

**MINUTES**  
**Sustainability Committee**  
**August 18, 2021**  
**Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at City Hall in Crystal Lake.

**2. Roll Call/Attendance**

Present were the following committee members: Lisa Janezic, Sam Zurawski, Terry Dieckhoff, Nicky Strahl, Jen Oliver, Emily Conti, and Cordell Crane. Members of the public in attendance were Lisa McLaughlin, Dean Farr, and Assistant to the City Manager Nick Hammonds.

**3. Public Comment**

Lisa McLaughlin introduced herself to the Committee as an interested member of the public. Lisa works at the Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce. Lisa discussed her interest in environmentally friendly initiatives and also the Food Shed Co-op. The Committee also discussed the recent developments with the Food Shed.

**4. Approval of the Minutes from July 21, 2021**

Terry Dieckhoff moved to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting as amended. Sam Zurawski seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

**5. Mayors Monarch Pledge Review**

Nick Hammonds discussed the ongoing efforts by the City and the Committee regarding the Mayors Monarch Pledge program. Lisa Janezic inquired about the status of removing milkweed from the City Code, which is one of the Pledge action items. Nicky Strahl stated that the City Code does not provide much detail regarding milkweed and there is no differentiation between the different types of milkweed. Nick Hammonds stated that getting approval for removing milkweed could coincide with the City's rain garden projects. This is because the rain gardens will likely have milkweed and other pollinator friendly seeds planted.

**6. Greenest Region Compact (GRC): Green Business Designation Program**

Nick Hammonds stated that the Committee's Green Business program will tentatively begin in September. Nick Hammonds stated that the City's feedback was to remove the tiered system for awarding Green Businesses. Jen Oliver agreed and stated that starting simple with the program would be prudent to promote awareness. Cordell Crane stated that he believes the program should have requirements that businesses follow through on their proposed plans for environmentally friendly practices. Nicky Strahl stated that businesses should begin with reporting what green practices they have followed or established since the beginning of the year.

Nick Hammonds discussed how the questionnaire will require businesses to provide answers to questions explaining their green practices. Sam Zurawski stated that the Committee will receive the contact information for each business and will be able to track in future years if the businesses have made any progress towards their future green goals. Jen Oliver agreed and stated that per the program,

businesses will still have criteria to follow in their application. Sam Zurawski stated that businesses will need to go into detail about their practices, and not only report that they recycle.

Dean Farr suggested that the Committee could promote the ComEd free energy assessments. ComEd offers free energy assessments to residents for their homes. Lisa McLaughlin stated that she has had an energy assessment and it was an easy process. ComEd will provide suggestions and give detailed report of improvements that can be made. However, Nicky Strahl stated that ComEd will not perform an energy assessment if a person is renting their home. Sam Zurawski stated that this may also prevent larger companies from pursuing an assessment. Nick Hammonds discussed how there are many small businesses that lease their properties, which may prevent them from qualifying for a free energy audit.

Lisa McLaughlin stated that she could contact her marketing manager at the Chamber of Commerce to assist with promoting the Green Business Program. Social media posts and weekly emails to the Chamber's mailing list would reach thousands of people. Nick Hammonds stated that he would follow up with the Community Development Department to work with the Chamber on promoting the program once the Google Forms submission is ready.

The Committee discussed the timeline for the program. The current plan is to allow submissions beginning in September through January 2022. Lisa McLaughlin discussed how the awarded businesses could be presented on Earth Day in 2022. Lisa Janezic stated that the design of the sticker to be provided to awarded businesses could look like a leaf or have elements of the recycling logo. The Committee will continue discussions of the sticker design at future meetings.

#### **7. Johnny Appleseed Festival: September 25, 2021**

Nick Hammonds discussed the upcoming Johnny Appleseed Festival scheduled for Saturday, September 25, 2021. The Committee discussed items to promote at the festival, including the Green Business Designation program and the Bike Share program. Nick Hammonds stated that the Committee will discuss the timeline for the event in more detail at the September Committee meetings.

Sam Zurawski discussed how having a bike share program bike at the festival would help promote the program and biking in general. Nick Hammonds stated that Prairieland Disposal will supply compost bins. Terry Dieckhoff stated that the Committee could post information about compostable items to share at the festival. The Committee also discussed having a QR code at the table that links to the Committee's web page.

#### **8. Open Discussion**

Jen Oliver inquired if there was additional information regarding large trees being cut down near her home. Nicky Strahl stated that the size of the trees and whether or not they are native could be factors as to why they are being cut down. Nick Hammonds stated that he will share information regarding the trees as it is available.

Cordell Crane inquired if there has been any update regarding the Emerald Ash Borer. Nick Hammonds stated that the City completed its program that addressed any ash trees in the City right-of-way. Nicky Strahl stated that there are two new beetles that may pose a problem for trees and the habitat.

Lisa McLaughlin inquired about the electric vehicle charging station proposed for the downtown area. Nick Hammonds provided an update regarding the status of the project, which is progressing.

Dean Farr discussed the importance of preserving natural areas and how many areas would benefit from reduced mowing. Specifically, he referenced the stretch of Main Street between Route 14 and Crystal Lake Avenue.

Jen Oliver discussed the gas station at the corner of Route 14 and Dole Avenue. The gas station was recently torn down. The Committee discussed the mural concept by Jen Oliver. Nick Hammonds stated that the City's Community Development Director provided guidance on how to proceed with the mural project. Once a concept is prepared and the business owner has given approval, the City can then review the proposed mural artwork. Jen Oliver discussed how the Committee could incorporate the Green Business Designation program logo into the mural.

The Committee discussed the results of the vote regarding chickens being allowed in Crystal Lake. The City Council ultimately decided not to allow residents to have backyard chickens. The Committee discussed the benefits and drawbacks of having chickens.

**9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

**10. Adjourn**

There being no further business, Cordell Crane moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Nicky Strahl seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.