

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

**MINUTES OF
April 21, 2021**

Item No. 1 being:

ROLL CALL

The Environmental Control Advisory Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a Special Session at the City of Norman, in the Executive Conference Room, Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street using Zoom Technology for video conference due to COVID-19 on April 21, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. Notice and Agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| MEMBERS PRESENT | Dane Heins (Chair) Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair) Deborah Cretsinger Robert Vollmar Traci Gold Sara Bondy Jim Griffith |
|-----------------|--|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| MEMBERS ABSENT | None |
|----------------|------|

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT | Debbie Smith, Environmental Services Manager Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager Jerry Gates, Environmental Services Asst. Manager Nathan Madenwald, Utilities Engineer Michele Loudenback, Stormwater Program Specialist |
|-----------------------|--|

Item No. 2 being:

INTRODUCE NEW MEMBERS & GUESTS

None

Item No. 3 being:

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF March 10, 2021 MEETING

DeKalb-Myers made a motion to approve the March 10, 2021 minutes. Cretsinger seconded. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken with the following result:

| | |
|------|--|
| YEAS | Dane Heins (Chair) Courtney DeKalb-Myers (Vice Chair) Deborah Cretsinger Robert Vollmar Traci Gold |
|------|--|

Sara Bondy
Jim Griffith

NAYS None

The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 0.

Item No. 4 being:

DISCUSS YARD BY YARD

Cretsinger said that they are still trying to set up meetings between the county, Kevin and the other woman that works with him. As of right now they are meeting May 12th. They did throw out that they would like to do a presentation to all of ECAB if people are into it. That way if anyone has questions or concerns they can speak to them directly. Everyone said they would like that. Cretsinger will give Smith the contact information so she can get ahold of them and work it out. Kevin's preference is to get the county on board first.

Item No. 5 being:

COMPOST SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

Vollmar said that there has been discussion via email about composting and they worked up a list of bullet points that they want to cover. DeKalb-Myers said that they had settled on 6-7 major posts and Vollmar organized them. There was discussion and concern about our status and ability to post to social media. She asked Smith if she had spoken with Meyers on the expectations for Facebook posts and how we would be able to promote the education on Facebook. Smith said that Mattingly and Madenwald spoke with her and she said that she could give Heins approval to edit and submit information and she can then go in and approve it. Smith asked if that was acceptable for Heins and he said yes, absolutely. Vollmar said that maybe we can find out if we can access the cities Instagram as well. Heins said that the topics looked good and now we can decide what the graphics will look like for each post. Some topics may end up being a 2-3 post. Heins asked if a month was enough time to get graphics ready and they said absolutely.

Item No. 6 being:

STORMWATER EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Evenson and Loudonback just came from their last artist meeting for their 2021 artful inlets. Evenson didn't make it a formal presentation because she wanted it to be a little more informal so they could ask question about Stormwater. Evenson said that Stormwater is in public works and has been a formal division since the end of 2016. It is a division of approx. 22 people. Evenson only has 3 crews for the Stormwater maintenance side for the entire city of Norman. One is an infrastructure crew that has 4 people on it. They maintain all of our grey infrastructure such as Stormwater pipes, inlet boxes...if it is made out of concrete, metal, steel or anything hard that is what they repair. Evenson said that lots of times we see sink holes in peoples' yards which happens when our pipes leak. We have a channel maintenance crew of 5 which maintain all our open channels in the city of Norman. During the spring and summer (mowing season) the only thing they can really do is mow because they have approximately 15 miles of channel that they have to mow on a regular

