

Chesapeake Environmental Improvement Council
Meeting Minutes – August 26, 2020, 12 pm
Video Conference Meeting

An electronic meeting is being held pursuant and in compliance with the Amended Ordinance adopted by Chesapeake City Council on April 28, 2020 to effectuate temporary changes in certain deadlines and to modify public meeting and public hearing practices and procedures to address continuity of operations associated with pandemic disaster.

Attendees: Becky Greenwald-Chair, Denise Cordeiro-Bennett-Vice-Chair, Lauren Ragsac-Secretary

- Council Members: Vikki Barnette, Jason Brown, Sydney Covey, Lacy Kuller, Sandy Madison, Calib Miller, Mike Perry, Rogard Ross, Levin Turner. A quorum was present.
- Parks, Recreation & Tourism Staff (PRT): Josh Fisher, Ana Elezovic, Megan Hale
- Guests: Heather Barlow, Bill Gregory, M. Moore, Micky VanZyl, Amy Weber

- I.** Welcome and Introductions: Becky opened the meeting at 12:02 and welcomed members and guests. She informed members of the remote electronic meeting practices and procedures ordinance. She noted that audio for the meeting is being recorded. If applicable, any public comments from citizens will be received during the citizen comments section of the meeting via Microsoft Teams. Voting will be taken by a roll call, to be conducted by the Secretary. Attendees must identify themselves before speaking during the meeting. Denise gave members a summary of parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order. Robert's Rules is required by CEIC bylaws.

- II.** Environmental Tip: Rogard encouraged CEIC members and guests to vote in the upcoming election. Chesapeake will have early in-person voting starting on September 18 at various satellite locations around the city. Registered voters can also vote by absentee ballot. Absentee ballots can be requested on the Virginia Department of Elections website.

Lauren encouraged people to continue to use reusable bags and to launder them after each use. Some stores are currently discouraging customers from using reusable bags.

- III.** Environmental Group Spotlight: Lacy drew attention to Clean Virginia Waterways, a nonprofit organization based at the Longwood University campus in Farmville, VA. This organization has an initiative to help prevent balloon debris. The CEIC could partner with Clean Virginia Waterways by identifying a local initiative to address balloon litter.

- IV.** Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the June 24 meeting were sent by email. Rogard made a motion to approve the minutes. Lacy seconded. The minutes were approved

unanimously. A brief discussion followed as to whether a roll call vote was necessary to approve meeting minutes. It was agreed that while a roll call vote to approve minutes is not required per Robert's Rules of Order, only those members who attended the meeting for which minutes are being approved can vote.

- V. Chair Remarks/Executive Committee Meeting Results and Plan of Action: Becky noted that Sandy Madison was awarded the 2020 Clerk of the Year. Becky welcomed new CEIC member Sydney Covey. Sydney introduced herself and talked about her professional background working on sustainability in the built environment. Becky informed members of the outcome of recent meetings of the Executive committee. The CEIC Executive committee plans to emphasize outreach and education, particularly in underserved communities. Further, four committees have been established corresponding to the four focus areas outlined in the bylaws, and Chairs identified: Litter and Pollution Prevention (Lacy), Waste Reduction and Recycling (Denise), Conservation Landscaping (Becky), and Beautification (Vikki and Mike). Standing committees are the Tree Board (Rogard) and Nomination committees. Each committee will hold regular meetings and establish goals and metrics. The Executive Committee also reviewed the giveaway items that are on hand and Becky encouraged Chairs to use these items in CEIC outreach and education programs. They also discussed the benefit of recruiting a military-related member to serve on the CEIC and a broader effort to diversify its membership and volunteer groups. Each CEIC member will be required to serve on a committee so they can fully participate in CEIC projects and programs. The Executive Committee plans to have a more coordinated effort in welcoming new members with an onboarding packet. Additional CEIC goals for the coming year include improving community volunteer recruitment through more social media use and distribution of a newsletter, and greater collaboration with other environmental and civic organizations. The 12-month plan of action required by the bylaws consists of: 1) Establish the four project committees and task each with focusing on at least one project for the year with measurable outcomes, 2) Improve outreach and communication through development of a CEIC newsletter, a robust list of points of contact within various organizations, and a reliable pool of community volunteers, and 3) Enhance collaboration with fellow Southside environmental organizations.

