



Citizen Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes September 28th, 2021 6:30-8:30 pm - VIA Zoom

6:15 PM: Optional Pre-Meeting Social Time

1. 6:30 PM: Welcome & Introductions.

Attending: John Chikkala, Jill Danner, Randee Edmundson, Hallie Finucane, Mark Gernes, Jennifer Gruetzman, Lauren Hazenson, Katie Keefer, Stuart Knappmiller, Dana Larsen-Ramsay, Carrie Magnuson, Linda Neilson, Gary Nelson, Glen Olson, Sage Passi, Scott Ramsay, Gary Schroeher, Stephanie Wang, Karen Wold

2. 6:45 PM: Watershed Excellence Awards & Recognition Dinner – Dana, Carrie & Sage

- a. Recognition Dinner – The annual dinner was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID concerns. The plan for 2021 is to have it in-person at the Keller Golf Course Club House/Event Center on the evening of November 18th, 2021
- b. LEAP Awardees (6) – two from last year will be awarded this year
- c. Eric Sommers Awards – we will use a statue similar to the 2016 vase/raindrop.
- d. Awards Selections from Nominees
 - The group reviewed the 8 nominees (including two pairs of nominees).
 - The following is the list of individuals who were nominated
 1. Gretchen Eibs – White Bear Lake Central Middle School 7th grade teacher. Nominated by Dana Larsen-Ramsay.
 2. John Hoffman – Resident of Shoreview. Nominated by Paige Ahlborg.
 3. Joy Cedarleaf – Recently-retired Professor at Century College who worked students on Service-Learning Projects with RWMWD and Maplewood Nature Center. Nominated by Carole Gernes.
 4. Shoua Thao and Koua Vang – Youth artists who designed the statues for the Ames Lake art installation. Nominated by Randee Edmundson.
 5. Lisa Uslabar: Volunteer at the Ramsey Co Correctional Facility Greenhouse. Nominated by Dana Larsen-Ramsay.
 6. Michele Anderson & Jaci Krogh: two now-retired teachers from St. Peter Catholic School in North St. Paul. Nominated by Sage Passi.
 7. Wes Saunders-Pearce: Former Water Resources Coordinator at the City of St. Paul. Nominated by Tina Carstens and Paige Ahlborg.
 8. Stephanie Wang: RWMWD Citizen Advisory Commission Member, Water Steward, and Woodbury Resident. Nominated by Sage Passi.
- e. The group discussed the individuals' accomplishments and decided on awardees for 2021. This selection will go to the RWMWD Board of Managers for approval. Awardees will not be mentioned publicly until the awardees have been notified.

3. 8:00 PM: Project, Activity & Event Updates

- a. Casey Lake Rain Garden Project with Simba – Simba

- Simba checked the Casey Lake rain gardens on our behalf for Quality Life.

- Simba proposes that we clean up the two gardens on Mohawk Dr. that the CAC helped with last year– homeowners are elderly and could use a hand. If we have time left once that is accomplished volunteers could help clean sediment from all 9 gardens in the area that could use it. This will keep the gardens fulfilling their primary purpose into the winter.
 - Date: October 18th. Rain day 19th. Probably 4:30-6:30pm, but TBD.
 - Discussion:
 1. Stephanie commented that she notices a lot of rain gardens in Woodbury that could benefit from a sort of pop-up maintenance crew. She once did something similar with the City of Woodbury. She made connections with staff to coordinate a cleanup of a raingarden near a park that was plugged and overflowing. The city provided a trailer for hauling debris away, and Stephanie used NextDoor to recruit volunteers. Stephanie’s suggestion for the CAC to consider is to put out a request to CAC members and other possible volunteers to assemble when they see other locations that need help.
 2. Simba commented that it would be good to assemble a team of people who want to do that. She could work with Sage to find sites that need this level of volunteer maintenance. She thought that Cities should be maintaining their own infrastructure, but she would like to offer it for private residences, churches, schools, etc.
 3. Another idea surfaced about having volunteers available as Rain Garden Mentors to act as guides to help other people understand their plants.
- b. Carp Fishing Contest Brief Recap (Brainstorm in Oct) – Lauren
- Two contests happened, the first on July 31st at Lake Owasso, and another at Lake Gervais on August 28th
 - They had a good turnout, including on a day with the worst air quality in MN history. 63 registered and 35-40 people showed up.
 - Lauren commented that they saw a good representation of the local community, and that the audience included a majority of people of color who we don’t normally see at RWMWD-sponsored events. Very successful event.
 - One challenge was the actual number of carp caught, which was not a lot. This could be solved by hosting it earlier in the year. We could also conduct it on a lake where we are not actively managing carp. If we do have it on a lake that has a lot of carp, we will need to figure out good access points (i.e. Kohlman, which has no public access).
 - Lauren suggests doing just one large carp contest for next year.
- c. Phalen/Water Trail Video Series (October topic) – Lauren
- They have been shooting and collecting video content and using it on a variety of outreach mediums to reach a diverse audience.
 - Will talk about it more next month.
- d. CAC/LEAP Team Planting at Wetland A – Bill or Carrie
- Warm and muggy August evening.
 - 21 hardy volunteers including 5 kids.
 - 730 plants representing 14 native emergent and wet meadow species were installed
 - Over 500 ft of wetland shore was planted

4. 8:25 PM: Community Announcements

- a. Debbie Barnes, RWMWD Administrative Assistant, retired on September 8th – Emily Simmons has been hired for the position. Emily has worked as a Natural Resources Field Staff Intern for the last 2 years and was instrumental in putting together the Snail Lake plant signs and iNaturalist plant guide.
- b. Bill Bartodziej (Natural Resources Coordinator) congratulated the CAC on our work on Keller Creek in 2018. “It took a few years for the emergent plants to grab hold and expand. The low water conditions (drought) is good for emergents. Burreed is the dominant - muskrat do not like this plant all that much. That is most likely why it took off. The CAC made a significant contribution to the ecological quality of the creek. BRAVO!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Everyone should be very proud!”
- c. Randee: Chuck Repke long time Chair of District 2 Council and advocate for the Cleveland Ames Lake Project passed away in August. There was a meaningful celebration of life that she attended. He was critical in working with youth and understanding the complexity of the Ames Lake Community relationships. There is an obituary showing where to send letters. Randee would like to plant a tree in his honor. If anyone is interested, contact Randee.
 - Scott: Tree donation/memorial program. Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County can do Tribute Trees in any community except St. Paul for \$150/tree. St. Paul uses St. Paul Parks Conservancy which is pricey at \$600/tree.
 - Perhaps a tree at Eastside Boys and Girls Club could be memorialized to him.

5. 8:30 PM: Adjourn – Actual time 8:45 PM

2020 CAC Project Review and 2021 Project Plans – Future Meetings

- a. Salt Use Outreach/Education – CAC
- b. Create Invasive Species Education Pieces – CAC
- c. CAC Visit to Artist Eric Sommers’ Glass Studio (2021?) – Dana
- d. Education Topics:
 - Invasive Species – Simba
 - Cultivars vs. Natives – Simba
 - Permitting – Nicole
 - Water Steward Tours – Sage (added 8/9/21 per Sage’s request)
- e. Other ideas?

Future meetings – Zoom or In-Person:

- October 26th
- December 7th