

MINUTES
Sustainability Committee
February 19, 2020
Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at the Municipal Complex in Crystal Lake.

II. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following committee members: Chair John Kavalunas, Emilie Hoffman, Terry Dieckhoff, Jen Oliver and Lara Smith. Members of the public in attendance were Sam Zurawski, Lisa Janezic, Cordell Crane, Ron Kagel, and Management Analyst Nick Hammonds.

III. Public Comment

Sam Zurawski, Lisa Janezic, and Cordell Crane introduced themselves to the Committee as interested applicants who look forward to being involved in helping the City with sustainable efforts. Ron Kagel introduced himself as a bike enthusiast and member of McHenry County Cycling Without Age.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from January 15, 2019

Terry Dieckhoff moved to approve the minutes from the January 15, 2019 meeting as amended. Emilie Hoffman seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

V. Crystal Lake Staff Guest

Nick Hammonds stated that a City staff member was planning to attend the meeting, however was unable to make the February meeting. The staff member will attend the March meeting to speak about engineering and infrastructure projects. John Kavalunas stated that the Committee looks forward to hearing about Complete Streets other projects in the City at the next meeting.

VI. Greenest Region Compact (GRC): Review Priority Objectives, Plastic Bag Objective Discussion, and Complete Streets Discussion

Below are the current priority objectives:

- Complete Streets Policy: Greg Glover
- Energy Star certification for Municipal Properties: John Kavalunas and Terry Dieckhoff
- Communication of Sustainability Committee initiatives, actions and goals: Lara Smith
- Promote and support local businesses that practice sustainability: Emilie Hoffman
- Plastic bag bans: Nicky Strahl and Joe Babiarz

Plastic Bag Fees

John Kavalunas discussed the GRC and the Committee's efforts to refocus based on key objectives identified in the GRC. John then asked Nick Hammonds how the City is proceeding with evaluation of plastic bag fees. Nick Hammonds discussed the City's process for research and evaluation by gathering feedback from Woodstock and nearby communities. John Kavalunas stated that Cynthia Kanner previously attended a meeting to discuss plastic bag bans and fees.

The Committee began a discussion of how to survey businesses and residents to gather feedback regarding potential plastic bag fees. Sam Zurawski asked how the Committee was planning to conduct surveying. Terry Dieckhoff stated that talking to businesses directly, or talking with people who are entering and exiting stores to gather feedback would help. John Kavalunas stated that the survey would need to be posted in the City newsletter. Cordell Crane brought up the possibility of conducting a radio broadcast on a local radio station. Lisa Janezic asked if the survey would be conducted to gather support for the implementation plastic bag fees, or just for general feedback. Lara Smith stated that the survey would be useful to gather information on the public's thoughts regarding plastic bag fees, and also whether people utilize reusable bags or not. Emilie Hoffman discussed whether Woodstock held open forums for the public to provide feedback on the proposed fee, and the Committee agreed that the City would need to hold public feedback forums.

Complete Streets

John Kavalunas discussed his visit to Batavia and the efforts that the town has made towards implementing Complete Streets policies and projects. John stated that the Batavia Mayor spent time talking to the public about how the town implemented Complete Streets, as well as the outcomes and setbacks that were experienced. Specifically, even though Batavia had made strides to implement Complete Streets, older infrastructure still posed difficulties that the town would need to address.

Communication/Green Business Designation

Lara Smith began the discussion of communication and promoting local sustainable businesses. She stated that locating a starting point for reaching out to people was difficult, but she provided a breakdown of potential updates to the City's web page to promote the Sustainability Committee. Lara proposed adding multiple features to the website, similar to other features on the site with sub-pages. Lara discussed adding a calendar for the Committee's events, a listing of the new GRC based objectives, and accomplishments of the Committee. Lara stated that having a place where residents and business owners can share ideas or submit forms to nominate people who practice sustainability would be helpful to encourage engagement from the community.

John Kavalunas stated that the website could include a link to the Green Guide and information about native plants. Lara Smith discussed possibility posting information about potentially harmful chemicals. Cordell Crane brought up possible liability issues with the City promoting certain chemicals as either harmful or not harmful.

Jen Oliver stated that the website currently includes information that was primarily used for the Clean Air Counts initiative. She stated that the Committee could use that language to improve on the existing website with a few modifications to match the current Committee goals. John Kavalunas stated that grant research was built into the original Committee initiatives, as a carry-over from Clean Air Counts, but that since Scott Hennings left the Committee there is not a member that specializes in grant research.

Lara Smith asked Terry Dieckhoff about the positives of having solar on a residential home and how these positive outcomes could also be promoted on the website. Terry agreed that promoting the benefits of solar could encourage others to go solar. Lara stated that opening up the conversations between people and promoting these items would further the Committee's steps towards achieving the GRC goal of communication.

