

# ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## Regular Meeting February 8, 2024

The Environmental Advisory Board held a meeting on this date at 4:00 p.m. at 405 6th Street, Room #404, Sioux City, Iowa in which the following items were discussed:

<b><u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u></b>	<b><u>STAFF PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>GUESTS/PUBLIC</u></b>
Grace Perrin	Alex Johnson	Arah Montagne	Matthew O'Kane
Ryan Rozeboom		Estefani Valdez	Lexi McKee
Corinne Erickson			
Sarah Nelson			
Audrey Anderson (virtual)			
Danna Sanchez (virtual)			

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Environmental Advisory Board was called to order by Arah Montagne, at 4:00 p.m. Meeting minutes from October 12, 2023, and December 14, 2023, were approved with a motion by Sarah Nelson and seconded by Grace Perrin.

### **REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS**

Volunteer Appreciation Social Recap: The board agrees the December 14, 2023, meeting minutes summarize the thoughts on the volunteer social.

Water Bottle Distribution: Arah recaps this went well and has received positive feedback.

Neighborhood Network Meetings: Arah will be printing a schedule of the Neighborhood Network meetings if anyone would like to attend. Matthew shares that he attended the Riverside meeting this week. He said one of the topics of discussion was the ornamental grass that was planted by the city a few years ago. Matthew thinks this would be a good meeting for board members to attend and discuss environmental issues.

**Comments from Staff & Board Members-** The Re-Event dates for 2024 are set and are as follows: April 27, 2024, and September 28, 2024. Asphalt will be done in time for the fall event. We will have signs and cones to direct traffic. The banner for the skywalk has been scheduled and Arah will work on posting this event on the PowerPoint that is presented prior to Council meetings. Sarah has a "save the date" post scheduled on social media as well. Grace coordinated an extra credit opportunity with David Hoferer, Environmental Science Department Head at Briar Cliff University, he will offer extra credit to any students that volunteer. Arah is currently working with LiteForm and hopefully they will participate this year. This event will also be mentioned to the Mayors Youth Commission.

Arah ordered magnets this week. The magnets will be in the shape of a recycling container, and they will list what can and cannot be recycled. The group likes the idea and thinks this will serve as a good reminder. We are stocked up on numerous items to distribute at events.

Arah asked the group to check their schedules for availability with upcoming events. She will be creating a Google sign up sheet to select shifts. Several events were shared:

Faces of Siouxland (Multi-Cultural Fair) will be on March 17th, 2024, from 12pm to 4pm. Grace will be there to run the booth, but others are welcome to help as well. Matthew will be there throughout the event to help with breaks.

Garden Show: This year, the Garden show will be a symposium style at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. It will be more of an educational setting and will not have vendors like in past years. The consensus in the group is that the EAB will not participate this year.

Pride Festival: The Pride Festival will be the first weekend in June. Staff will work on booking a booth for this event.

ArtSplash: ArtSplash will be held over Labor Day weekend. This event will be booked once enough volunteers sign up to work the booth. There are several activities that can be set up for this event.

The group presented their project ideas for 2024. Sarah shares that she would like to see a litter pick up on Earth Day and on National Clean Up Day in different areas of town. Arah states that we will always supply garbage bags and gloves for any cleanups and can also arrange with Gill Hauling to pick up the garbage bags.

Grace presented information about the Tiny Trees Program; she shared details from the program in Des Moines. The idea is to offer one or two saplings. The saplings are \$1 and can be purchased from IDNR, these would be Iowa native species. Discounts are offered if purchased in bulk. This would be a good option for properties where ash trees were removed recently. In addition, it's a great way to increase community engagement, beautify Sioux City, and is an option for those unable to afford on their own as it would be free to the public. Grace says we can put a stake with "Environmental Advisory Board" on it to promote where they received the tree. A tag/QR code with information on how to plant and care for the tree can be attached as well. Arah states a sign up would be necessary to avoid having a lot of trees left over. Ryan shares a concern, if the tree is not cared for properly or dies, then the EAB would be blamed. Corinne and Matthew share that someone can educate the public on the trees, possibly IDNR or Kelly Bach. Matthew thinks Kelly Bach is a good resource and thinks we should look into funding options.

Corinne presented the idea of having a certified backyard habitat/native landscaping program like the Certified Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. There would be a small application fee for residents to have their backyard certified. With this being more incentive driven, Arah states this will require some research and may be handled similarly to the rain barrel and composter program. Residents would need to submit pictures along with receipts for reimbursement. In the past, Ryan has expressed interest in assisting with grant writing so this would be a good opportunity. Corinne prepared a list of different grants and distributed it to the group. Matthew also shares that the city does "Yard of the Month" and this would pair well with that program.

Ryan shares his idea of doing a beautification project on a mural along Hamilton Boulevard similar to what was done along Wesley Parkway. Matthew explains the process to a project of this sort such as obtaining written permission from the owner of the building and using a specific kind of paint. Ryan supports Grace's idea along with the research and initiative she has already taken for this. The focus of the group should be a successful execution.

Arah encourages the group and thanks them for all the great ideas. States these are all ways to promote the EAB. The consensus is that the Tiny Trees Program is an attainable goal, all voting aye to make this the 2024 goal for the group.

Sarah brings up a few questions regarding the Farmer's Market, board vacancies, and the rain barrel/composter giveaway. The Farmers Market will be discussed at a later date but it's up to the board if they want to participate again this summer. As far as the board vacancies, no new applications have been received. Alex was reappointed to serve a three-year term. The group shared a few ideas for the rain barrel and composter giveaway. There can be a sign up at litter clean ups, if attending several 24 on 24s or if tires are brought to the ReEvent names can go in a drawing as well. Our office is seeing an increase in complaints about tires being dumped around town.

**Comments from Public/Guests-** Lexi comments that it's her first time attending one of the EAB board meetings and will think about applying to be a board member.

The Audubon Society will be at the March 14th meeting to present about the Bird Safe City certification.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m. with a motion by Grace Perrin seconded by Ryan Rozeboom, all voting aye.

Recorded by Estefani Valdez