

COOL CITIES COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

March 17th, 2025

Brennan called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The following members were present and answered roll call: Page, Martin.

Also Present: Senior Planner Caitlin Rice, Carol Freker, Willoughby Farms Superintendent, Scott Rayho (resident) and Beth Gutzler (UCM)

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Beth Gutzler introduces herself as a member of United Congregations of Metro-East (UCM). UCM is moving to the Illinois side to train their environmental justice team. UCM is also recruiting for workforce hubs around CEJA and Clean Jobs. The UCM team is canvassing communities in the Metro East over the next 3 months for this program. Another project is working on climate action maps and green team ministries. UCM also is working on an air monitoring program with Airnow.com and seeking to expand air monitoring systems onto the map in Illinois. The primary focus at this time is East St. Louis.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Page made a motion to approve February 24th, 2025, meeting minutes. Seconded by Martin.

Voice Vote: 3 ayes, Motion approved (3-0)

STAFF REPORT

Rice provides an update on the Mow Less Spring initiative. The webpage for the program is live on the collinsvilleil.org website, which hosts an application form to apply for a free Mow Less Spring Sign. Sign design is finalized with the Cool Cities logo and QR code added to help link people to more information about the program. Signs have been ordered and are hoping to be ready by April 1st. A social media push is planned to notify residents about the program.

Rice provides an update on the New Earth Farms Composting program. The promotion dates for the preregistration is set for April 1st through May 31st. A blurb about the program with a QR code to link to the preregistration form will also be published in the City Scoop, set to print in April.

Report-In for Green Business Challenge for Illinois Green Cities is scheduled for next Tuesday, March 25th at 2:30-4:30 p.m. The event will be hosted at Madison County Transit facility at 1 Transit Lane, Granite City, IL 62040. All Cool Cities members are invited to attend if available. Staff will be attending as well.

Event update: Spring litter clean up is scheduled Saturday, March 22nd, at 10 a.m., meeting at Rural King. Jaycee members will be attending, with number of expected members later this week. The spring invasive clean up is scheduled for Saturday, April 5th, 8-11 a.m., at Glidden Park.

The Committee discussed attending/participating in Arbor Day, Earth Day and Weeding Day.

Committee briefly discussed upcoming classes at Willoughby Farms.

Parks department can set up a table for the Cool Cities Committee at the Memorial Day festival. Parks will also be exploring the New Earth Farms composting facilities for the event. Cool Cities Committee will need to determine shifts/schedule for the event either tabling or monitoring compost stations. More information regarding needs will come soon.

Parks Department opted to forgo applying for a tree planting grant at Glidden at this time, due to ongoing construction projects in the future. Instead, Parks is applying for the Heartlands Conservancy program, Free Trees for Public Spaces.

Carol announces the free shredded leaves mulch pickup, made from leaves received through partnership with the township. Pickup will be self-serve, to the rock drive to the right by the entrance to the park. Finished resident compost pickup will be coming soon after compost is analyzed.

COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

n/a

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Scheduling and needs for Memorial Day

Potential update from UCM

Motion to adjourn made by Page and seconded by Martin.

Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Approved (3-0) ADJOURNMENT at 6:32 pm.