

MINUTES

CITY OF DEKALB

Citizens' Environmental Commission

October 6, 2022

The Citizens' Environmental Commission (CEC) held a regular business meeting on October 6, 2022, in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

Chair Steve Honeywell called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Roll call was recorded by Clare Kron, and the following members of the CEC were present: Chair Steve Honeywell, Rachel Farrell, Julie Jesmer, Clare Kron, Kyle Moore, Nick Newman, Sven Oscar, and Council Liaison Barb Larson. Not present were Ex-Officio Members Sarah Fox and Mike Holland.

Also present was Commissioner Clare Kron.

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. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of September 1, 2022

MOTION

Ms. Kron motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Newman.

VOTE

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

E. Commission Reports

1. DeKalb County Health Department

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

2. DeKalb Park District

In Ex-Officio Member Emken's absence, no report was given.

3. Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District

In Ex-Officio Member Holland's absence, no report was given.

4. Northern Illinois University

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

5. City Staff Liaison

Mr. Zak was unable to attend the meeting because of the NIU Homecoming event occurring downtown at the same time. Ms. Kron has prepared the minutes in his absence.

Barb Larson shared information, however, on her recent trip to Hilton Head Island, the most ecologically sustainable community in the country. Regulations state that trees cannot be removed, and light pollution is greatly reduced at night with minimal use of streetlights. The town includes 40,000 residents.

F. New Business

1. New Vice Chair election

Ms. Kron nominated Commissioner Jesmer and motioned that she become the Vice Chair for 2024 and 2025. Sven seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. Ms. Jesmer accepted the nomination.

G. Old Business

1. Next articles for Daily Chronicle

- a. November—grease disposal**
- b. December—recycling over the holidays**
- c. Future possible articles—insulation**

Mr. Newman agreed to write the article on the grease disposal for November. Ms. Kron will write an article about recycling wrapping paper, tree lights, and other holiday disposables for the December issue.

Mr. Honeywell informed the commission that photos may now be submitted with Daily Chronicle articles. A link will be provided and the name of the photographer must be stated with submission. Commissioner Jesmer reported that DeKalb already has an Adopt-A-Street program, therefore, she will change the information in her upcoming article.

Planned articles: January, 2023—Insulating your home (no writer assigned), and for February, Seed-starting, written by Commissioner Kyle Moore.

2. Follow-up from Stem Café event

Ms. Kron reported that the online event on September 21, Climate Change in Our Backyards, sponsored by the CEC and Stem Café, was presented with excellence by the three professors from NIU, fulfilling the objective desired by the CEC, which was to feature the effects of local climate change on DeKalb and the nearby communities.

3. Sustainability plan changes

Ms. Kron presented a spreadsheet for developing comprehensive sustainability plans from the ICLEI, the international organization addressing climate change. Courtney Gallaher, NIU Associate Professor, Department of Earth, Atmosphere and Environment, had provided the spreadsheet as it will also be the template for the NIU Sustainability Plan. The pathways built into the spreadsheet provide a framework for designing integrated solutions that balance the patterns of human life and the built and natural environments.

While the cost to join the ICLEI to use all its tools is \$1200 annually, which would need to be paid by the city, Ms. Kron suggested the commission can use the blank spreadsheet for revising the DeKalb Sustainability Plan, giving examples of using column headings, such as Intended Outcomes and Metrics, Co-benefits, GHG impacts, Cost, and Potential Funding Sources, as categories that would expand the knowledge base for addressing each goal. A main objective would be to outline a commitment to reducing carbon/GHG by converting to renewable energy. Ms. Kron used the available data from Indianapolis, IN, to show how to use the spreadsheet and give an example of a well-developed plan. She used city transportation as an example of a goal for DeKalb, and stated that as more buses were needed, hybrid and electric vehicles could be selected. Mr. Honeywell suggested creating an outline based on the current Sustainability Plan first, and Ms. Kron suggested dividing up the current plan among the commissioners for revision work.

More communication is needed among the CEC commission, the city, and the university, which could be achieved by establishing a Sustainability Dashboard that documented changes and suggestions. Ms. Kron asked if the city could provide an intern to help with this effort. Alderperson Larson stated that the city has priorities in securing citizen safety amidst the recent gun violence and would probably not have additional staff available.

The commission viewed the current Implementation and Monitoring of the DeKalb Sustainability Plan spreadsheet, discussing which goals needed the status changed (Pending, Ongoing, or Completed); which goals should be deleted; and which goals could be addressed by the commission versus important for the plan but not applicable to the commission's efforts.

Potential additional goal: Kishwaukee watershed information to the section on Natural Environment. Measures should also be included to ensure food availability for all residents.

Necessary additional sections to be included: 1. Climate Change; and 2. Climate Justice.

Ms. Kron stated that the CEC should develop a Climate Action Plan.

4. Ideas for 2023 presentations

Ms. Kron suggested repeating the presentation, What Tree Should I Plant in My Backyard?, as there was poor attendance at its first showing due to incomplete advertisement. Though not a presentation idea, an article was suggested that stressed no vehicle idling, and that would provide an energy audit.

5. Updates on other issues

Light pollution: Use information from the document previously provided by Nick to create a draft of an ordinance to be presented to the City Council for curbing excessive light in the city.

H. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

I. Announcements

1. New announcements

Ms. Jesmer informed the commission of a scriveners change to the agreement between the city and Facebook which would greatly increase the amount of water the city would provide for the complex. She suggested the City Council investigate the change.

2. Next regular meeting: December 1, at 4:00 p.m.

I. Adjournment

MOTION

Mr. Oscar motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Moore.

VOTE

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was declared adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Clare Kron, CEC commissioner

Approved by the Citizens' Environmental Commission on November 3, 2022.