



Minutes • Monday, February 11, 2019 • 6:00 p.m.
Robert Gilliam Municipal Complex, City Hall
First Floor South Conference Room
150 Dexter Court, Elgin, IL 60120

A. Call to order (chairperson)

B. Roll Call (staff liaison)

Chairperson Aagesen and Commissioners Anderson, Kroiss, McMullen (Perryman) present.

C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

The January regular meeting minutes approved. Special meeting minutes will be voted on at the March meeting.

D. Other persons present

Kendra Kroiss, John Zawada, Laura Knoerr, Troy Simpson, Tom Armstrong and Jan Monell present.

E. Working Groups and Task-Related updates

Provide updates and discuss goals related to Individual Commissioner Engagement Plans.

-Chairperson Aagesen is hopeful to work with DNA to move forward the straw initiative. Robin Migalla had shared with Aagesen a company that partners with Terracycle, that works with companies and allows consumers to buy a product, use it and ship the container back. A few cities are piloting the program now, and Aagesen asked Elgin be added to the list to potentially pilot.

-Commissioner Kroiss was granted access to the Salesforce Sandbox. He needs to populate the Sandbox with fake information and data in order to test it.

-Commissioner Anderson has scheduled February content to the Sustainability Facebook page. He's looking to get citizen feedback on the expiring Waste Management contract. He asked the commission to help share posts on individual pages. Anderson also added daily content to the Elgin Earth Day Facebook page and asked for shares on that as well. Anderson has also secured help in getting coverage for the Xiuthetical Martinez event. He reminded the commission that another \$2000 needs to be raised to pay for the speaker expenses like flight, hotel, food, etc.

-Commissioner McMullen (Perryman) has been involved with the U-46 biodiversity webinars and they have been very well attended. U-46 has a STEM expo coming up at Bartlett High School. McMullen met with the business manager and the head of operations to discuss the idea of solar panels on U-46 building roofs. She would need to get her cabinet of administration interested as well; all with an understanding that there is limited funding and some roofs are in bad condition. Her priority would be to seek installations on middle schools, as it would help support the 8th grade science curriculum.

F. Discussion Items

1. Community Garden at City-owned Channing/Division Property

Hear update regarding community gardening opportunity and consider offering endorsement or support and discuss any ways to help participate.

The liaison provided some background the community garden initiative and the progress made in particular the past year. With the Channing/Division (Old YMCA) City-owned property as the location to be pursued, a group of dedicated neighborhood volunteers working to finalize buildout and operational plans for a neighborhood garden. The group presented to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPA), which unanimously supported the idea and forming a subcommittee to oversee the garden project. The City has a community garden program in which it

leases City-owned land for a lost cost, and this initiative would follow the same program. In this instance, the GPA would be the organization leasing the land. The City would provide water and mowing services. Laura Knoerr, resident of the Gifford Park neighborhood spearheading the initiative, was present to answer questions about the proposed neighborhood garden. Knoerr said her group is looking at different models for renting the garden beds as they wish to not discourage anyone, especially due to cost. She specified that this would be a “neighborhood garden,” rather than a community garden, as only those within neighborhood borders would be allowed to participate. The idea is this garden would be the first of many throughout the community. Their goal is to create 25 plots/garden beds the first year. The cost for a raised bed is about \$95 to build out. They hope to get soil donated and possibly lumber. They will rely heavily on the Advocate Sherman master gardeners as their mentors and educators for the neighbors. Armstrong said the neighborhood is a park desert and a neighborhood garden would be a fantastic addition. Armstrong suggested GPA apply for a Neighborhood Matching Grant from the Elgin Community Network to help kick start the project. Anderson asked if the objective was to give people who don’t own property access to garden. Knoerr confirmed it was, but for people who cannot garden on their property for other reasons, like mature trees. Participants would be responsible for purchasing their own plants. Knoerr said they would host workshops. Monell inquired if they had considered different materials for the beds, as the wood can rot after a few years. Anderson suggested people educating potential participants that anyone who uses the SNAP program can use their benefits to purchase plants. Part of the success will require reaching out to other organizations. Anderson would like more information before voting on the item. Agesen agreed that additional information would be helpful like materials to be used and other plan specifics. She asked the commission to send any follow up questions in the near future so Ms. Knoerr can address them.

