

MINUTES
Sustainability Committee
August 17, 2022
Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at Crystal Lake City Hall.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following committee members: Terry Dieckhoff, Carol Elkins, Emilie Hoffman, Cordell Crane, Jen Oliver, Lisa Janezic, and Nicky Strahl. Members of the public in attendance were Shawna Flavell, Stephen Platt, Amy Olson, Martie Gorman, Dean Farr, Jeff Miller, and Assistant City Manager Nick Hammonds.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes from July 20, 2022

Carol Elkins moved to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2022 meeting. Nicky Strahl seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

5. Guest Presentation: Shawna Flavell, McHenry County Conservation Foundation

Shawna Flavell, the Executive Director of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation, provided a presentation regarding the Foundation's work and purpose. The Foundation funds environmental projects in McHenry County and adds additional financial capacity for the Conservation District. She stated that the Conservation District has 35 public sites and numerous private sites that are protected. She discussed the four pillars of the Foundation: Land and habitat restoration; Environmental education; Recreation, and; Land protection.

Shawna Flavell discussed the importance of spreading awareness regarding the environment and the Foundation's work. The Foundation accepts donations to help fund their initiatives, which often times will include donations of land.

Cordell Crane asked if the Foundation's plan is to purchase properties to donate to the Conservation District. Shawna Flavell stated that once the District acquires property, they cannot sell it. They are required to maintain and preserve the natural areas they own. But, because they manage the natural areas, they typically prefer not to have any buildings on the land they acquire due to the increased maintenance costs.

Shawna Flavell discussed the programs offered by the Conservation District. Steve Platt asked how many children go through their programs. Shawna Flavell did not have the number readily available, but stated that the programs are well attended. Amy Olson discussed how a better metric for success is to see how often the programs are filled to capacity. Shawna Flavell stated that their programs are almost always booked to capacity.

Shawna Flavell thanked the Committee for its time and provided brochures prior to exiting.

6. Green Business Designation Program Updates

The Committee reviewed the updated questionnaire for the 2022-23 Green Business Designation program. Lisa Janezic stated the dates should be removed from the questionnaire. Carol Elkins stated that a question should be posed regarding Styrofoam recycling. She also stated that the question for local nurseries should ask if they sell native plants.

Nick Hammonds stated that the September newsletter will have an article promoting the program. The program will be open for businesses to submit their answers on September 1, 2022.

7. Johnny Appleseed Festival

Emilie Hoffman discussed the items to present at the upcoming Johnny Appleseed Festival. She stated that the coloring books were popular in years past since the festival is geared towards children. The Committee also discussed having a scavenger hunt and highlighting the Brink Street swale. Carol Elkins stated that mazes that are sustainability related would be an option. She also stated that the Committee should provide general information on proper recycling to educate the public.

Jen Oliver stated that she can attend the table at the festival from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Terry Dieckhoff stated that he can be there from noon to 2:00 p.m. Cordell Crane stated that he can attend the afternoon from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

8. Mayors Monarch Pledge Action Items Update

Nick Hammonds provided an update regarding the Mayors Monarch Pledge. The City will be updating the City Code section regarding prohibited weeds to take Milkweed off of the list.

9. Elgin Grant Program

Nick Hammonds discussed the research he has gathered regarding the Elgin community grant program and similar programs operated by local municipalities. This item will be discussed at upcoming budget meetings. Buy-in will be needed to begin the program.

10. Emergency Preparedness and Climate Change

Nick Hammonds discussed the flyer made for the Johnny Appleseed Festival. The flyer will include a QR code directing people to the Fire Rescue Department's information on emergency preparedness.

11. Open Discussion

Amy Olson inquired if having a grant program is on the Mayors Monarch Pledge action item list. Nick Hammonds will review the action items to see if this qualifies.

Cordell Crane asked about public gardens in town. Amy Olson stated that the Park District has plots for community gardens. She also discussed the efforts to work with schools on community gardens. Carol Elkins stated that the challenge with schools is that there is nobody to maintain the gardens in the summer. Jen Oliver stated that schools typically have a sign up and they are always full.

Terry Dieckhoff inquired if the City will assist a resident with removing a tree on private property. He discussed a situation with his neighbor whose tree fell down.

Jeff Miller inquired if the City has plans to move to an electric fleet for City vehicles. Nick Hammonds discussed the research being conducted for future budget decisions.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

13. Adjourn

There being no further business, Lisa Janezic moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. Nicky Strahl seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.