

**MINUTES  
CITY OF DEKALB  
CITIZENS' COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMISSION  
July 19, 2021**

The Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission (CCEC) held a regular meeting on July 19, 2021 in the Community Room of the DeKalb Police Department, 700 West Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, Illinois.

Chair Brad Hoey called the meeting to order at 4:02 P.M.

**A. ROLL CALL**

Roll call was recorded by Management Analyst Scott Zak and the following members of the CCEC were present: Chair Brad Hoey, Melissa Beck, Jeanine Holcomb and Ellingsworth Webb. Absent were: Kenneth Brown, Aaron Robertson and Helen Umdenstock.

**B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – ADDITIONS / DELETIONS**

**MOTION**

Ms. Holcomb moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Beck.

**VOTE**

The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 17, 2021**

**MOTION**

Ms. Beck motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Holcomb.

**VOTE**

The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public spoke.

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Media coverage

The Commission reviewed recent articles in the Daily Chronicle on Paint-A-Plug, the ribbon cutting for the Unity Mural and the Commission's push for more murals. Chair Hoey said the articles will hopefully lead to more projects.

2. Utility/traffic box painting program

Mayor Cohen Barnes joined the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Mayor Barnes shared he was on the CCEC for ten years and they struggled to get projects done because the past administration put obstacles in the way. As Mayor, Barnes says he wants to get public art done. He noted the Realtors Association that helped fund the Unity Mural has another \$5,000 grant available and that he is working to make funding available for public arts so people can make a positive emotional connection with the City. Mayor Barnes continued that he wants to solicit the Commission's ideas for projects that can be done as part of the Lincoln Highway reconfiguration and wants to revisit the idea of sculptures.

Chair Hoey said the Mayor's comments are music to the Commission's ears and that it is encouraging to hear that roadblocks will be eliminated and public funding may be available.

Mr. Webb shared a publication by the Sun-Times of 800 murals that he says can serve as inspiration.

Turning to traffic boxes, Chair Hoey said painting or wrapping traffic boxes is big in the West. When the idea was explored previously, Chair Hoey said it was found that painting utility boxes would not be possible because they are owned by ComEd, so painting City-owned traffic signals was pursued instead. He said he would contact Commissioner Robertson about his interest in painting the boxes.

### 3. American Rescue Plan Grants

Management Analyst Zak shared that the first deadline was coming up quickly on Aug. 12 and to be eligible, the Commission would also have to complete a three-year history of its arts programming. The grants are also meant to support operations and are not project-based support. For other funding sources, Mayor Barnes suggested pursuing matches, and Ms. Beck noted Iowa City allows donations towards its public arts. The Committee agreed to look into grants from Target and ComEd.

### 4. Lincoln Highway reconfiguration update

Management Analyst Zak shared the reconfiguration project – narrowing Lincoln Highway from four to three lanes including a turn lane – would be happening shortly after Corn Fest but a firm date for the start of construction was not known yet. The project has not yet received state approval, so the City has been unable to go out for bids.

Mayor Barnes said the Commission should concentrate on ideas for the downtown sidewalks and crosswalks that could be done during the reconfiguration project. Ms. Beck suggested part of the downtown project could be like the Hopkins Park underpass mural where community members were involved in its creation. The Commission agreed to bring back ideas for downtown projects.

5. Paint-A-Plug application – 1729 Goldenrod Turn
6. Paint-A-Plug application – 613 Yorkshire Dr.
7. Paint-A-Plug revision – Third & Prospect St.
8. Paint-A-Plug proposal – Chris Perkovich

#### MOTION

Mr. Webb motioned that the Paint-A-Plug applications, revision and proposal be approved, seconded by Ms. Beck

#### VOTE

The applications, revision and proposal were approved by unanimous voice vote.

9. Mural site proposal – Gurler Road

Megan Vangorder lives on a small farm originally inhabited by Benjamin Gurler in 1860, and requested a large cement wall on the farm that can be seen from Gurler Road be listed as a possible mural site. The hope is the mural would celebrate farming heritage and the renown of DeKalb. The Commission agreed to put the site on the mural webpage.

Commissioner Umdenstock joined the meeting at 5 p.m.

#### **F. OLD BUSINESS**

1. Unity Mural at Lincoln Highway Underpass update

No information was shared here.

2. Possible next steps on DeKalb Area Arts Council
3. Possible next steps on DeKalb Entertainment Consortium

The Commission discussed ways to collaborate with the Arts Council and Entertainment Consortium. Commissioner Umdenstock shared an idea for a public performance space where people could feel a sense of belonging in the community. Ms. Beck suggested a gathering area at the intersection of Fourth Street and Lincoln Highway, and Chair Hoey agreed that creation of a public performance space should be explored.

Commissioner Umdenstock reintroduced the idea where DeKalb County businesses would pay \$20 a month with half going to scholarships and half to pay students to perform at local businesses. Ms. Holcomb said possible next steps should be finding a nonprofit to become involved and running the idea past the downtown merchants.

The topic returned to grants. Chair Hoey said he would look into grant opportunities with ComEd and Union Pacific, Mr. Zak would research the National Endowment for the Arts and Mr. Webb would look into Target.

The Commissioners agreed that a special meeting will be held to make recommendations on public art ideas that should be incorporated into the downtown reconfiguration project. The meeting will be held on Aug. 16 at 4 p.m. so the recommendations can be made before the construction begins. Commissioners can send ideas to Mr. Zak for dissemination to the CCEC with the agenda.

## **G. ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION**

Ms. Umbdenstock motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Beck.

### **VOTE**

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Zak, Management Analyst

Minutes approved by the Citizens' Community Enhancement Commission on August 16, 2021.