Emilie Hoffman provided an overview of her green business model presentation for the Committee to review. Emilie reviewed the current associations that certify and award green businesses. These associations include Green America and the Illinois Green Business Association. Emilie discussed the applications and scoring guidelines these associations use to certify green businesses and related their efforts to the possible functions of the Committee's green business designation program. Lara Smith agreed that the Committee could use their guidelines as a starting point for the Committee's own program in Crystal Lake. Jen Oliver inquired if any McHenry County businesses have received a certification, and Emilie stated that she did not locate a McHenry County based winner.

Emilie Hoffman detailed multiple municipalities that have a similar Sustainability Committee to the City's. John Kavalunas and Emilie Hoffman discussed contacting Batavia, Niles and Northbrook to gather more information on their green business designation programs. Emilie Hoffman also discussed the possibility of partnering with the Chamber of Commerce. She stated that the Chamber was not aware of the Sustainability Committee, and that the Chamber currently partners with the Park District for the Earth Day clean-up event. The Committee agreed that the Chamber would be a great partner for the Committee. Committee members have also been invited to network with the Chamber of Commerce at their next monthly luncheon in March.

The Committee discussed the most effective ways to recognize green businesses through the designation program. Cordell Crane stated that every business should receive some level of recognition. Sam Zurawski agreed that it would be beneficial to reward everyone on different levels rather than only giving out one award. One award per year may reduce engagement from other businesses that do not win. Jen Oliver stated that that some form of an audit would need to be performed on each applicant to ensure that they are not inflating their sustainable efforts just to win. John Kavalunas also stated that utilizing an open ended submission application would be easier to administer than following a checklist matrix for each business. Lara Smith stated that since the Committee is in the preliminary stages of carrying out the program, it may be more beneficial to begin with an open-ended process.

VII. Crystal Lake Bike Rack Plans

The Committee agreed to delay this item for the March meeting when a City staff member will be attending the meeting to speak about engineering and infrastructure projects.

VIII. Anti-Idling for South Elementary

Jen Oliver stated that she spoke with the principal of South Elementary and the feedback received was that anti-idling was not currently a top priority at the school. Jen discussed the importance of promoting walking and biking to school due to the large amount of parents that drive their kids. The Committee discussed the possibility of implementing a moveable sign to discourage idling. The issue would then be to establish a person responsible for displaying the sign each day. Jen discussed the option of reaching out to the school's PTO and will update the Committee with any developments.

IX. Bike With Your Neighbor Scheduling and Rain Date Scheduling

John Kavalunas began the discussion of the next steps for the BWYN. Terry Dieckhoff stated that the next meeting should focus on establishing the timeline for the event. Emilie Hoffman clarified the goals of the eco-hunt addition to the event. Terry Dieckhoff stated that the eco-hunt would occur after the bike ride at Main Beach and would be focused toward the younger participants.

Ron Kagel inquired about how the BWYN is organized. John Kavalunas provided a brief overview of the event. Ron then discussed his work with Cycling Without Age (CWA) in McHenry County and the possibility of selling or giving away fixed up bikes. He provided an overview of the functions of CWA to provide bicycle/rickshaw services for seniors in the County. Ron discussed the possibility of partnering with the Committee and the Park District for the BWYN. Ron discussed the possibility of bike donations, which Nick Hammonds will review with City staff to verify if donations can be accepted. The Committee mentioned that Greg Glover was previously on the Committee and set up an information table at the 2019 BWYN to promote the CWA.

The BWYN is reserved for June 7, 2020, with a rain date of June 28th. A new liaison for the Crystal Lake Park District will attend the March meeting to confirm the details of the event. The following event timeline will be used at the March meeting to establish the 2020 event timeline.

- Prior to the Event: Flags and arrow placement. Adjust clues as needed.
- Noon – 2:15 p.m.: Bike Rodeo (Park District Police)
- Noon – 12:30 p.m.: Registration, waivers, and pass out clues. QR code presentation. Bike registration (Park District Police).
- 12:15 p.m. – 12:25 p.m.: Safety Talk (Park District Police)
- Noon – 1:00 p.m.: Lucky Brake Booth
- 12:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.: Bike Rides. Games at Main Beach.
- 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.: Scavenger Hunt Clues Reviewed, Raffle Tickets & Refreshment Tickets Distributed (1 ticket – short route, 2 tickets – 6 clues, 3 tickets 10 + clues), riders put raffle chances in buckets.
- 2:30 p.m.: Prize Drawings (SC Members)

X. Open Discussion

John Kavalunas discussed the Pace Bus Electrification Resolution drafted for the Committee’s approval. John provided a brief history of the Pace Bus use of Compressed Natural Gas and the current opportunity for a new Pace Bus station to utilize electric vehicles. The Resolution is a letter of support that would be sent by the Sustainability Committee to the Mayor. John Kavalunas will follow up with Kim Stone, Highland Park Councilmember, to confirm the amounts of the grant dollars listed in her correspondence. Upon voice vote, the Committee approved of the letter supporting the Electrification of Pace Buses.

XI. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

XII. Adjourn

There being no further business, Terry Dieckhoff moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 p.m. Jen Oliver seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.