



September Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 13, 2022 • 6:00 p.m.
Heritage Ballroom, Edward Schock Centre of Elgin, 100 Symphony Way, Elgin, IL 60120

A. Call to Order:

1. The meeting of the Elgin Sustainability Commission was called to order at 6:02 p.m.
2. Roll Call:
 - i. Present: Commissioners Dan Brosier, David Jurina, Jeff Biss, Katie Gronke, Kevin Zaldivar. Council liaison Carol Rauschenberger. Staff liaison Mikala Larson.
 - ii. Absent: Chairperson Tom Armstrong. Commissioners Chris Flaherty, Dekovia Livingston.
 - iii. *A motion was made by Commissioner Brosier for Commissioner Gronke to be chair protem during the September 13th meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jurina and passed with Commissioner Gronke abstaining.*

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. August 9, 2022
 - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to approve the August 9th, 2022 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zaldivar and passed unanimously.*

C. Recognize Persons Present

1. John Ashworth, Graduate Assistant to the President's Office at Judson University, presented about Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) and how Elgin may be able to apply for and receive funding through this program. The proposed project is a feasibility study for a mixed-use trail to run along Route 31 between West River Road Trail and Wing Street. He is looking for community and organization support and has a petition for community members to sign by September 30th.
 - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Biss for the Sustainability Commission to support the ITEP proposal from John Ashworth. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jurina and passed unanimously.*
2. Sandy Kaptain, member of Sierra Club Valley of the Fox, shared about an event called Meeting the Candidates that is happening on Thursday.

D. Discussion Items

1. Elgin Image Awards: Enhancing Elgin is bringing back the Elgin Image Awards and adding a category for sustainable/green initiatives. They extended the invitation for a Sustainability Commissioner to be a judge. Staff liaison shared an overview of the awards and opportunity with the commission.
2. Pumpkin Smash Planning and Funding Request: The Sustainability Commission discussed hosting a 2022 Pumpkin Smash event. The staff liaison shared an overview of previous years' Pumpkin Smash events, including coordination details and tonnage of pumpkins composted. Commissioner Jurina mentioned giveaway options for the name drawing, such as zero waste kits. Ideas for what to give away will be discussed further at a future meeting.
 - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to move forward with a 2022 Pumpkin Smash event at a budget of \$1,300. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed unanimously.*
3. Elgin Native Roots Planning and Funding Request: Commissioners commented how popular and successful the Elgin Native Roots program is and reflect what a great way it is to engage people with the Sustainability Commission. Commissioner Jurina emphasized the importance of connecting people to the commission through a newsletter. Plants were left over from previous Market giveaway days, so it was recommended to purchase half the amount of

plants as was previously purchased, which was 2 flats of each plant species. Commissioner Jurina will bring the remaining Rain Garden plants to the September 23rd Farmers Market. 15 community members pre-requested a native tree or shrub. The native trees and shrubs will be given out at the September 23rd Farmers Market.

- i. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to approve the purchase of 15 bare root trees and shrubs from Green Guerrilla and one flat of each plant for the Woodland Edge garden kit for the September 23rd Farmers Market. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed unanimously.*
 - ii. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to allocate \$400 for the purchase of Woodland Edge and Rain garden brochures. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zaldivar and passed unanimously.*
4. Native Garden Demonstration Project and End of Year Event: Commission discussed replenishing plants at the garden and purchasing plant tags. Commission decided to revisit both topics in 2023. Plant inventory may look different in the spring, so commission will revisit the topic after vegetation comes up post-winter and after a plant inventory has been done to know what is needed and cost. Staff liaison has received comments and requests for plant tags at the native gardens. Plant tags aid caretakers, visitors, and community members in identifying plants. There are multiple options for plant tags, including simple to more intricate. Staff liaison shared the comments from the community at an Urban Ecology meeting and followed up to share three plant tag options and estimated pricing with the commission for consideration. Commission discussed labeling needs, including how many beds and how many plants would be labeled, and a desire to hear from Commissioner Flaherty what the plant tag needs would be including how many, size, and text. Discussion ended with a preference for simple, handwritten plant tags, but that the topic could be revisited in 2023.

The Urban Ecology workgroup and staff liaison have been discussing an end of year bilingual event at the native gardens. Staff liaison presented four pricing options for the event to the commission with varying options for activities, and all cost options included fee for a Spanish interpreter. Commission discussed date, time, cost, activities, and promotion of an event.

- i. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to allocate \$455-1,095 for the event on October 15th, with a workday beginning at 11am and the event at 12pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*
5. Outreach Funding Request: Request for allocation for outreach-related expenditures. A 2022 Budget wasn't officially approved, so this funding request was made.
 - i. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to approve \$500 for outreach funding. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed unanimously.*
6. Sustainability Commission Reusable Bags: Commissioner Jurina shared his research on reusable bags, and his recommendation to purchase hemp reusable bags due to hemp bags having a number of benefits. Commissioner Jurina pointed out that there are big differences between a polypropylene bag and a hemp bag, including the benefits and costs. Commissioner Jurina recommended purchasing 1,500 hemp bags. Commissioners discussed the purchase amount, bag purpose, distribution of the bags, and bag design/printing. Commissioners discussed both leaving the bags unprinted when ordering, so they can be screen printed at a later date in varying quantities with varying designs, or ordering them with a logo, educational message, or design printed on the bag. With the commission agreeing on a bag standard (size, shape, material), next step is to get more pricing on a comparable product. Staff liaison to find comparable products and pricing to share at October meeting.
7. Work Group Updates: Commissioners discussed the need for human capital, momentum, and community member involvement at the work groups to make progress on initiatives. Commissioners pointed out that although the work groups have been meeting for three months, there is low community attendance at the meetings. Comment shared that with and without involvement, progress can be achieved. Work groups can continue recommending and developing ideas and plans, and community members can plug in throughout the process. Work group efficiency was discussed, with the discussion leading to delegating work to work groups and creating synergy between the work groups. Discussed that an idea is great, but then a plan must be developed to do it. The responsibility is on the work group to bring a clear workable plan or presentation to the full commission to vote on and keep the process moving. Discussed that, depending on the size and budget of the project, the process should look like work group

presenting the idea or plan to the commission, the commission decides whether to move forward, then send back to the work group to develop the project further and complete, or make a recommendation to city council to direct city staff. To increase efficiency and project delivery, Commissioner Biss recommended replicating established successful programs instead of redoing a program every year, and use examples of successful programs in the area as a roadmap. Commissioners discussed the commission budget. Work groups should identify budget requests for work group initiatives, to maintain progress on projects and utilize the allocated budget.

Urban Ecology: Commissioner Brosier shared about a tree planting project, organized by Elgin Rotary Club in partnership with Kane County Forest Preserve. The topic will be added to the upcoming Urban Ecology agenda.

E. Staff Updates

1. None.

F. Other Business

1. None.

G. Adjourn:

1. *A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gronke and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.*