

RESOLUTION NO. 5647

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BEMIDJI TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MINNESOTA GREENSTEP CITIES PROGRAM

WHEREAS, efforts to address energy and climate issues provide an opportunity to move toward energy self-reliance and greater community resiliency; provide environmentally healthy and cheaper-to-operate public buildings; encourage new economic development and local jobs; and support local food and renewable energy production; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bemidji has established a Sustainability Committee; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Session Laws 2008, Chapter 356, Section 13 directed the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (“MPCA”) and Office of Energy Security in the Department of Commerce (“Office of Energy Security”), in collaboration with Clean Energy Resource Teams (“CERTs”), to recommend municipal actions and policies that work toward meeting the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, the Next Generation Act of 2007, Minnesota Session Laws 2007 - Chapter 136:

- (1) sets State greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals of cutting emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2015, 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, and 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050;
- (2) sets a State energy conservation goal of achieving annual energy savings equal to 1.5 percent of annual retail energy sales of electricity and natural gas;
- (3) establishes an energy policy goal that the per capita use of fossil fuel as an energy input be reduced by 15 percent by the year 2015, through increased reliance on energy efficiency and renewable energy alternatives;
- (4) establishes an energy policy goal that 25 percent of the electricity used in the state be derived from renewable energy resources by the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program assists in facilitating technical assistance for the implementation of these sustainable development best practices; and

WHEREAS, a broad coalition of public and private stakeholders including the League of Minnesota Cities, the MPCA, Office of Energy Security and CERTs responded to the 2008 legislation by establishing the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program to provide a series of sustainable development best practices focusing on local government opportunities to reduce energy use and greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program provides cost-effective sustainable development best practices in the following five categories: (1) Buildings and Lighting; (2) Transportation; (3) Land Use; (4) Environmental Management; and (5) Economic and Community Development.

WHEREAS, climate changes have been observed in Minnesota and have the potential to negatively impact local, regional and state economies; infrastructure development; habitat; ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations; spread invasive species and exotic diseases; reduce drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and pose health threats to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, uncertainty in energy prices and the transition away from fossil fuel energy sources present new challenges and opportunities to both the City of Bemidji and to the economic health of its citizens and businesses; and

WHEREAS, local governments have the unique opportunity to achieve both energy use and climate change gas reductions through building and facilities management; land use and transportation planning; environmental management; and through economic and community development;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Bemidji does hereby authorize the City of Bemidji (the “City”) to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program. Be it further resolved that the City:

1. Appoints Brett Cease to serve as the city’s GreenStep coordinator to facilitate best practice implementation and the involvement of community members, civic, business and educational organizations, and other units of government as appropriate in the planning, promoting and implementing of GreenStep Cities best practices; and

2. With the help of the GreenStep coordinator and the sustainability committee, will identify a short list of best practices for probable implementation and initial recognition by March 15th, 2012; and
3. Will work towards implementing in total at least nine required and seven elective GreenStep best practices that will result in economic savings, energy use reduction, and reduction in the community's greenhouse gas footprint. With the help of the GreenStep coordinator, a summary of the city's implementation of best practices will be posted on the Minnesota GreenStep Cities web site.

The foregoing resolution was offered by Councilmember Waldhausen, who moved its adoption, and on due second by Councilmember Albrecht, was passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Larson, Waldhausen, Hellquist, Johnson, Albrecht, Negard, Thompson
Nays: None
Absent: None

Passed: February 6, 2012

ATTEST:



Kay M. Murphy, City Clerk

APPROVED:



David A. Larson, Mayor