basis to maintain. They can get to a particular area about once every 6 weeks. They also do debris removal, clean flumes from sediment that deposited and things like that. In the winter is when they really become an infrastructure crew. The last crew is the set of street sweepers. There are 6 on this crew. Right now, 4 street sweepers and 2 to operate our camera van and our flush truck. The camera van is a recent addition in the last 2 years. It allows them to see the inside of the pipes. Before then they either had to enter them manually or had no way to inspect the pipes. Evenson's goal with the camera van is to be able to inspect all of the infrastructure that they have. They use that to help update their GIS inventory. They know there are some data gaps there. She wants a complete inventory of their system and the condition it is in. As far as the quality side, they do a lot of Stormwater education and they really value ECAB when it comes to helping with the Stormwater education. They do park clean ups, artful inlets, and get involved with ECAB. They have 5 totes that have been primed and ready for the rain barrel program. Evenson asked if anyone had questions. Griffith asked if there had been much discussion or work on putting forward another Stormwater Utility. Evenson said that there has not. She explains for those that are not aware of the efforts to fund Stormwater needs over the years. They are required to have a storm water quality program by regulation which requires funding. Smith asked what the repercussions are if they do not get the projects funded? Evenson said that without the funding nothing can be done so the infrastructure will continue to deteriorate. More sink holes, potential for more flooding. They also have permit requirements as well and if they don't meet them, those are permit violations and then it is up to DEQ to decide at what point that becomes a serious issue and those commitments need to be met. There are a lot of things that DEQ can do to gain compliance, some of which are scary. "We just want to make sure that we are giving the citizens of Norman the best storm water program that we can." Cretsinger asked if there are combined sewers here because back east they were? Evenson explains to everyone that a combined sewer has both wastewater and what runs off the streets combined in one sewer and that is a really tough system to manage. Evenson said that in Oklahoma, Norman in particular, the Stormwater and wastewater are separate. Another thing to know about Stormwater is that our Stormwater goes through these pipes directly to our creeks and streams so there is no treatment. Cretsinger asked if there was a setup to slow down the amount of junk that gets put into the streams and creeks? Evenson said that they currently do not have any of those types of best management practices installed. She said that if they did end up doing something like that it would be on a much smaller scale. Smith said that at one time there was an artificial wetlands constructed at Lake Thunderbird with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and asked if it is still there? As far as Evenson knows there is a constructive wetland in William Morgan Park and thinks CC Environmental was involved in that design. They also did a Stream restoration project. The city of Norman worked with the conservation commission on the upper portion of Brookhaven creek so you will notice it is pretty wild looking and different than what you would typically see in streams and that is done intentionally. They have a no mow zone in that area because of the stream stabilization work that they've done and they want that to be as natural as possible. Smith asked if she could talk about the new library and along Bishop Creek. Evenson said that the Eastwood Park system has established a no mow zone on the edges of Bishop Creek to help stabilize the banks and to give them a buffer as well as water quality benefits by allowing the water to filter through that taller vegetation. That area has a very active volunteer who cleans it on a regular basis. Evenson said that some of the things that they have been working on as a city is what they call rain infrastructure which is basically mimicking nature on a small scale to either absorb the water or treat it in some way to reduce the amount of contaminants that are in it. The new library has several really interesting green infrastructure techniques. It has a green roof. They have signs that tell you about all the different techniques that they have such as native grasses. Evenson said that out front along Dawes also looks wild which is intentional for the vegetation which is native and is lower maintenance. They have done the same thing at the east side library as well. Cretsinger said that might be something that they could do more education on as well. She said that she has seen on social media how people were complaining about how unstructured and messy it was and thinks

