

**MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
CITIZENS' COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMISSION
July 18, 2022**

The Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission (CCEC) held a regular meeting on July 18, 2022, 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 4:03 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 Melissa Beck, Aaron Robertson and Helen Umbdenstock. Commissioner Ellingsworth Webb joined the meeting after the roll call. Absent were: Commissioners Kenneth Brown and Jeanine Holcomb. Also present were Mayor Cohen Barnes and City Council Liaison Scott McAdams.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

MOTION

Ms. Umbdenstock motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Beck.

VOTE

The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 13, 2022

MOTION

Ms. Beck motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Robertson.

VOTE

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public comments were received.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. RECOMMENDATIONS ON PUBLIC MURAL PROJECTS

Chair Hoey said the Commission received a decent number of mural applications in the 5 ½-week period between the release of the Call for Artists and the

deadline and that he like the mix of applications, including some from NIU and others of the area and out of the state. He noted even if a design does not fit the City-owned mural sites listed in the Call for Artists, there could be opportunities to use it elsewhere.

Mayor Barnes was pleased with the applications and noted that the downtown brewpub Keg and Kernel recently put up a mural towards the rear of their restaurant that was done by producing a vinyl wrap. He noted framed wraps could be used in the Annie Glidden Road underpass and designed my NIU.

Mr. Zak presented a slide show of the 13 mural designs submitted for the south wall of City Hall, noting the proposed budget, items missing from the line-item budget and whether the artist had mural experience.

The Commissioners ranked their preferences. The design by Janelle O'Malley, Dean Kreuger, April White and Veronica Storc, who are NIU employees and students, showing the text "DeKalb" and two hands over a map of the City was the top pick in the first vote. Tied for second were the design by CJ Hungerman, which featured large, colorful flowers, and the design by Randy Halverson, which says, "Welcome to DeKalb" and features flowers and crows.

Mr. Webb said the NIU group's design was ideal for City Hall. Mayor Barnes said it lacked color, and Chair Hoey agreed it was not bold and suggested the possibility of contacting the artists to make adjustments to the design.

Regarding Mr. Hungerman's design, Ms. Beck questioned why one corner featured geometric shapes rather than color, and Mr. Webb said he liked that the design prompted questions. Ms. Umbdenstock suggested that if the Commission liked a large flower design, that it consider the design by Katherine Katz and Summer Blahnick-Kiener, which says, "kindness grows here," and feature large colorful flowers, since they are local artists.

The Commission took a second vote between just the top three finishers. Mr. Hungerman's flower design was the top choice.

Mayor Cohen Barnes left the meeting, and City Manager Bill Nicklas joined the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Mr. Nicklas said that when the mural design goes before the City Council, he will provide two choices, providing some flexibility.

The discussion turned to the mural proposals for the Annie Glidden Road underpass.

Mr. Zak shared that Mayor Barnes' preference is to work with NIU on a design instead of using one of the submissions from the Call for Artists.

Mr. Zak then presented a slideshow of the six submissions for the walls of the underpass.

City Manager Nicklas suggested NIU should be incorporated into the design since that is a large part of welcoming people to the community. Alderman McAdams said designs without references to NIU, such as those with flowers, could be used other places. Chair Hoey added that the Call for Artists was clear the underpass designs should have included a welcoming message and community spirit, and only two did so.

The Commission voted on their preference. Their top choice was the design by Carol Ann Boecker which shows Altgeld Hall and the DeKalb ear of corn on one end of the east wall and corn and a Huskie running on one end of the west wall. The second choice was the design by Stephanie Irving, which covered one wall and included the silhouettes of DeKalb and NIU landmarks and rays of blue, purple and orange behind them.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS ON UTILITY BOX ARTWORK PROJECTS

Mr. Zak presented a slideshow with the three designs for the Palmer Court utility box, three designs for the Van Buer Plaza box and the single design for the Vaughn Parking Lot box.

Three of the designs included the DeKalb County United logo, and Mr. Nicklas said promotion of the soccer club could not be included. Ms. Umbdenstock suggested the design could still be used with the logo removed. The artist will be asked if she is agreeable to that.

The Commission recommended Amanda Groff's design with a dreaming Huskie for Palmer Court, Rudy Galindo's painting of a vase with flowers for Van Buer Plaza and Jennifer Ramczyk's design featuring soccer and corn for the Vaughn Parking Lot

3. APPROVE PAINT-A-PLUG APPLICATIONS

The Commission approved designs submitted for the fire hydrants at 6 Arrowhead Lane and 736 Haish Boulevard.

The discussion returned to the mural recommendations, and Mr. Nicklas provided further explanation on why he would provide a second option to the City Council for the City Hall mural. He complimented the Commission on its work gathering submissions and said the Commission's favored City Hall submission would look good somewhere in the City while suggesting the theme of belonging should be incorporated in the City Hall mural. He said the Belonging movement is important to the City and it needs to be shown it is not a passing fancy. He says the City Hall mural should represent the spirit of the City and that spirit is belonging.

Chair Hoey said he would like belonging to be a theme in all projects and noted the T-Mobile grant application incorporated the theme.

4. DISCUSSION ON OLD PAINT-A-PLUG PROJECTS

Ms. Beck explained some of the first fire hydrants painted for the initiative are in bad shape with much of the paint chipped away. Specifically, the hydrants at Fourth and Oak Street and Oak and First Street were discussed. It was agreed that the artists for those hydrants will be contacted to see if they want to recreate their designs.

5. DISCUSSION ON ANNIE GLIDDEN ROAD MEDIANS

Based on the Commission's discussion last month on the need to improve the conditions of the medians on South Annie Glidden Road, Mr. Zak shared Assistant Public Works Director Andy Raih was open to low-maintenance ideas. Mr. Nicklas noted the City does not have a landscape crew and that it would be ideal if someone adopted that stretch of the roadway. Mr. Webb said he would ask his Kiwanis group if they would be interested in doing that.

Mr. Nicklas said another spot that needs attention is a triangle island in one of the crossings at First Street and Lincoln Highway, noting it has some plants that get hit hard in the winter and that filling the island with concrete is an option. Ms. Umbdenstock suggested a more artistic approach, such as an iron sculpture.

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. CITY OF DEKALB/NIU COLLAB NEA GRANT UPDATE

Chair Hoey shared the application for an NEA grant to fund Huskie sculptures was being postponed until next year. He explained the cost of the project and how the cost would be shared is not certain yet and proceeding with those ambiguities could hurt the application's chances. Chair Hoey shared an e-mail from NIU Dean of College of Visual and Performing Arts explaining the postponement, including the desire to create a 3D model of the sculpture for the application.

2. VETERANS MURAL

Mr. Robertson shared the artist he was working with for the mural is no longer interested. Ms. Umbdenstock suggested asking the artists who responded to the Call for Artist to submit a Veterans Mural. Chair Hoey said the mural will now likely happen next year as a result of the new circumstances.

3. LET'S MOVE TO THE MUSIC UPDATE

Ms. Umbdenstock shared she is arranging a meeting regarding the project with the owner of Blumen Gardens and then she will contact Facebook and Ferrara.

5. OTHER UPDATES

Mr. Nicklas said the project to narrow Lincoln Highway and make the downtown more pedestrian friendly will be done before Corn Fest. He said new downtown parking signs are being created and that while the crosswalks will only be striped this year, some more art could be done in the crosswalks in the future. He said he would also like to see 3D art created on every block to draw people downtown. The Commission strongly supported the idea.

G. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Mr. Webb motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Robertson.

VOTE

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Zak
Management Analyst

Minutes approved by the Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission on September 19, 2022.