



July Sustainability Commission Meeting
Minutes • Tuesday, July 12, 2022 • 6:00 p.m.

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

A. Call to Order: 6:01pm

1. Roll Call: Present: Chairperson Tom Armstrong, Commissioners: David Jurina, Jeff Biss, Dan Brosier, Dekovia Livingston, Katie Gronke, Kevin Zaldivar, Student Representative Jordon Hill, Staff Liaison Mikala Larson. Absent: Commissioner Chris Flaherty, Councilmember Carol Rauschenberger.

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. June 14, 2022
 - i. *Commissioner Biss motions to approve the June 14 minutes, Commissioner Livingston seconds. Chairperson Armstrong adds a comment to update the minutes to reflect that Commissioner Katie Gronke was present on June 14th. Motion passes.*

C. Recognize Persons Present

1. Eric Anderson attended, who participates on a podcast.
2. Kerry Kelly, a resident of NENA, attended. She sits on the Property Development Work Group (PDWG), a committee under NENA. Kerry presented about RiverLifeElgin. Anyone interested in participating can connect with Kerry Kelly or Tom Armstrong.

Commissioner Zaldivar joins the meeting at 6:08pm.

D. Discussion Items

1. Sustainable Elgin Community Grant: Free For You Services Project Report: Dekovia Livingston shares a final presentation regarding the Sustainable Elgin Community grant that Free For You Services (FFYS) received in 2021. The program is partnered with the IRS, and offers free tax services for low-income residents in Elgin or out. The program went very well and exceeded expectations. Free For You Services is the only tax clinic still open in the area at this time of the year, and the IRS is still sending clients their way. In addition to tax services, FFYS offer workshops, long-term learning seminars and skill building seminars. FFYS was nominated for two awards by the IRS for their Virtual Partner Recognition Ceremony, and won Partner of the Year. FFYS will be holding a drive on August 14th to collect school supplies. The drive will be at 675 Tollgate Rd, Elgin, Illinois, 60123 from 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. There will be free school supplies, free hair cuts, and free mini manicures. If anyone would like to donate school supplies, contact Dekovia Livingston.
2. Work Group Updates: The commissioners share out updates from their six work group meetings.
 - i. Building Efficiency: Commissioners Gronke and Armstrong met. They are looking to engage more community members to join their work group. They talked about 3 areas of focus for their efforts: retrofitting residential buildings, retrofitting non-residential buildings, and new construction. Energy Efficiency Day is in October, more discussion to

come on that to promote the day and make people aware of energy efficiency programs.

- ii. Outreach & Education: The next meeting is next week.
- iii. Renewable Energy: The work group came up with some project ideas for various sources of renewable energy. Next meeting is August 3rd. Commissioner Brosier highly recommends the book Drawdown as a resource for these topics as well.
- iv. Transportation & Mobility: The work group shared out project ideas and ranked the topics discussed based on how they perceive priority. 1. EV charging 2. E-bikes/electric scooters 3. Car share.
- v. Urban Ecology: Commissioner Jurina shared update that Patsy Hirsh had a tour at her property about herbicide drift, and shared what was learned on the tour.

Chairperson Armstrong shares that Urban Ecology is the first work group up to be at the Farmers Market, on Friday July 29th. A minimum of two commissioners is required to be present at a booth. Tent, table, chairs is provided. Chairperson Armstrong and staff liaison are unable to attend at the July 29th Farmers Market. Staff liaison will print out table materials for the work group. Discussed the 2021 Elgin Native Roots program and the success of it, and how it corresponds with the plants installed at the native garden demonstration project site (East Side Neighborhood Garden site).

Native garden demonstration workday this weekend: IL Master Naturalists.

Green Guerrilla issued the commission an invoice of \$2,700 for the purchase of stone and native plants for the native garden demonstration beds. The purchase as it stands does not follow the City of Elgin's procurement policy, and the amount of plants must be confirmed. Staff liaison reminded the commission of the procurement policy. Staff liaison will share updates as this topic progresses.

- vi. Zero Waste: Discussions of the Single Use Bag Fee, including exemptions such as based on square footage or income status. Commissioner Biss has gathered a number of documents regarding the single use bag fee and compiled them into the Box folder for commissioners to review so the project can be brought to a vote at the August meeting. Discussion of connecting with Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) and Chamber of Commerce to receive their input. Commissioner Biss offers to join Chairperson Armstrong in approaching the Chamber and DNA when he does so. Chairperson Armstrong referenced the 5 votes needed from City Council to pass the ordinance, and encouraged commissioners to make the effort to educate and get feedback from the community. Elaborated further on recommendation document,

modeled after Committee of the Whole memo document, that will help keep workflow consistent and moving forward. Chairperson Armstrong mentioned the example of a bag ban from the state of New Jersey, and the 6 month lead-up education time to inform customers and prepare them. Underlined the difference here of instituting a bag fee, not a bag ban. Studies have shown that bag fees do a better job of changing people's behavior patterns. Commissioner Brosier volunteers to be part of the group, and wants everyone to be part of it so the commission can be ready to vote at next meeting.

3. Elgin Alive: A program hosted by the Gail Borden library, Chairperson Armstrong thinks this could be a good way to get in front of the community, by hosting an event every other month. In the past, they had a variety of attendance, but it offers a good way to engage with and educate the community. Something to keep in mind: the library publishes their newsletter every 2 months, but they need content 4 months in advance. Chairperson Armstrong recommends talking with library first thing in January to begin planning publications.

E. Staff Updates

1. MC2 is bringing a new solar farm project online later this year that will create additional capacity for community solar. Staff is working to send out Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory data requests to the necessary sectors.

F. Other Business

1. Commissioner Jurina asked Chairperson Armstrong for an update on how the Parks Master Plan Meeting went. Commissioner Gronke added that there is an opportunity to participate in the survey online.

G. Adjourn: 7:30 p.m.

1. *Commissioner Brosier moves to adjourn, Commissioner Biss seconds. Motion passes unanimously.*

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