2. 2019 Budget

Adopt 2019 budget.

Anderson motioned to approve the budget. The motion passed.

3. Funding Requests

Vote on funding requests for 1) Earth Day, 2) Spartan event, 3) Earth Day domain.

-Earth Day at Hawthorne Hill Nature Center: Anderson supports Earth Day, but will abstain from voting on this event. Anderson believes good governance requires the commission receive proposals like this with more time for consideration. Anderson proposed a motion that \$1300 of the Earth Day line item be allocated in the Hawthorn Hill event’s program-related expenses (facepainters, entertainment and tree seedlings), and \$200 be allocated to a 2-page Bravo advertisement promoting all the Earth Month events. The motion passed.

-ECC Spartan pitch event: Anderson provided an update that he has not received many details, but ECC is theming the pitch event around Earth Day 2020 which would be open to the community, rather than just students. The commission could provide prize money could be targeted to towards the winning ideas, rather than to the recipients, and be based on paid receipts. There is an issue with timing of the commission’s budget with when their event takes place. Without many details, the commission agreed there was no vote necessary at this point.

-Earth Day Domain: Anderson updated the group that the Earth Day Planning Committee is using 2019 as a planning/test year. It doesn’t seem necessary at this point to purchase the domain, as the library will host a webpage. The City can also create a redirect to Gail Borden’s site. The event listing will be referred to as Elgin Earth Month for marketing purposes. There is no longer a recommendation to purchase a domain. As it pertains to Earth Month, Anderson provided the commission with a sample press release and fact sheet for the Xiuhtezcatl Martinez event as well as a schedule of events for all of Elgin Earth Month. He reminded the group to help push to fund the remaining \$2000 needed to cover the speaker expenses.

4. Sustainability Award Event

Discuss structure, date and other details.

Agesen suggested the group send a call for nominations on social media and a press release by February 22, with a submission deadline of March 7. Nominees would be announced by April 1. The commission reviewed the nomination form and recommended adding contact information for the nominator and also a drop down menu where the nominator can select which area of the Sustainability Action Plan the nomination is supporting. Agesen asked that text be added describing how Elgin defines sustainability. The event can be referred to as the Elgin Sustainability Awards. Monell suggested the parks and recreation software might be able to handle ticketing/registration. The physical award could be a tree seedling or something of sustainable nature. Anderson suggested the group look at the Green Expo contact list and create a joint sponsor program where sponsors can support both the Xiuhtezcatl Martinez and awards event. Agesen motioned to allocate a total of up to \$5000 to the awards event at ECC with food/drink for 150 attendees.

5. Sustainability Action Plan

Discuss planning models and timelines for updating the plan.

Agesen motioned that with new commissioners joining next meeting, it would be best to table this item until March. The motion passed. Liaison will add this item to the March agenda.

G. Old Business

1. Solar Group Buy

Discuss opportunities to promote program.

Anderson provided an update regarding all solar work group initiatives. When the commission voted to support the Solarize program last month, it was a group buy program for all of Kane County, administered by CUB with support by MREA. Since then, the program has now expanded regionally to include several other counties. What was going to be one installer may need to be one installer with sub-contractors, or multiple installers, depending on workload capacity. At the recent work group meeting, members discussed concerns about preliminary marketing materials and the growing size of the program to include multiple counties in addition to Kane County. Anderson recalled the solar work group was created to determine what solar initiatives make sense for Elgin and he suggested Elgin needs a diversified solar strategy, especially considering the different households in the community. The strategy needs to address solar at the municipal level too. He wants the Solar Work Group to develop a solar plan for Elgin. He requested the liaison retrieve the energy report for Elgin Mark Pruitt referenced at the recent Fox Valley Sustainability Network forum.

H. Commissioner comments/announcements

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. —