

## MINUTES

### CITY OF DEKALB

#### Citizens' Environmental Commission

January 4, 2024

The Citizens' Environmental Commission (CEC) held a regular meeting on January 4, 2024, in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

Chair Steve Honeywell called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

#### **A. Roll Call**

Roll call was recorded by Management Analyst Scott Zak, and the following members of the CEC were present: Chair Steve Honeywell, Rachel Farrell, Julie Jesmer and Clare Kron, Ex-Officio Member James Carlin and Council Liaison Barb Larson. Commissioner Shaun Langley joined the meeting at 5:18 p.m. Not present were Ex-Officio Members Matt Emken and Mike Holland.

#### **B. Approval of Agenda**

MOTION

Ms. Jesmer motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Farrell.

VOTE

The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

#### **C. Public Comments**

No public comments were received.

#### **D. Approval of Minutes**

##### **1. Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2023**

MOTION

Chair Honeywell motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Jesmer.

VOTE

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

#### **E. Commission Reports**

##### **1. DeKalb County Health Department**

Ex-Officio Member Carlin reported the Department continues to collect used holiday lights for recycling through the end of the month and dates are being set for this year's household hazardous waste and electronics recycling collections.

##### **2. DeKalb Park District**

With Ex-Officio Member Emken absent, no report was given.

### **3. Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District**

District Management Analyst Nick Newman sat in for Ex-Officio Member Holland. Mr. Newman reported a home near their facility's entrance on Sycamore Road has been demolished and the land will be converted to pollinator habitat, bringing the District's acreage of native habitat to ten. He said the District continues to accept cooking grease from residents and their electric vehicle charging stations are seeing use.

### **4. Northern Illinois University**

With no Ex-Officio Member appointed, no report was given.

### **5. City Staff Liaison**

Mr. Zak had no report.

## **F. New Business**

### **1. Presentation of PRIDE Awards**

P.R.I.D.E Awards were presented to Greg Romaneck for his work removing trash from the Kishwaukee River while kayaking and Brianne and Zachary Harrelson of Harrelson's Bikes for a Cause, a nonprofit which repairs bicycles for free distribution to children. Their nominations were read, Chair Honeywell presented the recipients with certificates and photos were taken. A third recipient, Javon Brown, was unable to attend. A certificate will be mailed to Mr. Brown, the owner of We Remove Things, a junk removal company being recognized for diverting items from the landfill through resale.

### **2. Sustainability video clip**

Due to technical issues, the clip was unable to be shown.

### **3. New Members**

Robert Srygler introduced himself to the Commission. Mr. Srygler has submitted an application to join the Commission. He has a background in environmental biology, was an adjunct professor at Kishwaukee College, has completed his PhD at Northern Illinois University and teaches at Rock Valley College.

### **4. Preparing for the Sustainability Plan update**

The one-page plans the Commission has written for each topic of the Sustainability Plan were distributed for review. Ms. Kron noted Tom Skusinski's grad students might be able to help with projects that come about from the Plan, Mr. Carlin and Mr. Newman can be resources and NIU's Sustainability Coordinator Courtney Gallaher can point the Commission in the right direction for grants. Commissioners agreed the plan should use plain language and be written so people know the impact of issues such as climate change will have on them. Chair Honeywell reminded the plan contains goals and is not an implementation plan. It was agreed the one-page section plans would be distributed in Word format for Commissioners, so Commissioners can suggest edits, which will be compiled for the next meeting.

## **G. Old Business**

### **1. Next articles for Daily Chronicle**

**Future possibilities – tree/Christmas lighting recycling**

**“Did you know” article**

The Commission agreed the February article will be on gardening, the “Did You Know” article with unique recycling and reuse tips will be in March and efficient water usage will be the topic for April.

### **2. Updates on other issues**

Ms. Kron shared the EPA awarded \$100 million in environmental justice grants, a polystyrene foam ban has been signed for state agencies and universities and single-use condiments will no longer be offered at state parks. She shared an article titled “Big Oil’s History of Greenwashing,” shared information on the hazards of vape disposal with Mr. Carlin and suggested scouts could help the Commission as they earn their Eagle Badges.

## **H. Announcements**

### **1. New announcements**

No information was shared here.

### **2. Next regular meeting: February 1, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.**

## **I. Adjournment**

MOTION

Ms. Kron motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Langley.

VOTE

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was declared adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Scott Zak, Management Analyst

Approved by the Citizens’ Environmental Commission on February 1, 2024.