mark Walter] And I'm unfortunately not going to be there able to make that. It's my daughter's birthday, golden birthday. She's 25 on the 25th. So we're gone.

- [Melissa] As far as, I'll just talk for a minute about the, out, some of the outreach we've been doing regarding the comprehen, the, the community-wide comprehensive energy plan. Today we had a tabling event at the Aging and Disability Resource Center in, down on Adams Street in Green Bay. And we were there from 11 until one talking to people about the community survey and assisting

members of the public that would like to take the survey that either maybe don't have a computer or have, you know, maybe some physical challenges where they're not able to do the survey in the traditional way. So we did that. Seth Hoffmeister and myself and Maddie from our, our Slipstream, our consultant was there today and it went really, really well. We met some wonderful people. And the survey is open until the end of the month. We are, we do need more business surveys done. We only have around 20 businesses that have replied for the survey. We are doing extremely well with residential input. We have almost 650 surveys from Green Bay residents regarding the plan.

- [Mark Steuer] So generally been pretty positive.

- [Melissa] I am not reading them Mark, Alder Steuer. I am not because,

- [Mark Steuer] Right, I know.

- [Melissa] I mean, they're coming in all the time. So I'm going to save that work for the consultant. Yeah, so that's where we're at. We're in the outreach phase and we've reached out to the, the business incentive districts, the Chamber of Commerce. I know Christa's done some outreach as well with her contacts. We do have cards that we're going to set out at the YMCA, the YWCA, Casa Melanie, and some other community organizations as well. But if you have contacts with business owners, or people authorized to, to speak to this on behalf of organizations like, you know, executive directors of nonprofits and things like that, that have facilities, please spread the word to those folks.

- [Seth] Cool. Other updates from folks? All right, well I think that brings us to end of the meeting. Do we have a motion to adjourn?

- [Ned] So moved.

- [Seth] By Ned. Is there a second?

- [Mark Walter] I'll second.

- [Seth] By Mark Walter. All those in favor of adjourning say aye.

- Aye.

- [Seth] All those opposed, say nay. All right, adjourned. Thanks everybody.

- [Ned] Thank you.