that people need to understand the purpose behind it. Smith asked if Evenson could cover the fertilizer ordinance and the water quality protection zone. Evenson said that they both came into play in 2011. The manufactured fertilizer ordinance basically states that you are not allowed to apply phosphorous containing fertilizer to your yard unless you have done a soil test and then you only add what is needed based on the soil test. It also requires that applicators come in and get a certification and provide them with what types of fertilizers they are applying and what their NPK ratio is. If they do not apply phosphorous containing fertilizer within the city limits then they certify that and waive their certification fee which is \$25. The other part of that is if you are applying an organic fertilizer and it contains phosphorous then there is an exception in the ordinance to allow you do that. The ordinance also states that you cannot dump or otherwise cause to be placed any yard waste into the storm sewer systems and the streets are part of the storm sewer system. With it being mowing season they are getting tons of calls on mowers blowing into the streets. They will then contact the company or persons and educate them on the ordinance and ask that they clean it up and do what they can in the future to redirect it. Either bag it or compost it or blow it back into the grass. Smith said that it is very inexpensive to get your soil tested at the Cleveland county extension office, approximately \$10. The water quality protection zone ordinance is part of the subdivision regulations and only applies to the Lake Thunderbird water shed and only applies when a piece of property is platted. As part of the storm water master plan process the consultants identify what they consider the full build out flood plain based on the projected land views at that time and set that out as what they call stream planning corridor which basically tells them where that flood plain would be if they were fully built out. When a property is subdivided and platted either through a certificate of survey or the platting process then they are required to dedicate the water quality protection zone entirely or they can shrink it if they provide engineered solutions that can reduce nitrogen and phosphorous to the same level that the buffer would have otherwise provided. All of that with the goal of trying to protect and improve water quality in the Lake Thunderbird water shed. When you dedicate the water quality protection zone, basically, you are saying that nothing is going to be built in that area and the vegetation can only be mowed to 6 inches or higher. They ask to keep it in as natural a condition as possible. Dane thanks Evenson for sharing all her information and answering all the questions. Dane gives the "last call" for any other questions. Griffith says, regarding the TMDL levels, that when he was on council back in the day, the lake was considered at risk because of the algae and there was considerable concern about an algae bloom and asks if the conditions have improved at all with the lake. Evenson said that the lake is still considered impaired but they are making progress. She doesn't know of any reports of major algae blooms in recent years. Right now they are working with Freeze and Nickles to analyze their watershed data. They monitor ten stream locations across the thunderbird watershed monthly for nitrogen, phosphorous and total suspended solids. They have 5 years' worth of data now as well as flow data so they are doing some loading calculations, analysis and modeling to see where they are at with complying with the TMDL and those particular requirements. Those results aren't in yet. Part of that contract is to identify any hot spots where they might need additional best management practices to get some initial pollution reduction. Smith asked if a lot of that was dependent on the weather as well. Evenson said yes.

Item No. 7 being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Griffith asked about the potential for the reuse project. Madenwald said that the current status of the reuse project is that they are setting up a pilot test at the wastewater treatment plant. Looking at different treatment technologies to see which ones work better for them being able to send water back to the lake. They will go through those steps and see what options work the best so

they don't send to many nutrients back. Once they evaluate and figure that out then we will go back to DEQ and see which options work, is it financially feasible, and go through those next steps. Griffith thought that there was considerable concern about medications and drugs that present themselves to the waste water treatment plant that can't be dealt with. Madenwald said that it's real small amounts and another consideration of the pilot as well. They are looking at different technologies to look at that. He thinks contaminants of emerging concern (CEC) is one component that they look at as part of the pilot too. Smith tells everyone that on Saturday there is an electronics collection event at Reaves Park from 9-12 on the west side. Let's everyone know that tomorrow night at 7 is a webinar from Utopia Plastix. It is a lady that has a manufacturing company in OKC which uses plant-based plastics. Smith lets everyone know some things pertaining to the board. If you miss 3 consecutive meetings you are off the board and they won't make any exceptions to that. She just wants everyone to know that. We will try to call you and remind you if you have missed 2 so you can be sure and attend the next one. If they do not have a meeting, for some reason its cancelled that will not count as a missed meeting. She also tells everyone about the rolling quorum and that they have to be very careful about the Open Meetings act. So if a board member sends an email to the entire group and another board member responds to the entire group, that is considered a quorum so you do NOT want to reply all to any of the emails. This is really for your protection. Smith asked if anyone had any question. Cretsinger asked if there was a number limit on that? Smith specifies that a quorum is over half. She says another thing that is good to know is if you post something you can't really represent yourself as an ECAB member unless the board has approved the message that your sending or posting. So don't send or post anything as a member of ECAB. You can do it personal just not as a member. Heins thanks Smith and asked if there was anything else that anyone else had. Nathan asked how many members we had. Smith said there are now 7 members so 4 would be considered a quorum. Heins said, "so it would be a 3-person limit on subcommittees?" Smith said yes so if we have 4 on the compost committee then we need to drop somebody. Bondy said they can remove her if need be until they get another person joining ECAB. Heins said since we need to get it down to 3 then that works for now. Heins said that they have all pretty much done their part anyway with getting the content together and from here it is going to be building up the graphics and getting the social media going so he will stick around to help with that. Smith thanked Bondy for removing herself from the subcommittee and thanked Madenwald for bringing that up.

Item No. 8 being:

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

Item No. 9 being:

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Passed and approved this 21st day of April 2021.

Dane Heins

Chair, Dane Heins