



Minutes • Monday, November 7, 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)

Prior to this meeting, Commissioner Frazier resigned and Commissioner Fitton was appointed by City Council. Chairperson Knoerr and Commissioners Agesen, Fitton, Hajek, Hernandez, Keare, and Segel present.

C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

October 2016 meeting minutes were approved.

D. Discussion Items

1. Elgin Green Groups 350 letter of support

Evaluate need for a carbon fee to address climate change and suggested support

Sandy Kaptain is the chair of the Elgin Green Groups. The discussion item was named incorrectly as the letter of support is a request from the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) organization, which Mrs. Kaptain is also a member of. Deni Mathews, chair for Citizens Climate Lobby was also present. The CCL organization has been around for 7 years. Every June, the group goes to Congress to lobby for passing a carbon fee and dividend. The group has a very sharp focus on working to get legislative action toward a carbon fee. CCL calls it a carbon "fee," because the money collected would be given back to citizens. Coal, oil and gas sources would pay a rate, starting at \$15 per ton. 100% of the money collected from such a fee would be returned to all American families, but it has not been determined how it would be returned (check, income tax rebate, etc). Climate change is escalating, and the models have been refined as it is happening faster than expected. Elgin committed to sustainability when it developed the Sustainability Action Plan, adopted in 2011. Several sections in the summary and the Alternative Energy section (Goal 1: to encourage energy conservation by citizens and businesses) are addressed with this legislative support. It also fits the Economic Development section's Goal 1. Mrs. Kaptain suggested a carbon fee dividend would help the lower and middle class people the most. The only ones that would pay out of pocket are a wealthier group who use much more energy than others. Citizens Climate Lobby is working with four US House Representatives. Some studies show that if we could pass a carbon fee and dividend program, it could resolve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Support from citizens, churches, organizations will help improve the chances of moving this legislation forward. CCL is asking the Sustainability Commission to sign a letter of support. Chairperson Knoerr suggested she was concerned about how it could impact the economy. She suggested the issue is when gas prices go up, so do groceries or other things, and that can impact a lot of people. There are two letters - One is for carbon fee and dividend, the other is for climate action. There are two ways the letter can be used by the organization. All letters will be

used with the member of congress in the district. The second, if desired, can be used for other purposes, which might be on a list of supporters that's public to a broader audience. Kaptain and Mathews explained that the support from business and community leaders makes a bigger impression on legislators. The letter requested would come directly from the Sustainability Commission. The commission will continue the discussion and have something ready, if decided, in January. Kaptain will send the liaison the letters digitally and she will disburse them to the commission. Commissioner Aagesen motioned to include the discussion item on the December agenda and continue discussion once commissioners have time to do some personal research. The motion passed.

2. 2017 budget and meeting date approval

Review 2017 proposed budget and meeting dates

The 2017 proposed budget and meeting dates were approved.

E. Old Business

1. Partners for Places grant proposal & Community Gardens

Continued discussion on community gardens projects in Elgin & meeting grant requirements.

Bob Bedard updated the commission that two proposals (AID and Food for Greater Elgin) are still in the works. Partners for Places website just released their funding cycle dates. The RFP will be released on December 5 with application due January 30. There's a Q&A round coming up as well. Bob Langlois, who also serves on Food for Greater Elgin board, was present. They met with AID executives, and found out they were proposing to sell the Route 31 site. After a discussion, AID executives were very excited about this possibility and they agreed to hold off on any action to the property until they hear back if we receive the grant. One stumbling block is that AID does not want to take on increased fiduciary responsibility or increased employee work. They were concerned over a revenue stream and that it could jeopardize them as a non-profit, that would need to be run by someone else. Bob Langlois has been an Elgin resident for 36 years. His job was to introduce technology to Africa. His company was approached 18 months ago by a government in Kenya, and wanted to take advantage of agricultural technologies in one of their counties. They researched with U of I on power side and Iowa State on agricultural side. With technology advances, it is now commercially viable to create rural collectives with aquaponics. In such systems, fish are grown in large tanks and their waste creates nitrogen that is fed to vegetables. This creates a closed loop system, using 90% less water than conventional agriculture. An 80x80 foot greenhouse can produce 66,000 heads of lettuce per year. Aquaponic and solar are much more viable, and the combination gives you a sustainable year-round agriculture with a harvest that is predictable. It has a multiplier effect as well in that it produces employment for the meat and vegetables. There is a system in Chicago and it may be worthwhile to tour. That system's fish are processed in Oak Park. Commissioners Aagesen, Hajek and Segel agreed to go through the Sustainability Action Plan and pull out ways that this project supports it. Zoning and health department considerations would need to be addressed in the business model.

F. Commissioner comments/announcements

Liaison will provide an update on Pumpkin Composting Event

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.