

**MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
CITIZENS' COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMISSION
July 17, 2023**

The Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission (CCEC) held a regular meeting on July 17, 2023, in the Second Floor Training Room of the DeKalb Police Department, 700 West Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, Illinois.

Chair Brad Hoey called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL

Roll call was recorded by Management Analyst Scott Zak and the following members of the CCEC were present: Chair Brad Hoey and Commissioners Kenneth Brown, Brandon Elion, Helen Umbdenstock and Ellingsworth Webb. Absent were: Commissioners Melissa Beck, Jeanine Holcomb and Aaron Robertson.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

MOTION

Mr. Webb motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Umbdenstock.

VOTE

The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 15, 2023

MOTION

Ms. Umbdenstock motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Brown.

VOTE

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public comments were received.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. MEMORIAL BENCH

The Commission continued its discussions from the last meeting on creating a memorial bench for Gracie Sasso-Cleveland, a 15-year-old who was killed in May. Possible locations were considered. Ms. Umbdenstock suggested placing it

along West Lincoln Highway near the lagoon. She said the wording on the bench would have Gracie's name and say, "Love Your Children." Mr. Elion asked if there were other locations with more children, and parks were suggested. Ms. Umbdenstock said \$700 has been raised so far to purchase the bench and another \$400 is needed. Mr. Webb said he would contact DeKalb Park District Superintendent of Parks and Development Mat Emken about placing the bench in a park. The Commission may be ready next month to vote on supporting the bench's creation.

2. COMPLETION CEREMONIES FOR MURALS

The Commission agreed a news release and social media posts would be appropriate to mark the completion of the Huskie Pride mural in the Annie Glidden Road underpass. Chair Hoey said a big event should be held when the City Hall mural is completed since so many people were involved. He said the volunteers who worked on the mural should be invited as a way of saying thank you. The Commission agreed a ribbon cutting with speakers would be appropriate.

3. NIU HOMECOMING BLOCK PARTY

Chair Hoey said a new piece of public art will be unveiled in downtown DeKalb during the NIU Homecoming Block Party on Oct. 12. He said the piece will be a great addition to downtown while providing another tie-in between the downtown and NIU campus. He also shared the event will be larger than last year and will be held on Lincoln Highway, which will be closed to traffic.

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. ANNIE GLIDDEN ROAD MURAL

Mr. Zak shared photos of the power washing and painting work that has been completed for the Huskie Pride mural. After a two-week period to allow the red paint on the walls to set, the Huskie Nation stencils will be painted on the walls and the Huskie image on the center column will be installed to complete the project. The final mockup of the stencils were shared. The font will match the font used by NIU Athletics and as suggested by the designer, the lettering will be smaller and higher up on the wall than shown on the draft mockup. This is because the bottom of the walls are uneven and placing the lettering too close to the bottom could make the letters look uneven as well.

2. CITY HALL MURAL

Mr. Zak shared artist Danielle Casali and the community volunteers are nearly finished with the creation of the mural's mosaic panels. The installation of the panels on the rear wall of City Hall will begin the week of Aug. 28.

3. VETERANS MURAL

The Commission continued its discussions of the Veterans Mural on the rear wall of Plaza DeKalb. Since the \$8,500 in T-Mobile grant funding available for the project will not be enough for a painted mural on the wall, the Commission at its last meeting agreed to explore a vinyl mural or a painted mural on panels that could be mounted on the building as options to lower the cost. Mr. Zak shared the City of Woodstock used the panel method to create a similarly sized mural at 8'x28' at a cost of \$20,000, including \$12,000 to the artist. During the design of the Huskie Pride mural, an 8'x20' vinyl billboard that was considered for that project had an estimated cost of \$5,200. Since vinyl mural is the only option within budget, the Commission agreed to explore it further. Resident Michael Embry asked the Commission to wait until its September meeting before making a final decision. He shared the City has been nominated for a national recognition as the most veteran-friendly city and said that could help with fundraising for a larger mural. He said a fund is being established with the DeKalb County Community Foundation. Mr. Webb said regardless of whether fundraising is done, the Commission needs to develop a back-up plan since the projects funded by the T-Mobile grant must be completed next year.

4. BOXES & PLUGS

Mr. Zak said a news release has been prepared to solicit designs for utility box artwork and Paint-A-Plug projects. The Commission decided against holding a special meeting in August to consider the designs and instead will consider them at the September meeting to give more time for submissions. If a Paint-A-Plug application comes in well before the September meeting, the Commission agreed that Chair Hoey could approve it.

6. LET'S MOVE TO THE MUSIC

Ms. Umbdenstock said she hopes to meet with Paul Kassel and Andrew Glendening to get the program going.

7. DOWNTOWN PLANTERS

Ms. Beck shared community planting day on May 20 was a success. That was followed by a long stretch of very dry weather, but Ms. Beck said only a few plants have died.

8. OTHER UPDATES

No information was shared here.

G. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Ms. Beck motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Elion.

VOTE

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Zak
Management Analyst

Minutes approved by the Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission on September 18, 2023.