



Meeting Minutes • Thursday, August 6, 2020  
Hawthorne Hill Nature Center  
28 Brookside Drive, Elgin, IL 60123

**A. Call to order:** 5:31pm

**B. Roll Call:** Councilperson Rauschenberger, Chairperson Armstrong, Commissioners Biss, Flaherty, McMullen, Kroiss.

**C. 2020 Budget Discussion Items**

1. **2019 Rollover Fund Allocations:** Chairperson Armstrong explained our 2020 budget and opened the discussion on what to earmark the 2019 Rollover fund totaling \$ 9,410. Councilwoman Rauschenberger expressed the importance of using the funds toward hiring a staff person or consultant who could conduct a baseline of City's Energy Usage/carbon emissions and sustainability efforts. Chair Armstrong thought the amount was not enough to hire a consultant and suggested a marketing handout. Commissioner Kroiss thought the commission could make a donation of \$3000 to the Koloni Bike Share Program to purchase more bikes. The current program began and only has 10 bikes for the whole city. A city the size of Elgin should have a inventory of at least 50 bikes. Commissioner McMullen liked the idea as well as Chair Armstrong and also suggested purchasing cargo carrying bikes for residents to be able to purchase groceries. Commissioner Flaherty felt more data was needed before approving another donation to DNA for more bikes. He feels we should diversify use of the fund by giving funds to Northern Kane Co. Wild Ones for their Natives in your Yard program. The group has expressed need for signage and support for the program. The Commission could provide funding for native seed packets to promote the program. Commissioner Biss expressed that the funding could go toward removing of the plastic webbing along the Fox River that traps ducklings and wildlife. It could also go toward the Commission purchasing milkweed and pollinator seed mix to distribute. Commissioner Flaherty suggested we use the funds to promote a Facebook survey to residents asking them where the City could build more native beds in our parks such as Foundry Park, Trout Park and other corridors. Commissioner McMullen suggested we take some of the funds and provide more public education opportunities. Chair Armstrong will be contacting Kane Co. Wild Ones and Greg Hulke to attend a Green Infrastructure Work Group and create a budget to include native plantings. 2019 Rollover Funding Ideas discussed were 1. Hiring staff/consultant for city energy usage report, 2. Donation to Wild Ones for Native Yard program, 3. Educational Opportunities, 4. Green Infrastructure budget.
2. **Refund of Vendor Fees from 2019 Green Expo:** Chairperson Armstrong recommended we refund Green Expo vendor fees from the cancelled event. It is not likely we will be having a large event such as Green Expo next year. Commissioner Kroiss motioned to approve the refunding of all vendor fees paid to the commission for the 2020 Green Expo. Commissioner Biss seconded it, motion passed.
3. **Return Donation to Elgin Community Network for Cancelled Strong Towns:** Chairperson Armstrong recommended we refund the donation that was given to us from the ECN for use towards speaker fees for Strong Towns for the Green Expo. Strong Towns was cancelled due to COVID-19. Chair Armstrong commented that the ECN is receiving grant requests and they could use those funds to assist grant applications. Commissioner Kroiss motioned to approve the refunding of all vendor fees paid to the commission for the 2020 Green Expo. Commissioner Biss seconded it, motion passed.

4. **2020 Sustainability Awards Dinner Status:** Commissioner McMullen said the event would not be held in person like before and that we could consider a virtual award show. We could run a live feed on our Facebook page. It could be used as an educational tool. Chair Armstrong suggested we could still have awards given out at a Council meeting. Commissioner Flaherty commented that nominations could be submitted online. Chairperson Armstrong asked to table the discussion to the Tuesday Commission Meeting.
5. **Farmers Market Bronze Sponsorship:** Commissioner McMullen motioned to approve the \$500 Bronze level sponsorship for the Elgin Farmers Market for work groups to promote sustainability efforts at 5 Fridays. Commissioner Kroiss seconded the motioned, motion passed. Chris Manhiem from the Solar Work Group commented that the Solar Work Group will not work Farmers Market unless they can get a solar installer to attend.
6. **Future Search:** Chairperson Armstrong expressed the need have a meeting with Rise' Jones and discuss the likelihood of conducting Future Search in this fall with the social distancing restrictions. Commissioner McMullen feels we do need to update the Sustainability Commission Action Plan. Conducting it in the Future Search manner will be difficult. McMullen feels it might have to be conducted in a Zoom format or in small groups. Chair Armstrong suggested we use the CARP from the City of Evanston as a framework to develop our action plan. Commissioner Flaherty asked if staff could come and talk to the commission. Chair Armstrong is going to call Kumar Jenson from Evanston on what steps they took in developing their plan.

#### D. 2021 Budget Funding Priorities

1. **Grant Program:** Chairperson Armstrong commented that the grant program could be setup with applicants maximum grants being \$1000-\$1500 each.
2. **Work Group Initiatives:**
3. **Green Expo:**
4. **Future Search:** Look into discussing virtual options with Rise' Jones before committing funds.
5. **Basecamp Subscription:** Commissioner Biss feels it's still a good tool to keep for the volunteers on our work groups. Chair Armstrong commented that couldn't we just use the existing Box software. Kendra Kroiss commented that is was a very useful tool during Green Expo planning.
6. **Fox Valley Sustainability Network Sponsorship:** Discussion to renew sponsorship at the same level for 2021.

#### E. Adjourn: 7:17pm

1. **Commissioner Kroiss motioned to adjourn meeting, Commissioner Biss second motion passed.**