



## September Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 11, 2022 • 6:00 p.m.

West Conference Room, 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 6:03 p.m.
2. Roll Call:
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Flaherty to admit Commissioners Zaldivar and Gronke to attend remotely due to personal illness. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*
  - ii. Present: Chairperson Tom Armstrong, Commissioners David Jurina, Jeff Biss, Dekovia Livingston, Chris Flaherty. Council liaison Carol Rauschenberger. Staff liaison Mikala Larson.
  - iii. Absent: Commissioners Dan Brosier, Kevin Zaldivar, Katie Gronke.

### B. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. September 13, 2022
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to approve the September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Livingston and passed with two abstentions.*

### C. Recognize Persons Present

1. Sandy Kaptain shared an option for a reusable tote bag that is made from recycled materials and requested the commission consider purchasing them.
2. Sharene Dulabaum is currently interning with the Parks and Rec department and wants to get involved with the Sustainability Commission.
3. Erik Andersen and Tia Aageson from the Elgin Watchman podcast attended the meeting.

### D. Discussion Items

1. Amendment of the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting date: The Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Sustainability Commission falls on election day. The commission considered rescheduling the meeting.
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to move the meeting date from November 8<sup>th</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup> due to conflict with the state and federal election. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Flaherty and passed unanimously.*
2. Post-event review: Elgin Native Roots and Farmers Market Tabling: Staff liaison prepared a document for commissioners to review recently held events, including the successes and

challenges, partnerships, attendance, budget and actual spend of the event, in order to document the event for future reference. Commissioners began review of two recent events: Elgin Native Roots and tabling at the Farmers Market. Commissioners expressed a preference to complete post-event review documents on own time rather than during the meeting. Commissioners can access the document in Box or by contacting staff liaison.

3. Elgin Rotary Club Fitchie Creek Tree Project: The Elgin Rotary Club is leading a project in partnership with Kane County Forest Preserve to plant oak trees in 2021 and 2022 at the Fitchie Creek Forest Preserve and is open to partnership on the project. The Urban Ecology work group has been discussing the project and will continue the conversation. The commission expressed positive feedback on the idea and will wait for more information and ways to get involved from the Urban Ecology work group.
4. Pumpkin Smash 2022: Staff liaison shared an update on logistics and planning of the event. Commissioners discussed a giveaway option for the event, including gift cards and zero-waste kits. Residents will be entered into the giveaway if they sign up to receive future communications from the Sustainability Commission. Commissioners expressed desire to hand out educational material during the event, similar to what is shared at the Farmers Market booth. Staff liaison will compile handout materials for the two sites.
5. Special 2023 Budget Meeting: The commission discussed a date to hold a special budget meeting to prepare for the 2023 budget and vote on a 2023 budget in December 2022. The meeting will be an opportunity for commissioners to outline the 2023 budget in order to efficiently utilize 2023 funds. Staff liaison prepared a budget request document for commissioners and work groups to complete that will help guide the budget discussions. Commissioners can access the document in Box or by contacting staff liaison. Completed budget request forms should be sent to staff liaison.
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Flaherty to schedule a special 2023 budget retreat on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at either Hawthorne Hill Nature Center or the Centre of Elgin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*

6. Work Group Updates:

Urban Ecology: The work group is continuing to look into and pursue important initiatives. The work group will continue on the Fitchie Creek tree project.

Renewable Energy: The work group shared about their research on a solar pilot program based on a revolving loan fund model. The work group mentioned an interest in the City's energy grid and ability to create incentives for rebates and other funding programs.

Transportation & Mobility: The work group shared updates on their effort to establish an electric vehicle home charging rebate pilot program. The work group is utilizing the City of Naperville and City of Batavia programs as examples.

**Building Efficiency:** The work group is monitoring the progress from the state with the Illinois Energy Conservation Code. The work group discussed various initiatives for homeowner education regarding energy audits and home efficiency, and discussed the potential to use ROPE houses as demonstration energy projects.

**Outreach & Education:** This work group has just one commissioner at this time and could make more progress with at least another person. If someone is interested in participating in the work group, they are encouraged to attend meetings and get involved. Commissioners discussed that each other work group has come up with various initiatives that can be promoted by the Outreach & Education work group. Communication and collaboration is encouraged between work groups and commissioners to share ideas and create content.

Commissioner Livingston left the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

**Zero Waste:** The work group reflected on the need to better promote the Simple Recycling program and ensure that the information is easily accessible on the website. Commissioner Biss recommended improvements to recycling messaging on the website. Commissioners mentioned that this could be an opportunity to collaborate with Outreach & Education, by way of making short videos promoting Simple Recycling or At Your Door and posting on social media. Staff liaison shared updates from research into options for purchasing reusable hemp grocery bags. No action was taken to purchase bags but the conversation will continue.

#### **E. Staff Updates**

1. Staff liaison shared updates on the community solar program and Single Use Bag Fee project. City staff is beginning the work in preparation of the City's current waste hauler contract expiring at the end of 2024. Community Input Meetings are being held to obtain input from the community for the City of Elgin's 2023 Strategic Plan.

#### **F. Other Business**

1. Commissioners asked follow-up questions about the fall tree parkway planting.
2. Commissioners expressed interest in learning the success of the 2022 Grow Solar Chicagoland program.

#### **G. Adjourn:**

1. *A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.*