VI. Updates

- A. Litter and Pollution Prevention Committee - Lacy noted that the committee met on August 25, with Alden, Sydney, Megan, and Becky in attendance. For the upcoming year, the committee decided to continue the Clean and Green poster contest. Also, cleanups such as the Great American Cleanup will continue to be organized through AskHRGreen. The next Great American Cleanup will be on September 18 and 19. Lacy is creating a group to do a cleanup. CEIC members can also create their own cleanup groups. For the cigarette litter campaign they are working on assessing locations to place receptacles. The project must be completed by the end of October in order to fulfill the requirements of the grant. The committee is also overseeing how the litter grant funds will be spent and will

be putting together a plan. They are also the CEIC liaison for the Adopt a Highway and Adopt a Park programs. Another area the committee is focusing on is balloon litter. The committee intends to meet on a monthly basis. Vikki suggested the committee also look at mask litter, as she has been noticing more disposable mask litter around Chesapeake.

- B. Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee – Denise informed members that her committee, which includes Bruce, Dave, and Lacy, will hold their first meeting sometime after September 8. The committee is going to emphasize waste reduction but will also focus on Recycle Days and Zero Waste education. Denise encouraged members who would like to serve on this committee to let her know. Rogard asked if the committee was planning to collaborate on projects with the Norfolk Environmental Committee and other sister organizations. Denise confirmed that the committee plans to do so.

- C. Beautification Committee – Vikki reported that the Notable Yards contest has thirteen nominations so far, but none of these are from the Western Branch district. The committee has extended the deadline for submissions to September 1. She asked CEIC members how to proceed if a given district is lacking nominations or has only one submission. Becky suggested setting a minimum scoring threshold: if only one nomination from a district is submitted and the score does not meet the threshold, it does not receive an award. She does not think that the deadline should be extended beyond September 1. Rogard thinks the minimum threshold idea is acceptable to handle this situation. Megan reminded members to get the word out again and that there have been last minute nominations in the past. Vikki asked for all materials to be sent to her in .jpeg format. After the contest closes, she will schedule a meeting of those who have volunteered to judge yards: Amy, Lacy, Lauren, Mike, Rogard, and Sandy. The Beautification committee is responsible for four areas: Notable Yards contest, Business Beautification contest, Adopt a Garden liaison, and the calendar photo contest. Mike Perry addressed the Business Beautification Award and noted that a number of new business developments have been completed and should be considered for nominations. The deadline for submissions is September 30. The Business Beautification Award considers four judging categories, to include litter control, signage, buildings and landscape. The committee is looking at modifying the score card for judging to incorporate more factors. Around mid-September they plan to meet to discuss revisions to the scorecard. Judging would start in late October. Sydney volunteered to serve on the committee and provide input on the scorecard revisions. Vikki also volunteered to participate. The annual calendar contest has a September 18 deadline. Becky suggested using local photographers to serve as judges. Calib is interested in helping with the Adopt a Garden initiative.

- D. Conservation Landscaping/License Plate Committee –the Georgetown Boulevard median project has been completed. Signs have been placed at the project

crediting Chesapeake specialty license plate funds with making the project possible. The process for applying for license plate funds has been finalized and is ready to send to Mike Barber for final approval. Upon approval, the committee will be able to start reviewing submissions. The Indian River Library circle had a sign installed as well and the site is being maintained by two employees at the library. The Central Library entrance circle is scheduled to be planted during the Great American Cleanup. Lauren, Becky, and possibly the group who will adopt the spot, the Chesapeake Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, will be involved in the planting.

