



## Meeting Minutes

Saturday, February 20, 2021 • 9:00 a.m.

Edward Schock Centre of Elgin, Heritage Ballroom Room,  
100 Symphony Way, Elgin, IL 60120

**A. Call to Order:** 9:11am

**B. Recognize Persons Present:** Councilperson Rauschenberger, Chairman Armstrong, Commissioners Biss, Flaherty, McMullen. Absent Commissioner Kroiss.

**C. Welcome & Objectives of the Special Meeting**

**D. Discussion Items**

**1. 2021 Budget-** Review of 2021 Budget spreadsheet. Year to date expenditure of \$999 for Basecamp subscription leaves \$23,001 balance in fund. Commissioner McMullen commented that the Susty Award allocation could be reduced to increase Earth Month account.

**i. East Side Garden Funding Request-** Review of \$6,000 funding request for additional water station at East Side Garden. Commissioner Biss recommended the ESG look into other alternative means of collecting water onsite such as catch basins and consider exploring sustainable alternatives before considering installing another water station. Commissioner Flaherty feels the group should seek out multiple funding sources and support from the homeowners association. Wanted to know where the cost estimate came from? Staff informed them the cost estimate was from the City's water and public works departments. Chairperson Armstrong commented on why the group hasn't considered a splitter hose from the current water source first, before asking for installation of a second water station. Also, agreed with the exploration alternative funding or less expensive ways to capture water. Commission recommendation was for staff to inform ESG to pursue alternative funding sources and sustainable water capture systems. Once that is done, to reapply for funding assistance through the commission's grant program at a later date.

**2. Climate Action Plan-** Chairperson Armstrong proposed that a Climate Action Plan be developed to begin to shift the City and Community to more resilient behaviors and policies due to climate change. He proposed the question to the group of whether wait for the hire of full-time position or should we meet with Rise' Jones

to discuss developing the plan. Armstrong also proposed that there should be a restructuring of the work groups from the 9 to 6. Those 6 work groups would be Renewable Energy, Building Efficiency, Transportation/Mobility, Green Infrastructure- which could include water, Zero Waste and Outreach Education. Chairperson Armstrong believes Building Efficiency and Transportation/Mobility are the biggest greenhouse gas contributors to the planet. He feels refocusing Commission efforts around these 6 work groups which can include building code and energy code changes and getting EV infrastructure in place should be priority. He also commented that Green Infrastructure can focus on water, pollinator gardens and increasing our tree canopy. He also questioned if there even needs to be a climate change work group working on initiatives that are already being addressed by current work groups. Commissioner Flaherty commented that it's redundant to have multiple work groups working on the same issues. Doesn't feel it is a good productive use of volunteer's time. This is something that should go on agenda if we are going to change the action plan. Commissioner Biss commented that what activists in the community such as Paul Berland need to understand that having a idea is not a replacement for still needing a plan. Change at the government level take time and they need to understand how to create a plan at the local government level that its residents can afford and understand.

3. **Work Group** -Chairperson Armstrong will draft new work group descriptions for discussion at the next Commission meeting.
  4. **Sustainability Grant Program**- Commission reviewed grant application documents that staff received back from legal review. Staff informed them that a web page would be created with application and final report documents linked for groups or individuals to submit their requests. The Financial Funding Request form will be pulled from the website and any future funding requests go through the grant program. The grant program would need to be announced via Facebook and press release. Commissioner Biss questioned what if a project stretches past the fiscal year and the grant would be over multiple years. Staff said that monies allocated within a fiscal year have to be used within that calendar year, if the project needs additional funding it can re-apply with another grant request in the subsequent year. Commissioner McMullen stressed the importance of having a scoring rubric to justify approving applications over one another and asked if the rubric created for the grant be reviewed again at the next Commission meeting.
- E. **Other Business**- Earth Day Event possibilities that are virtual in nature. Commissioner Flaherty suggested that the Commissioners reach out to possible partners for collaborative events. One suggestion would be to have a Commissioner interview a organization on what their 2020 successes were and what were their 2021 plans. Commissioner Biss suggested that we contact the

groups who offered events last year offer partnering with them to assist with promotion. Chairperson Armstrong commented that there is still a 2020 Elgin Earth Month Facebook page that exists. Maybe we could find who the owner is of such page and rebrand it for 2021. Commissioner McMullen suggested hosting webinars on such topics as Start in Your Yard, Karen Hagel or host a town hall or panel discussion on a climate change topic. Commissioner Biss suggested starting with the 50 for 50 spreadsheet in Basecamp to track what is being offered and when. Commissioner McMullen offered to put it into a google document format and email it out. Commissioner Flaherty offered to be the point person on Earth Month events and spreadsheet. Councilperson Rauschenberger commented that the Commission should create a year calendar of events.

**F. Adjourn:** 11:11am; Commissioner Flaherty motion to adjourn, Commissioner Biss seconded motion passed.