

CITY OF DUBUQUE - COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

GOVERNMENTAL BODY: Resilient Community Advisory Commission (RCAC)

DATE: 8/01/2024

TIME: 5:00 pm

LOCATION: Jule Operations and Training Center (JOTC) Circle Conference Room, 949 Kerper Blvd.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Josh Chamberland, Jake Kohlhaas, Robin Kennicker, Dean Boles

MEMBERS ABSENT: Steven Drahozal (unexcused), Sandra Evans (excused), Lalith Jayawickrama (unexcused)

STAFF PRESENT: Gina Bell

Chair Kohlhaas called the meeting to order at 5:05pm

TEST AGENDA

MINUTES APPROVAL: Kennicker motioned to approve the July minutes. Chamberland seconded. Motion carried. Boles abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

NEW BUSINESS

Branching out DBQ Update

New Environmental Justice Tree Coordinator, Laurana Snyder, spoke about USFS grant. The goal is to plant 5,280 trees in the next five years. In addition to planting trees, they are working to hiring 5-6 teens for the Teen Resiliency Corps to support this project and get them involved in urban canopy work. Planting will take place in census tracts 1, 3, 5, and 12.02. Talking to property owners about long term tree care and maintenance. August 24th is the big kick off event and there is a call for volunteers to plant trees, sign up on the Dubuque Trees Forever site as well as the volunteer Dubuque page. Aiming to get 110% of the city tree canopy back that was lost from the emerald ash borer – what the CAP recommends.

Per the grant we want to get more trees planted earlier in the grant period. But overall, it is going to be a continual program. The goal is to get some trees planted this fall 2024 and then work during the winter to flush out more details in following seasons, procure trees and build out programming. Trees will be planted on private or public property but there is not a specific breakdown. Please encourage people who live in these census track to sign up for free trees. Trees should be planted in privately owned yards to prevent trees from being planted on city property.

Work plan to focus on in FY25

Using goals set at July meeting commission will build out a workplan stating desired outcomes, related actions, who is responsible for these actions, who we need input from, and timeline. This is a living document and RCAC will continue to fill in as time progresses. Discussion as follows:

Unified Development Code: Wally from Planning will come and talk to the commission in September regarding the update and plan to work with RCAC and consultants. Discussion related to having City Council come to RCAC to hear their input vs. Have a commissioner representative go to a Council meeting.

Support permanent funding for CAP coordinator - letter of support to council from the commission

Advise council to adapt a science-based target for emissions reduction

1. 50% by 2030 was a good goal in early 2000s
2. Funding sources have asked if we have a science-based target, so we want to make sure we are still eligible for many possible funding opportunities
3. Set a goal farther than just 2030 because that is only 6 years away
4. If we report on city fossil fuel use, there has not been much of a difference. Perspective is important.
5. Business as usual plan is not enough, we need to aim to do more.
6. How do we take people who have natural gas furnaces and get them onto heat pumps?
7. How do we facilitate people getting more efficient appliances?
8. Emphasize effects of fossil fuel use on GHG emissions
9. Adopting a city goal on fossil fuel use and GHG emissions from city government use

Ongoing support/research on community solar – very dependent on funding, it's not super accessible

Walking, biking, and transit – specific focus on bike routes for college students, commuter routes and access to trails → be able to bike to trails without feeling worried about car traffic and how are we measuring the difference these changes make. Reminder to fill out the Central White survey

Green space - Urban ag guide and pesticide reduction; Josh is still working on the letter

Waste reduction - We need something from the landfill that we can support

OLD BUSINESS

Policy work – Review ordinances and policies as they relate to Climate Action Plan paired recycling responses from city staff; letter was passed along to CC as well

1. Next steps Urban Ag guide (see above)
2. Chemicals on lawns – waiting for more RCAC members

HOW DID I SHOW UP? COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

- Robin spoke to Crescent Community Health Center, and they have more spots for dental care
- Josh has been doing person research on historic mines because of the increasing sink holes in Dubuque
- Dean wants folks to fill out the CDBG consolidated plan survey

NEXT MEETING: The next commission meeting will occur on September 5, 2024, at 5pm at the Jule Operations and Training Center (JOTC) in the Circle Conference Room, 949 Kerper Blvd.

ADJOURNMENT: The Commission adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Minutes approved by: 

Jacob Kohlhaas, Commission Chair

Prepared by: 

Gina Bell, Director of Sustainability