



Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 14, 2023 • 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 6:05 p.m.

**B. Roll Call**

1. Present: Chairperson Tom Armstrong, Commissioners Chris Flaherty, Dan Brosier, David Jurina, Katie Gronke, Jeff Biss, Council liaison Carol Rauschenberger, Staff liaison Mikala Larson.
2. Absent: Commissioners Dekovia Livingston, Kevin Zaldivar, Sharene Gould Dulabaum, Student Representative Isabella Cheung.

**C. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

1. January 10, 2023
  - i. Approval of the January 10, 2023 minutes was deferred to the March meeting.
2. February 6, 2023
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to approve the February 6, 2023 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed unanimously.*

**D. Public Comment**

1. Carl Missele, Tyler Creek Watershed Coalition presentation. Carl presented about the stormwater management challenges in the Valley Creek development, and the solutions the Tyler Creek Watershed Coalition is working to implement.

**E. Unfinished Business**

1. Earth Month and Arbor Day Planning: Staff liaison shared event venue options for the environmental summit. Commissioners suggested requesting if partners Kane County and Seven Generations Ahead/Fox Valley Sustainability Network will participate in event cost-sharing.
  - i. *A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to book the Elgin Community College event spaces on April 29<sup>th</sup> from 8am-2pm and discuss cost-sharing with partners. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Flaherty and passed unanimously.*

**F. New Business**

Councilmember Rauschenberger needed to leave the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Commissioners decided to move discussion of the Single Use Bag Fee to the first item so she could participate.

*i. A motion was made by Commissioner Brosier to move the Single Use Bag Fee to the first discussion item. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*

1. Single Use Bag Fee: Based on conversations with city staff and Village of Batavia's lead, council liaison recommended dividing the Single Use Bag Fee approach into two phases. Phase one would engage businesses 5,000 square feet or larger, and phase two would come in six months after phase one goes into effect and include businesses 4,999 square feet or less. Commissioners responded that a step one and step two approach is fine, especially while engaging the large retailers off the bat. Commissioners mentioned that small businesses should have opt-in capabilities during phase one, so they can participate if they would like.

*i. A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to amend the Sustainability Commission's Single Use Bag Fee recommendation to include a two-phase approach. The first phase will engage businesses 5,000 square feet or larger in the ordinance and include an option for smaller businesses to opt-in. The second phase will take effect six months after the first phase goes into effect and will engage businesses 4,999 square feet or less. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed unanimously.*

Councilmember Rauschenberger left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

2. Carl Missele, Tyler Creek Watershed Coalition presentation: No action.

3. Gail Borden Library VolunteerPalooza: Commissioners considered participating in the Gail Borden Library VolunteerPalooza. The event is on April 15<sup>th</sup> from 11am-2pm.

*i. A motion was made by Commissioner Gronke to participate in the VolunteerPalooza on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*

4. 2023 Farmers Market Dates: Through the Sustainability Commission's sponsorship of the Elgin Farmers Market, the commission can sign up to table at 5 dates during this summer's Market.

*i. A motion was made by Commissioner Biss to table at the Farmers Market during the five Fridays in June. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brosier and passed.*

5. Budget Requests: Commissioner Biss submitted two budget requests to the Sustainability Commission, one to Illinois Recycling Foundation (IRF) and one to RecyclingMarkets.Net. Commissioners decided to table any action on these budget requests in lieu of staff discussing if they are resources that would be beneficial and if there is capacity to utilize.

6. Fossil Fuel-Free Project: Commissioners discussed a draft proposal submitted by the Renewable Energy work group. The proposal would create an advisory committee responsible for researching and drafting a fossil-fuel free ordinance for all new construction and major renovations. Commissioners expressed concern that there is not enough information at this time to recommend an ordinance, but supported the recommendation to create an advisory

committee which will do the research and flesh out the ordinance. Commissioner Jurina said he will create a presentation to share to City Council.

- i. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to recommend to City Council the creation and appointment of a community advisory committee to explore the development and adoption of a fossil fuel-free new building and major renovation ordinance for the City of Elgin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Biss and passed unanimously.*

1. **Work Group Reorganization Discussion:** Commissioner Jurina recommended a new work group structure that would narrow the six work groups down to three, and to elect a chairman and vice chairman for each work group with the vice chairman responsible for minutes. It was discussed to use this structure at least until a Climate Action Plan is adopted and revisit work group needs at that time. All work groups meet in the West Conference Room at the Centre. The suggested work groups and meeting schedules are:

**Carbon Reduction:** First Wednesday of the month from 6-7:30pm

**Sustainable Communications:** Third Wednesday of the month from 6-7:30pm

**Urban Resiliency:** Fourth Thursday of the month from 4-5:30pm

- i. A motion was made by Commissioner Jurina to adjust the work group structure to the following three: Sustainable Communications, Carbon Reduction, and Urban Resiliency. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Flaherty and passed unanimously.*

#### **G. Chair and Work Group Reports**

**Urban Ecology:** The Sustainability Commission purchased native seeds to do a winter overseed at city-owned properties in Elgin and Urban Ecology is working further on Project Overseed.

**Transportation & Mobility:** The work group has been researching Active Mobility Plans. They are eager to learn from staff what the Request for Proposals criteria will be and provide input. They commented that there are very good plans around the country that can serve as examples.

**Renewable Energy:** The work group prepared the fossil fuel-free proposal.

**Building Efficiency:** No update.

**Outreach & Education and Zero Waste:** The work groups had a joint meeting. They talked about improving knowledge and understanding of the Simple Recycling program through outreach.

#### **H. Staff Report**

1. Staff liaison shared an update on the Single Use Bag Fee and the most recent meeting with the Elgin Development Group. City staff continues preparing for the waste hauler contract Request for Proposals. City of Elgin is participating in the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Energy Academy.

#### **I. Announcements**

1. Parks and Recreation has a meeting on February 15th about the Master Plan.

**J. 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 8:54 p.m.*