

Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission
8150 Barbara Avenue
Thursday, October 27, at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

The Environmental Advisory Commission of Inver Grove Heights met in City Council Chambers on Thursday, October 27, 2022. Chair Boehmke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Nichole Boehmke, Commissioners; Nick Ruiz, Ted Trenzeluk, Kevin Sethre, Todd Kruse (until 7:33 p.m.), Brian Barner

Absent: Sarah Brass, Sara Goodman, Larry Moehring, Todd Kruse (after 7:33 p.m.)

3. Presentations

A. Metropolitan Airports Commission, Noise Oversight Committee Update

Michele Ross, Community Relations Manager of Metropolitan Airports Commission, presented background and recent updates on MSP airport and the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

The PowerPoint presentation reviewed the following topics:

- Metropolitan Airports Commission Overview
- Metropolitan Airports Commission Roles & Responsibilities, including the MSP Noise Oversight Committee, Work Plan and Accomplishments
- 2022 MSP Update, including MSP operational trends and complaint data

Commissioner Barner requested an explanation of the converging runway operations noted in the 2023 NOC Draft Work Plan. Mrs. Ross stated the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has identified a potential convergence point could occur when arrivals at 35 are delayed and departures at 30L and 30R are incoming. In these circumstances, the FAA uses different runway procedures to reduce risk. The MAC receives updates on how FAA uses this procedure.

Commissioner Sethre noted the runway names refer to the degree at which airplanes are departing, so runway 35 would depart at 350 degrees north.

Commissioner Kruse asked if MSP has space to add additional runways or if they are at capacity. Mrs. Ross noted MSP's long-range plans address long term capacity. Additional runways are not an option, but additional capacity alternatives are being considered.

Commissioner Sethre commented there has been a decline in total arrivals and departures and likely demand for additional runway is not currently increasing. Mrs. Ross agreed.

Commissioner Kruse asked what the current MAC debt is, such as the total current debt and debt capacity. Mrs. Ross stated she does not have that information on hand but it is public information available on their website (www.metroairports.org/NOC), which could be found in NOC meeting minutes or their financial report.

Commissioner Kruse asked if the MAC employees are employees of MAC or the State of Minnesota. Mrs. Ross stated they are employees of MAC.

Commissioner Barner asked what has caused the recently changes in operational trends. Mrs. Ross stated changes in aircraft type has allowed for few flights but has increased passengers year-over-year.

Commissioner Barner asked if 3 households filed 10,000 complaints. Mrs. Ross responded in the affirmative.

Commissioner Sethre asked if the complaint data was just Inver Grove Heights complains and Mrs. Ross confirmed it is.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked in there have been increased complaints due to more people working from home during the pandemic. Mrs. Ross stated this has been a factor in number of complaints received. Significant fluctuations in aircraft activity due to the pandemic have also changed people's perceptions of aircraft noise.

Chair Boehmke asked if other communities see similar complaint patterns, where majority of complains are coming from a few households. Mrs. Ross responded in the affirmative and stated that NOC tracks the top ten households who submit complaints. Typically, the top 6 households have accounted for 60-70% of complaints filed for all of MSP areas.

Commissioner Sethre asked if the households that submit the most complaints live near the airport. Mrs. Ross stated the majority of complaints submitted by the Inver Grove Heights households shown in gray and purple on the graph, are related to 30L. These households are located just south of the centerline of this runway, which means they are nearby arriving aircraft traffic.

Commissioner Barner asked how someone submits a complaint. Mrs. Ross stated complaints can be submitted via email, website and phone line.

Commissioner Ruiz asked how complaints are investigated and brought to a resolution by NOC. Mrs. Ross stated a response is provided if requested by the complainant.

Commissioner Ruiz asked what the next step of complaint resolution is after NOC. Mrs. Ross stated NOC does not have authority over aircraft in flight, but they work with air traffic control and FAA to abide by noise abatement procedures to reduce noise impacts to neighbors.

Commissioner Kruse was excused from the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Commissioner Sethre stated hush kit technology has come a long way in decreasing aircraft noise from historical levels.

Commissioner Barner asked if NOC has regulatory authority over the time of day aircraft depart. Mrs. Ross stated NOC is unable to restrict the time an aircraft can operate at the airport. Runways must be available for public use 24 hours a day, similar to a highway or transportation resource.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of Thursday, August 25, 2022, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Trenzeluk, seconded by Commissioner Ruiz to approve the minutes from Thursday, August 25, 2022 as submitted.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. Regular Agenda

A. 2023 Environmental Advisory Commission Workplan Discussion

Ally Sutherland, Environmental Specialist, presented the staff report as included in the meeting packet. Mrs. Sutherland requested the commission provide feedback on draft 2023 EAC Work Plan included in the packet and assign a EAC representative for each item.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked if there is a cost to the city to extend the MOU with Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy. Mrs. Sutherland stated there is no cost to the city, Xcel Energy would incur the costs to provide Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) facilitation to the city.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked if an Energy Action Plan progress report is available. Mrs. Sutherland stated Partners In Energy has provided the city progress data which will be shared with the EAC and City Council in early 2023.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked if City Council has reviewed or approved this work plan. Mrs. Sutherland stated no but the intention is for the EAC to finalize a 2023 EAC Workplan by the end of the year and make a recommendation for city council approval. Staff would bring the work plan to City Council for review and approval in February 2023.

