

**MINUTES  
CITY OF DEKALB  
CITIZENS' ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
January 2, 2020**

The Citizens' Environmental Commission (CEC) held a regular business meeting on January 2, 2020, in the Executive Conference Room at the DeKalb Municipal Building, 200 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, Illinois, 60115.

Vice-Chair Clare Kron called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Roll call was recorded by Management Intern Adam Grubbs and the following members of the CEC were present: Ms. Kron, Ms. Farrell, Mr. Honeywell, Mr. Oleckno, Ms. Skala, and Ms. Wilcox.

Also present were Management Analyst Jason Blumenthal and Management Intern Adam Grubbs.

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Vice Chair Kron asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION

Mr. Honeywell moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Farrell.

VOTE

Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of those present.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vice Chair Kron asked for public comment. No public comment was given.

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular monthly meeting of December 5, 2019.

Vice Chair Kron asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting held on December 5, 2019.

MOTION

Ms. Skala moved to approve the monthly minutes with minor changes; seconded by Mr. Honeywell.

VOTE

Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of those present.

**E. COMMISSION REPORTS**

1. DeKalb County Health Department- Vacant

2. DeKalb Park District- Amy Doll: Management Analyst Blumenthal gave an update for Ms. Doll. There will be a Christmas tree drop off and recycling at Hopkins Park between December 30<sup>th</sup> and February 9<sup>th</sup>. The trees must be real and have lights removed. The Park District has also budgeted for a part time, natural space manager, apprentice position to assist with maintaining natural species and invasive plant removal. DeKalb Nature Trail clean up (woody invasive plants) took place in December.
3. Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District- Mike Holland: Management Analyst Blumenthal gave an update for Mr. Holland. The Reclamation District is continuing to look at the food digester for energy conservation.
4. Northern Illinois University: vacant: Vice-Chair Kron explained the resignation of Christine Lagatolla.
5. City Staff Liaison: Jason Blumenthal: Management Analyst Blumenthal talked about the United States Census and stated what the City's efforts will be. Ms. Kron asked about soil samples at the Gurler Road project. Management Analyst Blumenthal stated that the City Manager has made sure this was accomplished. Ms. Kron asked about the CEC Web Page. Management Analyst Blumenthal explained where to find it. Ms. Kron asked about Monarch City. Management Analyst Blumenthal said the Park District and Kishwaukee Reclamation district are interested. Ms. Farrell asked about the official letter. Ms. Kron asked about a partnership with Ellwood House and other places that are interested.

## **F. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Resignation of Christine Lagatolla, NIU ex-officio member.**

Ms. Kron explained this during the NIU ex-officio members report.

### **2. CEC public forums**

The Commission discussed this past year's public forums. Only one was completed and it was on Indoor Air Quality and presented by Mr. Oleckno. Vice-Chair Kron suggested the commission connect their forums with STEM cafes that NIU organizes. If interested, the commission could present a topic at one of these events. More specifics were discussed and the idea of a presentation on 5G technology came about. Management Analyst Blumenthal said it would be an idea, however, it would need to be run past the City Manager.

Mr. Honeywell indicated that it might be nice to shoot for 2 to 3 forums in this coming year. Discussion continued and the idea of having Dave Davis, with Kishwaukee350, do a presentation on community solar was presented. Mr. Honeywell stated that it might be nice to have a discussion on alternative energies in general.

## **MOTION**

Mr. Oleckno moved for a joint partnership with Kishwaukee350 to hold a community forum with solar communities; seconded by Mr. Honeywell.

VOTE

Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of those present.

## **G. OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Sustainability Plan Updates**

Discussion on the Sustainability Plan occurred. Management Analyst Blumenthal indicated updates to the excel document were done and that he would make it into a true word document.

### **2. PRIDE Awards**

Ms. Kron asked for recommendations for this year. Dave Davis suggested Mark Eddington. Ms. Kron suggested Common Grounds. Mr. Oleckno explained the difference between Business Pride awards and Grosklag's Award for individuals. Mr. Oleckno suggested to send out the criteria for the awards to all members. Ms. Kron explained any business that uses sustainable practices is eligible.

