



Minutes • Tuesday, June 14, 2016 • 6:15 PM  
Robert Gilliam Municipal Complex, City Hall  
Second Floor South Conference Room  
150 Dexter Ct., Elgin, IL 60120

**A. Call to order (chairperson)**

**B. Roll Call (staff liaison)**

*Chairperson Knoerr and Commissioners Agesen, Frazier, Hajek, Keare, Masterson and Segel present. Commissioner Jacobs resigned prior to the June meeting.*

**C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes**

*May 2016 minutes were approved.*

**D. Discussion Items**

**1. Waste Management presentation**

***Waste Management public sector representatives will update the commission on recent pilot recycling programs and outcomes, as well as plans to expand programs.***

*Waste Management representatives Vaughn and Sheila provided the commission a presentation on the recent recycling pilot program in Elgin. They covered the program's background, Phase 1, Phase 2 and the next steps. Commissioner Agesen inquired if they had any information on contamination rates in cities that have banned plastic bags. They did not have that information.*

**2. Solar presentation**

***Elgin resident, Paige Fitton, will provide the commission with a presentation and discussion.***

*Paige Fitton provided the commission with a presentation related to energy savings and solar. She discussed options residents have like having a Nicor energy audit. She also discussed the Nest thermostat and how it can save energy by changing heating/cooling settings when you are away from the home. She then discussed solar. While it would be nice to have off-grid solar, it involves a battery, which is currently very expensive. It was pretty easy to have on the grid solar. She discussed how solar panels have dramatically fallen in price in the last 5 years and the payback can be 5-8 years. In addition Home Owners Associations cannot deny residents. There is also a Federal tax incentive available to pay for 30% of cost, including the cost of the panels, mounting and installation. Pat Curran, a builder in the West Point Gardens neighborhood, is supportive of solar and will be offering solar packages on new homes being built. Perhaps the commission can reach out to new builders and developers to suggest similar packages. Paige recommends that the Sustainability Commission send a letter to Home Owners Associations informing them of the state statute that they cannot deny residents solar, so they are informed when a resident inquires. She suggested we ask Illinois Solar Energy Association (ISEA) for a draft letter. Paige recognized Elgin's diverse housing stock and the reasons for the structural engineer requirement, even though it can be an extra expense. Regarding installation and the current ordinance, she was curious if there could be more accommodations in the*

setbacks on the roof. The current setbacks, she assumed, were for firefighter purposes. However, she would have liked use more space on the roof for additional solar panels. She went to the Illinois Solar Energy Association (ISEA) website, checked their certifications and recommended installers and then sent inquiries to those companies. She picked three companies based on reviews and asked for proposals. They all conducted site visits and ask for her energy account number and then explained the process. Paige found ComEd to be a big barrier in the process. The solar installer applies for an interconnection agreement. ComEd can't say no, since its part of state legislation. Interconnection agreement and net metering agreement are required.

**3. Debrief recently sponsored events**

***Discuss & provide feedback on ECC event with Professor Glenn Earl***

*Professor Earl provided materials regarding the event debriefing they had at ECC, and suggested they will begin planning the event much earlier this year. He suggested positioning this as co-curricular event instead of extra credit and getting more students involved earlier in the process.*

**4. ComEd's proposed demand charges policy discussion**

***Discuss SB1585 and its potential effects on homeowners and the solar industry***

*ComEd is trying to push the state to have demand charges, but ComEd has not said what the charges are. Some believe ComEd are trying to get a bail out for its nuclear plants. The proposals have been very vague and suggest getting rid of net metering. The commission is concerned as it could hurt the solar industry if net metering were abolished or tampered with. Federal government is supporting renewable energy by offering incentives, and the state should as well. The ISEA website shows a response to ComEd's letter from April and highlight the problems in red.*

**E. Old Business**

**1. Partners for Places grant proposal**

***Continued discussion on project idea, requirements, and timeline.***

*The commission will continue this discussion at the July meeting.*

**2. Community Gardens**

***Continued discussion on ideas & logistics into expanding options in Elgin.***

*The commission will continue this discussion at the July meeting.*

**F. Commissioner comments/announcements**

***Fox Valley Sustainability Network – Liaison & Commissioner Segel will recap the June 8 meeting.***

**G. 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. —