

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
May 26, 2016
City Council Chambers

A Special Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 5:30 PM on Thursday, May 26, 2016 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

A roll call was taken.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Ellinghausen, Laurie Kacmar, and Chair Erica Poremba.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jaci Krandel and Steve Wenzel.

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Public Works Director Tom Migatz and Chief Deputy Clerk Jane Howie

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Commission was unable to approve the Minutes from the May 5, 2016 as some of the meetings attendees were not present. This will be added to the June 16, 2016 Agenda.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Develop action items ranking matrix from Environmental Plan Recommendations List

T. Migatz reported on several action items, looking for sites for community gardens, conservation design standards, and comprehensive plan guidelines. Information received from the City's Water Department doesn't include aquifer info from 2005 to 2015; however, it does show a decrease in pumping level which could be due to loss of businesses, cooler and wetter springs and summers. The numbers went from 1,000,000,000 down to 820,000,000. Wastewater Treatment needs a more constant water level for their system to work properly.

B. Mention of Council request to explore mosquito spraying alternatives

C. Request by Commissioner Ellinghausen to explore options related to salt brine used to process potable water

ACTIONS ITEMS:

Line #128, Household Hazardous Waste: Provide improved handling of household hazardous wastes including more frequent special collections or regular pickup of household hazardous wastes. High Priority. The Defenders and some other groups are already using these practices. E. Ellinghausen said the IEPA held an event at MCC about 3 years ago. He suggested that the Defenders should lobby the County to get more of these hazardous recycling events scheduled.

This is something the Commission could get involved in. E. Ellinghausen said they have electronic recycling drives each month. He recommended that the City to lobby the County to organize hazardous household / waste drives.

E. Poremba added that the City of Oak Forest does a lot of those drives through major companies; a cooperation agreement. This might be something the City of Woodstock could do.

Line #133 & 134, Air Quality: Plant trees and protect / increase green space to improve air quality. Become a Clean Air Counts community. E. Poremba said Oak Forest is working on this – they’ve partnered with 400 business and other communities, through energy efficient, etc. lawnmower by-back program once per year (gas powered lawn mowers). This information can be found on Oak Forest’s website. E. Poremba will contact the City of Oak Forest to gather more information. Maybe a couple of the Commissions can get together to initiate some of these events.

#139 & 140, Bike & Pedestrian Transportation: Increase the availability of bike racks and “rest area” type amenities around the city. Investigate grants and develop partnerships for building pedestrian bridges, bike lanes, and trails/sidewalks. E. Poremba is curious if there may be a grant for these items. Woodstock does have a pedestrian population. The Commission discussed current bike rack locations and will think about additional places where bike racks would be most useful. E. Ellinghausen said he is looking into a grant program for bike racks.

Page 16, #193, Green Building: Coordinate with waste management companies, McHenry County and neighboring municipalities to develop a construction waste recycling program. The goal is to reduce the amount of construction waste. L. Kacmar will look into possibly partnering with the Re-Store and local waste haulers.

#200, Energy Efficiency: Conduct energy audits on municipal buildings and calculate potential cost savings and reduction of carbon emissions. The Commission is interested in having this done for both new & existing buildings. Medium Priority for # 200 through # 207. The Commission asked if conducting an energy audit would be an easy or difficult task on municipal buildings. Medium-priority. T. Migatz said the city is currently working on energy efficient lighting. He would have to look into the process of an energy audit.

#203, Provide information to residents on Federal/State and local tax incentives for energy efficient home improvements and purchase of energy efficient appliances. The Commission asked if this information could be included in the City Scene, on the City’s website and various other places. It is believed that this info has been in the City Scene; however, several of these items would need to wait until after an energy audit is done.

#205, Examine options for energy efficient exterior public lighting considering the lifecycle costs of the options. T. Migatz said this is a common practice already in place for the City of Woodstock.

#207, When making a new purchase, choose appliances with the highest “Energy Star” rating possible. E. Poremba & L. Kacmar will look through City Scenes to see if these types of information have been included.

#211 – 216 Community Education and Outreach: Develop & Maintain an environmental page on the City’s website. Utilize the City Scene and other publications to promote information regarding sustainable environmental practices, issues or seminars, as applicable. Establish and maintain an information area within the library which will provide information on the Woodstock Environmental Plan. Distribute the City of Woodstock Annual Environmental Progress Report prepared by the Environmental Commission providing a review of Woodstock’s implementation of the WEP. Develop a program of environmental education forums with other organizations open to the community. Coordinate with the parks department, Chicago wilderness and/or other organizations to explore programs such as No Child Left Inside. High Priority. The Commission is interested in creating an Environmental Page on the City’s website in the near future.

E. Poremba said these are all High Priority items. At the next meeting the Commission will go through the high priority items and rank them. Then, decisions can be made and a timeline set to begin working on these items.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by L. Kacmar, second by E. Poremba to adjourn this Special Meeting of the Environmental Commission to the next Special Meeting at 5:30 PM on Thursday, June 16, 2016. Ayes: Ed Ellinghausen, Laurie Kacmar, and Chair Erica Poremba. Nays: None. Absentees: Jaci Krandel and Steve Wenzel. Abstentions: None. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Howie
Chief Deputy Clerk