

**City of Dubuque**  
**COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**GOVERNMENTAL BODY:** Resilient Community Advisory Commission

**DATE:** December 5, 2019

**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, Adam Hoffman\*, Lalith Jayawickrama, Robin Kennicker, Laura Roussel, Leah Specht.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Candace Eudaley-Loebach, Jake Kohlhaas

**STAFF PRESENT:** Gina Bell, Sustainable Community Coordinator

\*left early

Chair Specht called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm. Bell confirmed the meeting was in compliance with the Iowa Open Meeting Law.

**TEST AGENDA**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Jim Herrig shared his interest in knowing what the RCAC has done related to tree planting/tree canopy. Will follow up with Staff.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** Motion by Commissioner Kennicker to approve November 2019 minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Jayawickrama. Motion carries.

**DUBUQUE METROPOLITAN AREA SOLID WASTE AGENCY UPDATE:**

Ken Miller, Administrator shared a lot of information about his position and the work they do.

He began with introduction and background – his own and that of the Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA). He shared the mission of DMASWA and invited the group on a tour or to attend the annual open house. The Landfill needs lots of upgrades - buildings are from 1976; not customer friendly but plans to move things to more accessible area. There is a new entrance currently being built – the old entrance off Hwy. 20 will be closed and the new road is off Seippel Road. With this move, the DMASWA is also rearranging their entry and drop off area. Ken gave a robust presentation including some of the following information. The Agency is a 20/80% agreement between City and County - 2 council members and 1 county supervisor make up the board. The Agency will complete Strategic Planning for Landfill in February 2020.

Their processors are environmentally responsible - certified for their needs.

Agency collects all hazardous waste free of charge and collected 150,000 pounds last year. Illegal dumping costs \$6-7K / year (tv, tires) they take most in free of charge but assign a \$ amount to it.

Batteries and tires – battery collection will be huge push in January. Alkaline cost money to send off for recycling. Rechargeable batteries are all processed at the same facility. Iowa does not have a battery recycling law although manufacturers are asking for one to be passed. They've changed marketing to tell people "batteries" vs. specific batteries, so they can capture as many as possible. They are paid for car batteries which they use to fund alkaline batteries costs.

Electronics recycling - tv, computers, stereos, toasters can be dropped off. TVs, monitors and laptops there is a charge. It all goes to Scott County for recycling.

Holiday lights are being collected at Public Works and the Landfill. The processor will strip for copper and use that to offset costs of the things for which they don't charge.

They offer Waste Minimization Grants and they need review committee members. 2 types of grants are offered, and they have 4 review periods annually. The committee looks at what qualifies as waste minimization; grantees can appeal to the board. Annual grant budget - \$100K for waste minimization; education; etc. roll over, \$25K is grant cap but can go over if \$ is still available.

More can be found on their website: [www.dmaswa.com](http://www.dmaswa.com)

**Commissioner questions for Ken:**

Q: Is there a market for glass now? Can you not use glass for roads out there anymore?

A: Agency has to offer options for glass recycling per state law. They will be collect and store it and Ripple Glass will pick it up. The environmental impacts of having a semi drive from KC to DBQ and back to KC may be greater than having glass in the landfill. We cannot use it in road building material anymore.

Q: Will Sieppel be the only entrance?

A: YES.

Q: Recycling at Flexsteel - where did it go?

A: It hasn't been moved but eventually, it will be at Public Works building. Near fuel island. Glass recycling and regular recycling.

Q: Do they still offer tv pickup at your house?

A: Call Public Works - \$20 for first tv \$5 each additional.

Q: One challenge is for low-income populations, many have no cars to drive out to landfill to dispose of hazardous waste or big items. What are you doing to solve for this? Will we ever see recycling at large multi-family dwellings?

A: DMASWA is working on lowering the cost for low-income residents. To be effective, they need technology upgrades.

Q: What happens to hospital waste?

A: It goes to another facility - most goes to incinerators. They do take residential use sharps (Hartigs and Mercy pharmacies) and from drug task force events. Must be in puncture proof containers.

Q: Future/status of food scraps?

A: This will be a part of the strategic planning process. They did a compostable studies that was received by the board. Need to be very cautious related to smell since they are surrounded by development.

Q: Status of methane capture?

A: Revived with a new partner, less reliant on RIN market. One of the original two finalist. Currently working on contract terms. Will need to do well field development (need to add gas wells) currently have 40 some wells. Piping is already in place. De-water some of the wells, add wells in area of cell 9 that were started longer than 5 years ago. Their strategy is to sell to large gas purchasers. Currently they collect the methane and flare it. They would clean it and put it back on the natural gas pipeline. General timeframe ~12 months.

Q: City of Dubuque's waste goes up each year. Is the volume per capita going up?

A: No, it is staying flat. Plan to do lots of education around recycling to make sure it is "clean" /less contaminated. Looking to CR for what they are doing.

Following the presentation by Ken Miller, RCAC will discuss whether to:

- Advocate (write a memo, letter to the editor, etc.)
- Act (do something beyond a memo such as bring in an expert on the subject, host a workshop, spend more time on the topic, etc.)
- Ask (reach out to community groups that may be familiar to issue or have interest)
- Step Aside (if it doesn't fit the focus this year, that's okay and perhaps we can revisit in the future)

Request from Ken to Commission – Help with public education! There is a lack of knowledge about year-round household hazardous waste; mostly drop offs by 55+; need to reach younger crowd. Residents are not required to do anything with their household hazardous waste. They will take cooking oil at landfill, but you can't put it out with your curbside pickup. Hoping the reuse area will lessen the shipments/cut down on costs. Ken requests Commission shares news of the reuse news.

Research/discuss/advocate for a low-income electronics program. It is currently subsidized by tipping fees, but could City offset cost for L/I residents, perhaps model it like storm water reduction/electric bills/ etc. or partner with ONV to hand out a free certificate to folks who say they need it?

Always looking for volunteers at mobile events. Takes 6-8 people to run an event.

**CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE:**

Gina gave update on progress with consultants and the use of the action finder tool.

Commissioner Boles requests that the consultants consider outreach as something beyond “read the plan” but an actual explanation and could model after council work sessions – simplified, informative and in 30 minutes or less when it comes time to share the draft plan in meetings/community updates.


**COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

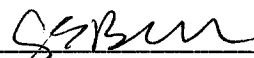
Commissioner Boles shared that anyone interested in the draft 5-year plan for CDGB the CDAC is taking public input. He also shared the consultants have completed the Analysis of Impediments for HUD.

Commissioner Roussell will be leaving the Commission to take her spot on the City Council in January 2020. She shared she has enjoyed serving on the commission. Has already found one potential person to fill her spot!

**NEXT MEETING:** The next commission meeting will occur on Thursday, January 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 6:52 pm.

Minutes approved by:   
Leah Spocht, Commission Chair  
Robin Kennicker, Co-Chair

Prepared by:   
Gina Bell, Sustainable Community Coordinator

