



MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 1st, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Virtually via Go-To-Meeting pursuant to and in compliance with City Council Ord.
20-05

Commissioners Attending: Robert Courtnage (Chair), Kerry Devine (City Council) Carolyn Helfrich (Arborist), Cristi Carver, Damian Cobey, Sarah Hurst, Amanda Stebbins, George Solley, Kim Bastress-Kistler

Ex-officio Members Attending: Mike Ward (Parks and Rec), Diane Jones (R-Board)

New Commissioner Introduction - *Robert Courtnage*

Kim Bastress-Kistler was introduced as a new commissioner. She's been a city resident for 20 years, studied environmental policy and is interested in reducing waste.

Intern updates - *Mike Ward*

Shelby will continue as intern responsible for mutt mitts and but containers. She will lead a trash pickup along the canal path with UMW students later this month. In March there will be a park cleaning event. She will be doing a cigarette clean-up at an apartment building on Williams street near Soup & Taco 2 and will speak to property manager about installing but containers. She will also be involved with Green Spotlight award, working with the city on an environmental web area on the city website and social media for C&G.

Discussion of Officer Elections (Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary) - *Robert Courtnage*

The Commission will decide on new officers at the March monthly meeting. In the by-laws there are three positions, chair, vice-chair and secretary. The role of chair is to run the meeting, vice chair back up for chair-run the meetings in the absence of the chair, secretary takes notes at Commission meetings and assists with other responsibilities such as social media.

Sustainability Award for 2021 Launch - *Sarah Hurst*

Sarah discussed the status of the Sustainability Award development. City businesses Dragon Fly and the Old Towne Butcher will participate, among others. The plan is to disseminate information before the next meeting. The next meeting will be to resolve any outstanding issues with the goal to roll out the award on March 17th.

Letter to City Council on supporting plastic bag tax - *George Solley*

The Sustainability Subcommittee recommended C&G submit a letter in support of adopting the Virginia General Assembly plastic bag tax. The city voiced support for this legislation to pass ordinances to tax plastic bags. The tax only applies to grocery and convenient stores. It's a 5-cent tax per bag, and funds can only be used for environmentally related uses (clean up –



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pollution and litter mitigation or education). Retailers receive a 2-cent rebate for each bag, then transitions to 1 cent. The state requires the ordinance become effective 3 months after the date of passing and can only be effective the 1st day of a quarter. George Solley moves to send letter and Amanda Stebbins seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to send the letter to Council. Robert will send a letter following any edits by Commissioners to Council for their February 16th meeting.

- Subcommittee Updates

- Clean Committee – *Damian Cobey*

- Installation of the 15 new cigarette butlers donated from Keep Virginia Beautiful: They have been delivered to city shop with details of where they are in need along with instructions.
 - Schools recycling: will be meeting with City Schools staff next Wednesday or the following Wednesday.
 - Plans for 2021 clean up, will reach out to Friends of the Rappahannock to work together.

- Green Committee – *Carolyn Helfrich*

- Tree planting updates: The tree budget is being worked on with the city. No planting dates at this time. Looking at what is their next big initiative. City leaf litter is becoming more available and will be pushed out to raise awareness.

- Sustainability Committee – *Robert Courtage*

- Re-cap of Meeting with City Manager and Dept Superintendent on RFP for ESCO through Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy: Will have a bid for both city buildings and school buildings instead of 2 separate ESCO contracts.
 - Roof-top solar for city buildings: Do not have the answer to if roof-top solar is still being pursued separately by city schools.