

City of Dubuque
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

GOVERNMENTAL BODY: Resilient Community Advisory Commission

DATE: March 5, 2020

TIME: 5:00 pm

LOCATION: JOTC Circle Conference Room

Jule Operations and Training Center, 949 Kerper Blvd., Dubuque IA 52001

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean Boles, Sara Booth, Candace Eudaley-Loebach, Adam Hoffman, Lalith Jayawickrama, Robin Kennicker, Jake Kohlhaas, Craig Reber, Leah Specht.

MEMBERS ABSENT: n/a

STAFF PRESENT: Gina Bell, Sustainable Community Coordinator

GUESTS PRESENT: Mary Rose Corrigan, John Klostermann, Anderson Sainci

Specht called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. Bell confirmed the meeting was in compliance with the Iowa Open Meeting Law.

TEST AGENDA

PUBLIC COMMENT: Paul Uzel, representing Dubuque Interfaith Green Coalition Made up of 10 congregations, to address the automated collection issue and encourages commission to not rush this process. Especially consider low-income and renters. Also encourage “pay as you throw” to encourage reducing, reusing and recycling before throwing away. Urges again to go slow.

Paul Shultz, President of Green Dubuque, shared the attached comments. The Commission allowed for a brief Q&A with Mr. Shultz. Commissioner Kohlhaas asked Mr. Shultz to address the worker’s injury argument. Mr. Shultz responded that we already have semi-automated pick up. The only injuries he saw when he was in this role, was “an occasional sprained ankle”. The loads are not that heavy. Commissioner Reber asked if it is a more automated system, won’t maintenance costs increase? Mr. Shultz deferred to staff member John Klostermann for an answer. Commissioner Kennicker asked about studies of employees sitting in a truck for 8 hours a day and the injuries related to this? Mr. Shultz deferred to Mr. Klostermann again. She followed up with a question about the City’s proposed plan to narrow streets and the feasibility of this if said plan goes through. Mr. Shultz responded that he is open to automation, just not at this rushed rate. There are lots of technology and truck designs to consider. CR picks up everything in a 35-gallon container. Commissioner Kohlhaas asked about the fee structure? Mr. Shultz responded that we should be able to be cheaper than private industry but we as residents have to now pay more. Commissioner Kennicker noted that instead of increasing property taxes, water, waste water and storm water, garbage and other fees have increased. Mr. Shultz agreed that she was correct.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Motion by Commissioner Kennicker to approve February 2020 minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Boles. Motion carries.

PUBLIC HEALTH PRESENTATION:

Mary Rose Corrigan, Director of Public Health gave an update of the Council priorities that overlap with RCAC priorities covered by her department. She spoke of the Brain Health and the Pacific Islander Health Project. Corrigan share the Community Foundation did a study about mental health services and the lack thereof. It then became a council priority. The City does not directly fund nor provide brain health services. But law enforcement and other staff participate on the Brain Health Task Force which is addressing gaps in service and finding a provider to meet this need.

Where does the RCAC fit in?

Trauma and/or ACEs affect brain health. To build resilience, you need to not be affected by this trauma long term. If we have a resilient community, they can overcome trauma and lessen adverse effects.

Relentless stress (immigration, poverty, racism, sexism, injury, etc.) leads to always being in fight or flight which makes other parts of our bodies not work as well. Which may lead to behavior and brain health and our ability to cope. It isn't just systemic or substance abuse, there are many factors that play into this. Crescent Community Health Center (CCHC) has added additional staff to address brain health needs and doing this in a more holistic way and focusing on wellness as a whole to decrease the constant stressors. Commissioners are invited to Crescent's Open House on March 30th at 5 pm. Handout attached.

The Resilient Community Advisory Commission can help by supporting adequate funding for brain health (which is through the state). Additionally, advocacy work to support these initiatives and work to de-stigmatize and support brain health issues. The RCAC can encourage people to go to CCHC for health care needs even private health insurance holders.

Commissioner Boles asked, "How do you fund care for Marshallese population since they are not eligible for Medicaid?" Corrigan responded that it is funded through donations, some City funding through a grant, and children who are eligible use Hawkeye Insurance. Boles followed up asking if our City's Legislative Priorities continue to advocate to change the language and policy in the Compact of Free Association. (Yes.)

Commissioner Boles asked if there is an action plan associated with this work? Corrigan responded that there is not one from her office, the City doesn't have its own plan, but acts as a partner with the state and county initiatives and plans. The County Board of Supervisors is funding the Community Foundation to continue the brain health task force. Traditionally, brain health is a county responsibility.

Commissioner Specht asked about connections between the school district and her work, citing that Roosevelt Middle School has one of the highest population of Marshallese populations and they are aiming to be a Trauma Informed Care (TIC) school and wondered if a direct relationship exist? Corrigan believes there is someone from the school district on the task force and encouraged that the TIC model is really important!

Commissioner Boles asked if there is a community resource officer equivalent related to brain health in the schools or could the City fund this position? Corrigan: No, there are no school-based clinics.

Corrigan also referenced the Politico article about the Marshallese population in Dubuque which can be found [here](#).

Commissioner Jayawickrama asked about the relationship between obesity and Marshallese population in Dubuque? Corrigan shared that there are many resources dedicated to this and a lot of data collection.

PUBLIC WORKS - AUTOMATED COLLECTION INFORMATION:

Anderson Sainci, Resource Management Coordinator presented the City's proposal and background related to automated waste collection. A copy of the presentation is attached. Sainci also shared the survey which the City conducted with the help of a consulting firm.