Commissioner Trenzeluk is happy to see a work plan developed for the Commission. He noted he is in favor of extending the Partners In Energy MOU through 2023. He would also like to be a representative of the SolSmart program.

Commissioner Barner stated he would like to be a representative for electric vehicle readiness.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked what we should do for next steps with assigning representatives. Chair Boehmke suggested that this is a living document. She suggested staff note which topic Commissioners present at tonight's meeting are interested in, then allow the Commissioners not present to share their thoughts at the November meeting.

Commissioner Sethre noted Xcel Energy is a publicly regulated utility and stated the cost of the program may be factored into their rising utility rates. Mrs. Sutherland noted she believes she has heard Xcel Energy state their purpose for providing Partners In Energy is to stay informed and involved with communities' energy planning, and to promote energy efficiency which helps keep their capital costs down by avoiding having to build new power plants.

Commissioner Trenzeluk stated what he likes about the Energy Action Plan is that there is something in it for everyone to appreciate, whether you're interested in environmental programming or saving on energy costs.

Motion by Commissioner Trenzeluk, seconded by Commissioner Ruiz to recommend City Council extend the Xcel Energy Partners In Energy MOU through 2023.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Chair Boehmke stated she would like to be a representative for the organics drop off program.

Chair Boehmke stated we will bring this item to the November meeting to allow other commissioners to entertain these items, and that multiple representatives per item can be considered.

6. Public Comment

Dawn Gaetke, 7477 Cahill Avenue, presented a public comment in support of including electric vehicle readiness in the 2023 EAC Work Plan. The PowerPoint presentation reviewed the following topics:

- Electric vehicle charging stations and the lack of charging stations in IGH
- Electric vehicle charging stations can be an economic development tool for local businesses
- The city's role in supporting public electric vehicle charging infrastructure can included providing education to businesses, streamlining permitting processes for charging stations, and hosting an electric vehicle charging education workshop for businesses
- Types of charging stations

Commissioner Sethre asked what is the definition of a fast charger. Mrs. Gaetke stated it is a direct current fast charger (DCFC) station that can charge a typical electric vehicle in about 30 minutes.

Commissioner Sethre asked what type of charging is used at home. Mrs. Gaetke stated you can charge by plugging into a regular outlet, referred to as Level 1 charging, or you can update to a Level 2 charger for faster charging.

Commissioner Sethre asked is a Level 2 charger procured with the vehicle. Mrs. Gaetke stated no, this is a separate electric charger purchase however some manufactures will provide promotional incentives to help with purchasing a charger.

Commissioner Sethre asked how much a Level 2 charger costs to install. Mrs. Gaetke stated her charger was a little of \$1,000 to purchase, but she has an older home which required an electrically system update that cost an additional \$9,500. She stated this was due to trenching work and most residents would not face this electrical upgrade costs. This is one reason why public stations are helpful. They are also useful to apartment, duplex and townhome dwellers.

Commissioner Sethre asked if you need to pay at public charging stations. Mrs. Gaetke stated yes but it's typically a minimal fee, for example she paid about \$7-\$8 to fully charge at a Volkswagen dealership charger for 30 minutes, which provides about a 150 miles range.

Commissioner Trenzeluk thanked Mrs. Gaetke for being part of the Xcel Energy Partners In Energy Stakeholder process and speaking to the city about market gardens in the past.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked how much it costs to charge at home. Mrs. Gaetke stated she doesn't have that information at this time.

Commissioner Ruiz asked if there are problems with people parking at stations for too long. Mrs. Gaetke stated vendors are aware of this issue and often charge at a fee that increases over time to encourage people to leave after you are fully charged.

Mrs. Sutherland noted Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) will be kicking off an Electric Vehicle Readiness Program for cities in November with grant funding to assist cities in becoming Electric Vehicle ready. An application is required and limited spots are available. Mrs. Sutherland will attend the informational meeting on November 17 and will provide the commission an update.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked if we are able to engage citizens in the 2023 EAC Work Plan items. Mrs. Sutherland stated the Commission can discuss having working groups for items on the work plan after the plan is approved if it chooses too.

Commissioner Sethre stated he would be in favor of engaging the citizen representatives for the work plan as well.

7. Commissioner and Staff Comments

Mrs. Sutherland shared a Winter Clothing Swap update. The city hosted a Winter Clothing Swap on October 26 to provide the community a local and free textile donation and reuse opportunity. She stated 40 families attended and 61% of items brought into the event were taken home by others. The city received positive feedback about the event and will likely host this again in 2023 based on the event's success.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Boehmke to adjourn at 8:22 p.m.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Motion carried.