

## MINUTES

### CITY OF DEKALB

#### Citizens' Environmental Commission

September 7, 2023

The Citizens' Environmental Commission (CEC) held a regular meeting on September 7, 2023, in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

Chair Steve Honeywell called the meeting to order at 4:35 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. Not present were Commissioner Shaun Langley, Council Liaison Barb Larson and Ex-Officio Members James Carlin, Matt Emken, Sarah Fox and Mike Holland.

Also present was Management Analyst Scott Zak.

Mr. Zak reported Nick Newman has resigned from the Commission.

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

MOTION

Ms. Kron 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 July 6, 2023**

MOTION

Ms. Jesmer motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Kron.

VOTE

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

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

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

In Ex-Officio Member Carlin's absence, Chair Honeywell read the report. The household hazardous waste collection coming up on Saturday is short on volunteers. 300 people

participated in the electronics recycling event in June, and another electronics recycling event is planned for Sept. 30. The Health Department has begun collecting sharps at no cost.

## **2. DeKalb Park District**

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

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

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

## **4. Northern Illinois University**

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

## **5. City Staff Liaison**

Mr. Zak reported the 50/50 Parkway Tree Planting Program for the fall was a success with all available funds allocated. He suggested Greg Romanek, who was featured in the Daily Chronicle for cleaning the Kishwaukee River, be nominated for a PRIDE award.

## **F. New Business**

### **1. Need for new members**

Ms. Kron said she knows of three potential members to contact, and Chair Honeywell said he knows of one.

### **2. Presentation on bamboo products**

Ms. Kron shared information on Grove, a company that ships sustainable consumer products. It sells toilet paper and paper towels made of bamboo since bamboo grows back quicker than the trees from which paper products are usually made. Other products are sold without using plastic such as soap in concentrate dispensed from a reusable glass bottle, which is supplied. Ms. Farrell added the products cost a little more than those typically purchased, but the cost can be made up by skipping an expensive coffee.

### **3. Visit to recycling center**

Ms. Kron shared information from her recent visit with Mr. Carlin to the LRS recycling center in Forest Park, including photos and a video. The facility processes 150 tons of material daily with a contamination rate of less than one percent, which is very low by industry standards. The work is done by people using conveyer belts since machine-only sorting did not work well. LRS passed a third-party inspection, showing the company is truly doing the recycling it says it is. Ms. Kron shared that containers of peanut butter and other sticky substances can be recycled without washing as a way of saving water and that the facility is now taking paper cups and is experimenting with recycling plastic film. E-waste and household hazardous waste are also accepted, with the household hazardous waste sold in bulk to companies for reuse.

### **4. Sustainability plan and update**

Ms. Kron shared a plan for moving forward with the Sustainability Plan after recently exchanging e-mails with City Manager Bill Nicklas. She said Mr. Nicklas shared what the City has done to support sustainability, and she shared the work the Commission has done on

updating the plan. Mr. Nicklas suggested after the City budget is complete, the City can revisit the Sustainability Plan with the input of department heads in January. Ms Kron said it will be wonderful to have the inclusion of the department heads. Mr. Zak said this will create a more usable document based on the City's abilities. He suggested the Commission finish their section narratives to serve as a starting off point for discussions with the departments.

## **G. Old Business**

### **1. Presentation with STEM Cafe**

Ms. Kron said she would contact STEM Café about their upcoming joint presentation.

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

#### **September and October—Forever chemicals**

The Commission agreed the November article would review the work done by the Trash Squirrels over the past season and home efficiency will be the topic of the December article.

### **3. Future presentations—monarchs, fusion, home efficiency**

Chair Honeywell said the Commission will need to develop more topics that can be done in partnership with other groups.

### **4. Updates on other issues**

Ms. Kron said she read about an Eagle Scout and suggested the Commission may be able to suggest sustainability projects to Scouts.

Ms. Farrell said she has seen reports on social media about birds dying and dogs getting sick because of weed killers being sprayed on lawns and asked if the City had rules on these chemicals. Mr. Zak will check with the Building and Code Department.

## **H. Announcements**

### **1. New announcements**

No information was shared here.

### **2. Next regular meeting: October 5 at 4:30 p.m.**

## **I. Adjournment**

MOTION

Ms. Kron motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Jesmer.

VOTE

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was declared adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Scott Zak, Management Analyst

Approved by the Citizens' Environmental Commission on October 5, 2023.