Commissioner Kennicker asked if the survey was given to the landlord's association, adding that a 12% response rate is very low.

Commissioner Reber is a renter and fears this will affect a lot of people.

Sainci continued to share why the city wants to move to automated service. Slides speak to workers compensation and injuries. John Klostermann, Director of Public Works, added that the biggest concern is the industrial injuries which are permanent injuries, noting the City has paid over \$1.3M over 13 years for the top 10 injury claims. See slides for additional information (attached).

Commissioner Kennicker shared that she is struggling with basing this decision on the survey because it reflects so few people and followed up by asking how much time and money is spent in the schools to teach kids how to recycle? Sainci responded that it is someone's full time job and they spend significant resources related to reducing, reusing and recycling before throwing away.

Klostermann shared that the City needs to have base fees paid to support the collection and recycling system and the ordinance states that everyone has to pay the base fee, or the system doesn't work.

Commissioner Jayawickrama stated that different classes of people have different waste needs and asked if the City has studied economic buying power and waste? Sainci responded that what they see is wealthier people waste more/throw out more trash. Recycling rates across town are pretty equal.

Commissioner Eudaley-Loebach gives shout out to Bev Wagner, the DMASWA education coordinator and clarifies: The problems are no lids (litter, rats, water) and people getting injured. (Correct.) The base fee is the trash and recycling pickup so picking up less trash, but more recycling still costs the same. For the Climate Action Plan, going to a 48-gallon seems counterintuitive. Her hang up is the size.

Commissioner Hoffman offers another shout out to Bev Wagner as well as to Anderson Sainci and Paul Shultz. He asked how many L/I residents take advantage of the 50% bill reduction that is offered? Sainci explained that the funding comes from Public Works budget. For the past 5 years it is less than 300 households participating. Commissioner Boles shared that he has asked the same questions through the CDAC and stated that of the ~24,000 households in Dubuque, he believes a couple thousand households likely qualify (because the income guidelines are more than 150% of HUD poverty guidelines) and so there is a need but people aren't using the system. Booth agrees that this seems to address a concern about affordability. Sainci added the biggest concern he's received is about eliminating union jobs.

Commissioner Boles asked if this plays a role in path to zero waste? Klostermann concurred that this proposal has nothing to do with zero waste goals outlined in the CAP. Boles followed up by stating that the benefits are decreased injuries and decreased litter (because of lids) and offered that there is a 7.6% increase in cost with no additional efficiencies. If it isn't going toward path to zero waste, it doesn't seem to matter to RCAC.

Commissioner Reber asked if this isn't a priority why can't we slow down? Klostermann responded that "protecting my employees is a priority."

Commissioner Eudaley-Loebach wants to see a more progressive pay as you throw to really incentive / have a pocket book impact.

Commissioner Booth asked if data exists related to what works to help residents reduce the amount of trash they produce.

Commissioner Kohlhaas expressed concerns with the work beginning when they get the money, saying, "It has gone way to fast and hasn't considered sustainability. We need to have a better process. It is missing too many pieces." Klostermann replied that the process began in 2017, there wasn't a lot of money for the study, but a lot of the background work has been done and it is time to move forward.

Commissioner Reber asked how do we know the public supports this? Sainci: We did consider sustainability from the beginning. Review the slides - there was input from citizens of co-creation of a path to zero waste. RCAC was asked early on and Paul Shultz helped too. 80% of the people who took the survey said they are interested. While it is a small number, these are what the people said they wanted.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Kohlhaas motions to submit a letter to Council urging them to table the budget item related to automated collection and includes the following requests:

- Slow down this process and increase community input,
- Future proposals need a clear path to zero waste component, and
- RCAC is not opposed to automated collection, just in this manner.

Commissioner Eudaley-Loebach seconds.

Motion passes unanimously.

IMPROVEMENT BUDGET REQUESTS:

Commissioner Eudaley-Loebach reviewed the improvement budget requests with the RCAC goals for FY 20 and the Commission decided not to discuss because they wasn't much overlap but RCAC will pay attention to for the future.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Commissioner Kohlhaas shared that a portion of Valentine Park, including a house, barn and shed, was purchased by the City with a federal grant and there is interest by the neighborhood to put a community garden there. However, the Parks Department, without community input, tore down a barn instead of de-constructing and the house, that could be re-used, is also set to be torn down. When questioned, the Parks Department responded that since they are using grant funds, which they received for a specific purpose, can't do anything about the neighbor's request.

Commissioner Kohlhaas is dismayed with the response from Parks Department and feels there has been no public input. He shared his slideshow of potential changes and suggest to RCAC that Community Gardens are a good thing for commission to take on.

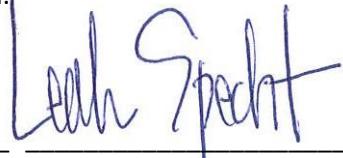
Commissioner Boles added that he would like to be able to go on the website and find out where I can turn city lawn into orchard/garden/etc. but that doesn't exist. He then asked if as a commission can they request something like this?

Commissioner Kohlhaas wants the commission to ask council for a pathway to create garden space.

NEXT MEETING: The next commission meeting will occur on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm. The location of the meeting will be at the Jule Operations and Training Center, 949 Kerper Boulevard.

ADJOURNMENT: The Commission adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Minutes approved by:


Leah Specht, Commission Chair

Prepared by:


Gina Bell, Sustainable Community Coordinator

Attachments