

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved 3/21/2018

MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

February 21, 2018, 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Establishment of a Quorum.

Chairman Beebe called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Roll call found Commissioners Dan Beebe, Bethany Brown, Kris Zimmermann, and John Symowicz present, Commissioner Bob Blaus arrived at 7:09 P.M.

Also in attendance was Assistant Director of Public Works, Tim Wilcox.

2. Approval of Minutes.

- A. Environmental Commission Minutes of January 17, 2018. Commissioner Symowicz made a motion to approve the minutes of January 17, 2018 seconded by Commissioner Zimmermann.

Voting Yea: Commissioners Beebe, Symowicz, Brown, and Zimmermann. Voting Nay: 0.

3. Public Participation/Presentations.

None

4. Items For Consent

None

5. Review and discuss Commission Priority List.

- A. Review current priority list

Monarch Butterfly Pledge

Mr. Wilcox informed the Commissioners he submitted the yearly reporting form to the National Wildlife Federation last month before the January 20, 2018 deadline. He also indicated he had nominated six West Chicago grade schools to receive a Butterfly Garden Kit from Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Nomination does not guarantee that a school will receive a Butterfly Garden Kit. Schools who receive kits are encouraged to plant gardens this spring and fill out a brief follow-up survey in fall 2018.

Blooming Fest

Chairman Beebe announced he will have more responsibility at the Garden Club tent this year and will need someone to handle the setup and takedown of the Environmental Commission's tent. Both Commissioners, Symowicz and Blaus, indicated they would be able to do it. Commissioner Blaus said he requested the Solar House so he may be towing it to the event that morning. He will finalize plans closer to the event. Chairman Beebe attended the first Blooming Fest Committee meeting held on February 15, 2018. He said it was very well attended and met Bethany Bayci, the City's new Special Events Coordinator. He said the Garden Club was looking into getting butterfly friendly plant plugs this year from a source in Minnesota.

Since last year's event was canceled we still have most of the handouts which we can use for this year's event. In addition it was suggested to promote the next pumpkin recycling and paper shredding events at this year's Blooming Fest.

Street Light Request Policy

This item was not discussed.

Cool DuPage Program

There was no new information, item was not discussed.

Pumpkin Recycling Event

Item was discussed briefly during discussion of Blooming Fest. The City should look into getting a smaller roll-off dumpster this year; the 30 yard was way too big.

Lighting Ordinance

Commissioner Zimmermann said the Environmental Commission & Committee Coalition (EC3) of DuPage County met a couple weeks ago. They are still looking to have West Chicago as their pilot city in their effort to make DuPage County the first Dark Sky County. She said Drew Carhart agreed to give a presentation of his views on light pollution and allow it to be recorded at no charge. EC3 is also planning a "starry skies" exhibit to get the word out for the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) and their goal for night sky preservation. There was discussion about where to host the event, inviting Police to the presentation, and discussion about how proper lighting actually provides more light (just where it's needed) for security purposes.

Chairman Beebe looked up Drew Carhart on the internet and read off a number of highlights about him and his efforts. Commissioner Blaus was asked if he was able to contact the First United Methodist Church of West Chicago to see if they would be interested in hosting the presentation sometime in April. He said he would check into it.

Adopt A Highway

Item was discussed briefly to mention the dates for cleanup. April 28 and October 6, 2018 are the tentative dates.

Holiday Light Recycling

Item was discussed briefly for total amount collected this season. West Chicago collected 661 pounds of lights. Commissioner Blaus said York collected 650 pounds.

Rain Barrel Sale

Mr. Wilcox informed the group that the agreement with the Conservation Foundation has been sent in. Regarding the speaking engagement they offer, there needs to be a decision made for the topic and where to host the presentation. It was mentioned the new coffee shop in town has a meeting room, the library, City Hall or First United Methodist Church are also possible sites.

B. Discuss new additions to priority list

None.

6. Other Business

At the last meeting Commissioner Blaus suggested organizing an Earth Day yard cleanup similar to the leaf raking in the fall. He said he spoke to Kay McKeen, Executive Director for SCARCE and she mentioned to him that there is talk of organizing a County wide cleanup effort for the fall of 2018. It's too late to try to organize a spring cleanup he said.

Mr. Wilcox mentioned that he attended a meeting on the subject of America in Bloom. The City of West Chicago and the West Chicago Park District are teaming up to try to become nationally known as an America in Bloom community. He said the meeting was very well attend with representatives from DuPage County, the Park District, Ball Horticultural, People made Visible, We Grow Dreams Greenhouse and Garden Center, the West Chicago Garden Club, the City, Park District, and some others. Judging will take place sometime in the summer and the City will be evaluated on 7 criteria: flowers, landscaped areas, urban forest, environmental efforts, celebrating heritage, community vitality, and overall impression. Rosemary Mackey asked that someone from the Environmental Commission join the committee as well. Chairman Beebe indicated he would attend the next scheduled meeting.

Commissioner Zimmerman discussed information in a hand-out she received about the Citizens' Climate Lobby which is a non-profit, nonpartisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change. They are working on a Carbon Fee and Dividend proposal and working to build relationships with elected officials, the media, and local communities.

Commissioner Blaus reminded the group that September 29, 2018 is the date of Winfield Townships recycling event. He also said he attended a watershed workshop sponsored by DuPage County and the Forest Preserve; there they discussed rebuilding detention ponds to work better. He spoke with Al Murphy, Forest Preserve District Commissioner and discussed the proposed bike path bridge which will cross the DuPage River and Route 38 just east of Route 59.

There was much discussion about bike trails and the new bike path bridge.

7. Adjournment

At 8:15 P.M. Commissioner Zimmermann made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Blaus seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Wilcox, Assistant Director of Public Works