



Minutes

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

6 PM, Robert Gilliam Municipal Complex,
City Hall, Second Floor South Conference Room, 150 Dexter Ct.

A. Call to order (chairperson)

B. Roll Call (staff liaison)

Commissioners Frazier, Hernandez, Jacobs, Knoerr, Masterson, and Segel present.

C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

The commission approved the May 2015 minutes.

D. Communications

1. Sustainability Honor Roll presentation

Mayor Kaptain spoke about Deb Perryman and her accomplishments in both Elgin's academic community and the natural environment. He then presented Deb the award and the two posed for a few pictures. Deb then spoke of how honored she was to receive this award and how much she enjoys working in Elgin.

2. Friends of the Fox presentation by Gary Swick

Gary described how Friends of the Fox has been working on water quality tests (Water Quality Network Outreach Education, Elgin Report), which has been supported by the commission for a number of years. He recently presented with Deb Perryman at the Fox River Summit. They are planning to get municipalities, of which there are 28 total in Fox River watershed, to help fund educators. Aurora will be the next municipality to try to get involved. Gary would like to talk to 80 mayors. While the goal of \$50,000 in funding is a high number, he suggested it is attainable spread out between the 28 municipalities. Cindy Wendt, paid staff member of Friends of the Fox, has been studying water as long as Gary. Part of the money the commission funds applies to her hourly rate of \$20/hour. Gary stated they were definitely under budget this year. He suggested Kyla Jacobsen from the city of Elgin Water Department can report the exact cost from the last year when she returns from vacation. Many volunteers are involved

in this organization. Money mostly goes to time, mileage, and equipment (nets, chemicals, waders). Gary initially hoped to get 2000 kids in the stream each year. Right now they get about 1000 in the fall, mostly 5-6th graders but also some middle school from Boys and Girls Club in 7th & 8th grade. Gary showed the streams and local places where they got in the water to collect data with schools. Over the last year 1100 students were involved in the 29 times they took groups into the streams. They are working to fill the gap with McHenry County and East Dundee. Gary will provide the commission with a schedule of stream trips, so that commissioners may participate if desired. Stream monitoring is the most powerful vehicle Gary has experienced in his career. He suggested it's a great educator and way to engage children. He appreciates support of the effort and hopes we can pump it up by getting other municipalities involved. Liaison will email Gary for a schedule to pass along to commissioners in the future.

3. Mighty Acorns presentation by Maura Neuffer

Maura works both as the part time naturalist for the city of Elgin, and as an educator for the Conservation Foundation. Maura gave a presentation on Mighty Acorns, a program through the Conservation Foundation that the commission has supported for the past few years. She described the curriculum and seasonal organization of the program.

E. Discussion Items

1. Partners for Places & Grand Victoria Foundation

i. Review community projects from the "Idea Bank" related to composting and water that have been approved. Continue discussion of Elgin project ideas for proposal.

Commissioner Segel stated that the last round seemed different on what projects were selected for support. He suggested that the language is very important. Commissioners discussed the need to find a project that would benefit the entire community. Trying to help the tributaries that lead into the Fox would help the health of the overall river, which impacts so many communities surrounding the watershed. It was recognized that the proposal must support a healthy environment, strong economy and well being for all residents. Commissioner Knoerr suggested some of the newer developed areas are maybe what we need to focus on. Commissioner Segel suggested we look for other grants opportunities, too. Commissioner Knoerr inquired if we could commission Friends Of The Fox to conduct a study to help find needs. Commissioner Masterson liked the Providence, RI "Lots of Hope" project, but other commissioners stated concerns of having a water source for such gardens. Commissioner Masterson would also like to bring back the home retrofit program. Commissioner Frazier stated that the Community Development department has a number of grants available based on funding, and she can look into those further. She also suggested we could look at having those lower

incomes be more applicable for this type of retrofit programs. We should continue to look for grants that will help support the efforts of the Sustainability Commission, while deferring this particular Partners for Places until we can talk to Kyla Jacobsen from the water department and find out what is needed from the water conservation side, and avoid being “water stupid.”

2. New chairperson appointment recommendation for City Council

i. Chairman Masterson is renewing his term, but as a commissioner this time, and would like give another commissioner the opportunity to be chairperson.

Commissioner Jacobs nominated Commission Knoerr. Masterson nominated Fraizer as well. Commissioner Frazier stated she is unable to do so with current time restraints. The commission unanimously supported the appointment of Commissioner Knoerr as new chairperson.

F. Working Group Reports

G. Old Business

1. Habitat for Humanity partnership

i. Continued discussion on plans & commission involvement/sponsorship

Commissioner Knoerr and the liaison updated the commission on their meeting with Kathy Haerr and Judi Brownfield the Thrusday prior. They explained questions they asked regarding the resource center idea and what their roles would be. The commission stated concerns of the project not following typical protocol of proposal with a budget, approval/denial, and support/sponsorship. The commissioners also stated concerns of personal time that would be required. Commissioner Masterson suggested the project would be a startup and in an area of town with little foot traffic. He inquired why we would not use the library for such a project, which is already a center for information that has the traffic. Commissioner Knoerr said it'd be nice to partner with Habitat for Humanity on a project, but that the organization does not need us by any means. Commissioner Masterson suggested asking Wanxiang New Energy to donate a couple solar panels for a south-facing roof on a home they build, and we could help finance the project and look into providing insulation for electrical power. Commissioners discussed that we have no problem getting marketing materials and providing a website and social media presence for the commission as of now. As a city commission, if there are efforts we can support financially, and each project is brought forth, we can consider such projects. Those concerned about sustainable efforts can know that our meetings are a place to come. It's not our place to provide an education center and hire community coordinators, we are here as a vehicle to provide funds. Commissioner Jacobs questioned the added value of having such coordinators in the system. The commission agreed they are not seeking to hire anyone for marketing at this time, but are willing to consider proposals for future projects in which Kathy Haerr and Judi Brownfield are seeking financial support for.

2. Gail Borden Public Library “Swap This” event

i. Update on budget items to be covered by sponsorship

Liaison provided an update as to which budget items would be covered by commission sponsorship of the library event including record DJ, live art demo, and A to Z rental, totaling under the agreed \$1000.

3. Sustainability Honor Roll

i. Review any new nominations

1. Commissioner Masterson wants to nominate Sherman Hospital for their geothermal heating/cooling system, but was concerned about who would receive the award in comparison to nominating an individual.
2. The liaison suggested nominating Carl Missele for this extensive volunteer restoration work at Hawthorne Hill Nature Center, and she will write up the nomination for the July meeting.

H. Commissioner comments/announcements

1. Update from Chairman Masterson regarding trip to Freedom Field

Commissioner Masterson reported that Chet from Freedom Field recently blew out his knee and had surgery. He is waiting for his full recovery before we can set a date.

2. Riverside Manor entryway project updates from liaison

Liaison updated the commission that things were moving forward with this neighborhood improvement grant. It will likely end up costing less than initially estimated as the neighborhood decided they only want a garden bed on the north corner of the entryway instead of both north and south corners.

3. Commission surveys handed out by liaison

Surveys were not yet available. Liaison anticipated she would receive a link to send out to commissioners over the next week so surveys could be completed online.

4. The July 2015 meeting will be rescheduled for one week earlier than usual, on Tuesday, July 7, due to scheduling conflicts. Liaison will look into room availability and post notice to website and social media.

I. Adjourn

— The City of Elgin is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities, are requested to contact ADA coordinator, at (847) 931-6076, or TTY/TDD (847) 931-5616 promptly to allow the City of Elgin to make reasonable accommodations for those persons. —