### **3. End of year report**

Ms. Kron explained that Mr. Kenney emailed stating the end of the year report was not complete. Management Analyst Blumenthal said everyone should bring end of year notes to the next meeting.

### **4. Goals for 2020**

Ms. Kron stated the goal list for 2020 was supposed to be created at this meeting. Mr. Honeywell said one goal should be co-presenting topics at two public forums; Mr. Oleckno presented the goal list for 2019. FOIA was discussed, committee members should keep all information in a folder regarding the committee, or CC Jason on Business e-mails.

### **5. Coyote awareness**

Ms. Kron stated more coyotes have been seen in town, and they could be a danger to little animals and babies. This could be a potential new forum: When urban environment and wildlife environment intersect. Educate residents on coyotes, not exterminating them. Mr. Oleckno said there were other wildlife to which awareness should be raised. He stated there should be awareness of our interaction and the wildlife ecosystem. Mr. Honeywell said monarch city could tie into this.

### **6. Updates on previously discussed items**

Ms. Kron brought up a conference call on climate change. This was a topic of international interest to bring back to state and local levels. More on a community level than a federal level. There is an increasing rate of natural disasters. U.S. efforts are not up to scale. There needs to be better infrastructure: early warning systems, heat action plan. Planning should be based on not if, but when, and health care systems must be prepared for extremes. This process should involve equity and policy. DeKalb's immediate concern: Backup equipment for people with immediate medical needs, who live at home. Ms. Kron asked someone to investigate this, she clarified backup for electrical equipment for life support. Mr. Honeywell said he would do this.

Ms. Kron asked if there was a registry for at risk individuals. Management Analyst Blumenthal said the Community Services Coordinator would have one. Ms. Kron asked who is looking after these people at risk. Management Analyst Blumenthal said the City has an emergency plan. Ms. Kron asked to look at the registry. Mr. Honeywell suggested asking neighbors to identify individuals to place on this list.

Ms. Kron addressed the state of the bees. Mr. Honeywell and Management Analyst Blumenthal wanted to talk about the Bee Keeping Ordinance. Mr. Honeywell said a ¼ acre is too large for lot size, the requirement needed is 25 feet from lot lines. Mr. Honeywell asked what the average lot size is in DeKalb? Management Analyst Blumenthal did not know. Mr. Honeywell said maybe the requirements could be 75 feet from lot lines. Mr. Oleckno suggested 5,000 square feet. Mr. Honeywell then suggested 1/5-acre lot size, or 7500 square feet. It does not need to be a specific distance from house, but just from lot lines. They need to find out minimum line lot size. Management Analyst Blumenthal will talk to City Planner and see what regulations there may be. Mr. Honeywell talked about having barrier fencing between apiary and other houses and should include other buildings. Mr. Oleckno had one issue on this, he thinks there should be training for prospective beekeepers. Mr. Honeywell and Management Analyst Blumenthal said there is no requirement. the hive just needs to be inspected. Mr. Honeywell said there is no training like that out there.

Ms. Kron asked who she should send articles to for the commission to post? How will articles be presented? Management Analyst Blumenthal said he oversees the web page and he will post the information. Mr. Honeywell asked If he puts in a request for articles in the Daily Chronicle will other people contribute to it? Committee members said yes. Mr. Honeywell will ask Shaw Media on CEC stories.

Ms. Kron wants to prepare a press release on cannabis and new rules. Young mothers are using marijuana and there are no studies on this issue. Management Analyst Blumenthal said to talk to the City Manager. Ms. Kron said she will email him.

## **H. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. New announcements

Next Meeting: February 6, 4:00 pm.

## **I. ADJOURNMENT**

Vice-Chair Kron called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

Ms. Skala moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Oleckno

VOTE

Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Vice-Chair Kron Adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Adam Grubbs, Management Intern.