

**MINUTES  
CITY OF DEKALB  
CITIZENS' ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
April 4, 2019**

The Citizens' Environmental Commission held a regular business meeting on April 4, 2019, in the Executive Conference Room at the DeKalb Municipal Building, 200 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, Illinois, 60115.

Chair Kenney called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**A. ROLL CALL**

The following members of the Citizens' Environmental Commission were present (indicated by ✓):

- |                           |                |                  |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| ✓ Dan Kenney (Chair)      | ✓ Ken Koch     |                  |
| ✓ Clare Kron (Vice-Chair) | ✓ Bill Oleckno | ✓ Rachel Farrell |
| ✓ Sharon Skala            | ✓ Ann Shult    |                  |

The following ex-officio members were present (indicated by x):

- ✓ Amy Doll, DeKalb Park District
- ✓ Mike Holland, Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District
- ✓ Christine Lagattolla, Northern Illinois University
- ✓ Veronica Polvi, DeKalb County Health Department

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Kenney asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION -

Ms. Skala moved to approve the agenda.

Mr. Mr. Koch seconded the motion.

Agenda was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**D. APPROVAL of MINUTES**

Chair Kenney asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting held on March 7, 2019.

MOTION –

Ms. Skala moved to approve the minutes.

Ms. Farrell seconded the motion.

Minutes unanimously approved by voice vote.

**E. COMMISSION REPORTS**

1. DeKalb Park District: Amy Doll

Northern Illinois University (NIU) and the Dekalb Park District will be teaming up for NIU Cares Day. NIU students will clear invasive plants and remove garbage. The Strategic Plan Committee's new plan is almost finished. Preservation and sustainability will be critical to the Park District's new strategic plan. Possible projects under review include solar panels at the

recreation center. In May 2019, the Park District will reveal a new master for Welsh Park.

2. Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District: Michael Holland

Mr. Holland reported construction at the Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District's new facility is making great progress. By fall of this year the new facility will be producing their own electricity through a hydroelectric process. He also mentioned the DeKalb Watershed Committee will announce a tour soon.

3. Northern Illinois University: Christine Lagattolla

Ms. Lagatolla announced the sale of equipment such as canoes, johnboats, and various camping equipment on April 28, 2019. NIU also plans to partner with the community and the DeKalb Park District as a coalition to pool together resources and maximize grant opportunities. She also mentioned plans for an Earth Day cleanup with students and faculty.

4. DeKalb County Health Department: Veronica Polvi

Ms. Polvi announced the DeKalb County Health Department collected 939 lbs. of Christmas tree lights. She also announced dates for two county-wide recycling events. On May 4, the County will hold a recycling event at the DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport for electronics and an event on June 8 for the collection of hazardous household wastes.

5. City of Dekalb: Patrick DiDiana

Mr. DiDiana informed the CEC Lakeshore Recycling Systems, the City's waste hauler, started curbside landscape/yard waste collections. He briefly provided an overview of the services included in yard waste collections.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

1. DeKalb Police Department Discussion on the Purchase of Patrol Vehicles

Deputy Chief John Petragallo attended the meeting to discuss the Department's policy on the purchase of alternative fuel patrol vehicles. Currently, the Department is evaluating which vehicle type to purchase in the future. When considering the purchase of vehicles the Department considers several factors. First, the Department evaluates the vehicle's ability to meet "front-line" requirements. "Front-line" requirements are critical because of the stress the vehicle endures from everyday use. Second, the Department considers the availability of replacement parts for the vehicle. Replacement parts should be readily available as maintenance occurs regularly. Price is a determining factor. In the past the City has utilized same pricing the State of Illinois receives and negotiates.

Mr. Koch suggested purchasing vehicles that idle off an electric battery when considering hybrid vehicles. Ms. Shult also provided insight based on the research she completed and revealed General Motors and Chrysler will unveil their first hybrid police vehicles in 2020. Ms. Kron asked if the Police Department would consider making sustainability a priority. Chief Petragalla responded that it is possible. Mr. Nicklas interjected that he and City Council are planning budget discussions soon and those discussions will include how sustainability will impact the budget. Mr. Oleckno and other Commissioners also asked questions seeking clarification of the department's priorities regarding vehicle use. Finally,

Mr. Koch made a motion to draft a formal letter to the Council recommending purchasing hybrids only for future police vehicle purchases. Ms. Kron seconded the motion.

## 2. Public Forums – Planning Discussion

The CEC has agreed to three public forums for 2019. A public forum on the dangers of radon will take place first. Ms. Lagatolla will locate an expert to make a presentation. A second public forum will focus on indoor air quality. The third forum will focus on outdoor air quality and will be tentatively scheduled for June. Mr. Oleckno volunteered to give a presentation on indoor air quality for CEC members at a future meeting. The Commission endorsed the idea enthusiastically.

## G. OLD BUSINESS

### 1. Coal Tar Sealants

Mr. Oleckno stated that while coal tar sealants pose a potential public health risk, he does not have enough information at this point to determine whether or not this is an issue in DeKalb. More information on the use of coal tar sealants is needed.

City Manager Bill Nicklas also suggested further research on coal tar sealants to determine if it is a public health issue in DeKalb. Mr. Koch suggested analyzing stormwater runoff. The next steps will be discussed with the City's new attorneys if the CEC decides to recommend pursuing a coal tar sealant ban.

### 2. Charging Stations for Electric Vehicles

Staff Liaison Patrick DiDiana presented information on electric vehicle charging stations. The information detailed different business models and presented pricing for a unit recommended by Mr. Koch.

### 3. Urban Chicken Discussion

Ms. Kron motioned to withdraw a proposed local ordinance to regulate backyard chickens. The motion was seconded by Mr. Koch. The members unanimously voted to withdraw the ordinance. After the vote, Ms. Kron explained her decision to withdraw the proposed ordinance. Her decision was partly based on the City's lack of resources to regulate a local ordinance if it was passed.

### 4. Updates on other items discussed previously

Ms. Kron discussed using information from a previous presentation Ms. Shult gave on native vegetation to offer educational classes on same subject at the DeKalb Public Library. Ms. Farrell mentioned updating the spreadsheet that lists tasks and its leader at the next meeting. Ms. Shult informed the CEC of an event she was organizing to train people on how to spot cranes (the birds). Ms. Kron also provided an update on LED lighting. She sent the data City Manager Nicklas provided to an expert in the field. The expert stated the current LED lights

have a good design and have dimming capabilities. Once she has his ideas and recommendations, she will update the CEC.

#### **H. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, May 2, 2019, 4:00 pm

#### **I. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Shult moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Oleckno seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Chair Kenney declared the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Patrick DiDiana, Staff Liaison