1. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.
Committee members in attendance: Jade Pennig, Cindy Joanning, Connie LaCombe, Nicholas Hager, Laura Zanmiller, Ken Paulman, Liz Pearson, Joshua Pryzbylski
Non-voting members in attendance: Robyn Gulley, Dave Lynch, Dave Schletty

2. NEW BUSINESS
a. Approve January 5, 2021 Minutes - The minutes were approved.
b. Introduce New Park and Recreation Committee Liaison - Dave Lynch
   Lynch talked about the last Parks and Recreation Committee meeting; members discussed a safety issue with children running across the street into Emerson Park. They also talked about Community Gardens. One of Lynch’s pet projects is improving access to wetland spaces in the parks. There is a beautiful pond/wetland along this River to River trail in Garlough. It is not visible because of invasive species (buckthorn) growth. This may be a project for both committees.
c. Consider Recommendation Climate Emergency Resolution - Schletty reported that Connie LaCombe mentioned this resolution and wanted to discuss it at the Committee meeting. Sixteen [Minnesota] cities have declared a Climate Emergency. The committee did a similar resolution in 2019, which emphasized carbon pricing. If enough cities declare a climate emergency, action may be done on a state level. Schletty suggested that the Committee could research on the resolutions passed by other cities and the language that was used. Most of the work could be done by email and be finished by next month. Paulman commented on the City of Edina; some cities are already doing the [climate] work. Pennig mentioned that different cities like Burnsville, St. Louis Park and Cedar Rapids have different climate action plans. It would make sense to compare and see what makes sense for West St. Paul. Pearson asked about the next steps after the resolution is approved, and what the City would want the State to do. Hager commented that the resolution might be used in-house and in the West St. Paul community. This is an emergency; here are the tangible steps residents can do to implement changes. This is more practical. Zanmiller said we could do both the local and the get the bigger involvement on the state level. Paulman remarked that there are some limitations on individuals wanting to make an impact. For example, there are barriers to using public transportation. The bigger question is if individuals would be willing to making a major impact like living in denser neighborhoods or deemphasizing automobile use. Pearson suggested using the resolution as a tool to get people in our community involved. Residents can participate in projects (the GreenSteps program) that the City has identified. Hager added that he would also like to see big policy goals and resolutions. On a city level, it might look like denser zoning. Another resolution would be for the City to be carbon neutral by a certain date, at least for city government activities. Gulley said it could also apply to having developers designing [green] building plans, i.e. installing solar panels or charging consoles for electric vehicles. The city does not actually have any “teeth” to ask developers to do these type of buildings. Gulley supports the resolution. Joanning talked even simpler [incentives.] She mentioned the rebates she received for more energy-efficient home items like her new efficient boiler and new efficient mini-split. Pennig talked about using the city website to promote the best practices to the residents. Pearson, LaCombe, Joanning and Paulman volunteered for the subcommittee on the resolution.
   Pennig made a motion to have the subcommittee move forward on forming a climate emergency resolution for the City of West St. Paul. Paulman seconded the motion. The motion carried. All Ayes

3. OLD BUSINESS
a. Solar Ordinance Amendment Discussion - Schletty reported the Planning Commission and City Council discussed the code updates and changes to the solar ordinance. Council did approve the changes. A second
meeting is needed. The final reading will be at the February meeting. It would be a good time for Committee members to show support.

b. **U of MN Student’s Final Projects.**

Schletty would like members to look at the presentations and decide on their subcommittees. LaCombe suggested focusing on the GreenSteps program. Other committees can take the other projects that do not pertain to the GreenSteps. Schletty said there is an RFP going out on the bike and pedestrian plan assessment. The students’ assessment will be part of it.

4. **UPDATES**

a. **City Council**- Gulley mentioned the Tour de Rec program, which happens monthly. It is a lot of fun; [the Recreation Department] has a lot of different programming and residents are welcome to drop in the activity. Her child has been enjoying the Pride Outside program at Dodge Nature Center. Dakota County still has its tree and shrub sale going on. Explore West St. Paul Days (August 11-13) is returning to the city this summer as well.

b. **Staff**

i. **West St. Paul Days**- Schletty described the three-day event. The City Open House will be on Thursday, August 11. On Friday, August 12, there will be a parade on Friday evening and the Movie in the Dome, (Community Choice.) On Saturday, August 13, a Fitness in the Park event and community bike ride are scheduled for the morning. There will be a gap mid-day. In early afternoon, there will be an arts, culture and environmental fair in Harmon Park. Schletty would like Members to be involved at an info table during the fair. Finally, in the evening, there will be a big party at the Sports Complex with a band (PopRocks). There will be a beer garden and food trucks and possibly fireworks as well.

ii. **City Hall Reconstruction**- the reconstruction is currently underway.

iii. **Planning Commission**- NA

iv. **Park and Recreation Committee**- Lynch said that it is an exciting time for parks. The first pickleball court was installed. This summer, the first stage of the Marthaler Park reconstruction will be implemented. It is a three-year plan that will transform the park. This spring is the West St. Paul pool park playground will be replaced.

5. **OTHER**

a. **Landscaping for Clean Water/Dakota County Soil and Water** – Pennig mentioned the online course-. Applicants sign up for the free class. The course teaches how a watershed works and how to design backyards and other green spaces for a healthy watershed. Residents can apply for a $250 garden grant once they have completed the class.

b. **WHEP/Dakota County**- Schletty mentioned the Wetland Health Education Program volunteer program in which 3-4 wetlands are selected; volunteers will do evaluations on those wetlands. Participants take water samples and looking at what types of animals are living there. The findings are submitted to a consultant. Schletty’s wife volunteered last year, enjoyed it and learned a lot.

6. **ADJOURN**

With no other business before the Committee and no objections, the Environmental Committee adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon G. Hatfield