- E. Tree Board – Rogard updated members on Tree Board activities. Arbor Day date is to-be-determined and will be a scaled down event. There will be a proclamation and a tree planting at City Hall. Some recommendations have been offered as to species of trees. The City Manager noted the City’s Fiscal 2022 budget cycle will allow for an Urban Forester. There is nothing to report on the Comprehensive Plan update. The 2021 Conservation Conference is to focus on urban forestry, developing outreach and partnership with other organizations. The Tree Board wants to update the urban forestry plan which hasn’t been updated in the past decade.
- F. Keep Chesapeake Beautiful Photo Calendar Contest and Use of Funds –Megan noted that she has received several submissions and the deadline has been extended to September 18. The contest is open to residents and non-residents of Chesapeake. Submissions can come from amateurs, professionals, adults, and minors. The winner of each category receives a cash prize of \$100 and a copy of the calendar. The calendar can be purchased for a suggested donation. Megan reminded members that \$867 is available to be used for environmental programs and projects. Becky suggested surveying members as to how the funds should be used. Vikki asked if we could have a professional photographer do the judging for the contest. Megan said that was fine as long as they hadn’t entered the contest.
- G. Fix-It Fairs – Megan informed members that the Fix-It-Fair will be at the Western Branch Community Center on Saturday, October 17. This event will pair people who can fix things with people who needs things fixed. Volunteers are needed to help with this event.
- H. Recycling Perks – Megan met with Recycling Perks. The City’s contract with them is limited, so the CEIC would be limited in what it could do to partner with the company.

VII. New Business

- A. Conservation Conference 2021 –Rogard noted that he, Becky, and Megan agreed to plan for a conference in 2021, although a lot remains uncertain due to the pandemic. The theme would be urban forestry. The format would be a half day

conference, with two speakers in the morning and a keynote speaker during the awards luncheon. The budget will be assessed and the CEIC will seek approval so they can start planning the conference and securing speakers for the event.

- B. T-shirts and Name tags –Megan noted that she has name tags for CEIC members (can be picked up at PRT) and will put the ordering of t-shirts on hold, as the preferred options for shirts (green color and organic cotton) are currently not available. Vikki noted that for those members involved in the Notable Yards contest, they should wear their name tags.

VIII. Seeking Volunteers

- A. Great American Cleanup, Sept 18-19 – Lacy’s committee will be working on this. The AskHRGreen website is hosting registrations. CEIC members who want to get involved should select Chesapeake for their location.
- B. Cigarette Litter Prevention Campaign – the committee is identifying locations for placement of the receptacles. An educational messaging campaign will then be launched via social media and physical outreach. The installation of receptacles must be completed by the end of October.
- C. Newsletter Editor/Outreach Coordinator –Becky noted that a CEIC volunteer is needed to take on this role. Josh updated members – he spoke to Mike Barber about using MailChimp for distribution but there are some security concerns. The City has a strict policy on what types of platforms it is willing to use.
- D. Business Beautification Committee- contact Mike Perry
- E. Fix-It-Fair, Oct 17, 10am – 5pm
- F. Chesapeake Recycles Day, Oct 24, Nov 14 – the City has cancelled the September date, but the Oct 24 event in Greenbrier and the Nov 14 event at Tidewater Community College are slated to be held.
- G. Civic Organization List – the City maintains a list of HOAs and civic organizations. Becky noted that the list has not been kept up to date and she thinks it would be a great resource for the CEIC in order to better engage community members in CEIC projects and initiatives. Roger Fuller has agreed to work on one third of the list, which is an Excel spreadsheet. Sandy informed Becky that the Mayor’s office may actually have an updated list of these organizations. She offered to provide the list to the CEIC. If needed, Levin volunteered to update the remainder of the list. He also has a list of Rotary and Ruritan contacts and volunteered to do those as well.

- IX. Citizen Comments** – Bill Gregory commented in the chat section, giving praise to the City’s sanitation workers for post-storm cleanup. Lacy mentioned a series of webinars being offered by the Virginia Green Travel Alliance. Becky asked if Lacy could send her the information to she can share it with members.

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m. The next meeting of the CEIC is September 23, 2020.