

Sustainability Commission Meeting December 12, 2016

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by Mrs. Ann Gilmore

Roll Call: Rick Hawksley, Nadine Gomez, Ann Gilmore, Judy Nelson, and Julie Morris.

Staff: Suzanne Stemnock, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Melanie Baker, Service Director

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of November 14, 2016:

Mrs. Gilmore made a motion to approve the summary reports from November. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and was approved with a 5-0 vote.

Public Comment

None

OLD BUSINESS

The Commission began with discussions on clothing recycling. Mrs. Baker met with Simple Recycling, a company that recycles clothing and home goods. The City would get one cent for every pound recycled within the City. Mrs. Baker explained that about 85% of textiles normally end up in landfills. Simple Recycling either resells items, donates the items to third world countries, or the items are recycled to fill various items like car seats, etc. They will also place donation stations for students at the University. Simple Recycling would pick up on the same day as trash service. They have specific bags and tags for their items and they are to be placed at the opposite side of the driveway from the trash service. Mr. Hawksley and Mrs. Morris expressed concerns about the local needs not being met because the items are being sent elsewhere. Mrs. Nelson mentioned that she believes Simple Recycling is only interested in useable, working appliances. The Commission hopes this would help lessen the items not being recycled during the Spring clean up. Mrs. Nelson was also interested in the location of the warehouse where items are taken and sorted. In addition, she was interested in knowing more about health concerns, like bed bugs. Mrs. Baker also explained that in the long term it could decrease trash collection costs with a decrease in tonnage. The Commission agreed this would be a good opportunity for Kent residents and would like Mrs. Baker to look further into bringing textile recycling to Kent.

Next, the Commission discussed business recycling. Mrs. Morris explained that the Commission is wondering about business recycling and the City's recycling contract and ordinances. Mrs. Baker explained concerns with making businesses recycle such as space. She furthered to state that there are many difficulties in making businesses recycle, just like what the City has experienced with multi-family property recycling. Mr. Hawksley explained that City Ordinance 935.18 states that businesses are to be recycling. Mrs. Nelson is interested in working with businesses to help increase business recycling. Mrs. Baker notified the Commission that she will discuss the ordinance and enforcement with the Law Director.

The Commission also wanted to discuss the Spring clean-up with Mrs. Baker. Mr. Hawksley expressed his concerns with items being put into landfills that could be recycled or used by those in need. He also stated that the cost of the clean-up would be better used for something like a hazardous waste disposal. Mrs. Baker will look further into this idea.

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Then the Commission discussed pollinator gardens with Mrs. Baker. Mrs. Gilmore explained about pollinator gardens and her ideas to work with the City to create some gardens. She has reached out to Main Street Kent to work with them on possibly making specific Adopt-a-Spots into pollinator gardens. The Commission discussed some gardens that had previously been planted along the Haymaker Parkway by the Kent Environmental Council. This led to discussions concerning the possibility of applying for a grant to support the creation of the gardens. The Commission would like to see if the previous gardens would be able to be saved or if there are any concerns or ordinances the City may have with these types of gardens.

Lastly, the Commission discussed the rain barrel workshop. The Commission explained to Mrs. Baker that they would like to take over the workshop. They would like to hold the workshop at the Haymaker FarmersöMarket in the Spring. Mrs. Baker will look further into the logistics of the workshop. Mrs. Gilmore also mentioned that there is a grant through Volkswagen to increase fleet fuel efficiency that Mrs. Baker may be interested in.

Mrs. Baker expressed her excitement to be working in the City of Kent. She gave the Commission a brief background on her experience with sustainability and her time in the Village of Richfield. Mrs. Baker is anxious to be working on these items with the City of Kent and the Commission to improve services provided to residents. She provided the Commission with her information should they have further questions.

Mrs. Gilmore gave the Commission an update on her plastic bag presentation to Council. She is unsure of what next steps the Commission needs to take based on Councilö comments. The Commission would like to review the meeting minutes once those are available. Mrs. Nelson expressed her concerns with bed bugs and the bag share program.

The Commission decided to defer talking about the next possible Tree City Bulletin article until the January meeting.

The Commission also decided to defer talking about possible grant opportunities until they have a better idea what they can apply for and then share that with the City prior to working on any applications.

The Commission shared their success at the Haymaker FarmersöMarket. They discussed sharing more information at future Markets in addition to keeping an email list.

Finally, the Commission briefly discussed the current utica well reports and a map of injection wells in Ohio. The Commission confirmed that there had been no changes in Portage County since their last meeting. The Commission agreed there are still no real concerns at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Stemnock reminded the Commission that the Chairperson position was vacant and that they would need to vote to fill the position. Mr. Hawksley nominated Ms. Gomez to be chairperson. Mrs. Stemnock proceeded to ask each member for their vote.

Julie Morris voted for Nadine Gomez
Rick Hawksley voted for Nadine Gomez
Nadine Gomez voted for Nadine Gomez
Ann Gilmore voted for Nadine Gomez
Judy Nelson voted for Nadine Gomez

Mrs. Stemnock confirmed that Ms. Gomez will be the new Chairperson of the Commission.

The Commission deferred the introduction of each member until the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

January 9, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved by a 5-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:09pm.