

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

(January 26, 2017)

The DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) met on January 26, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the DeKalb County Administrative Building, Conference Room – East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Commission Members: Cheryl Aldis, Jo Ellen Charlton, Les Bellah, John Fisher, Rich Gentile, Brian Gregory, Misty Haji-Sheikh, Martha May, Becky Morphey, and Les Redden. Also in attendance were: Greg Millburg, and County Staff members: Derek Hiland and Marcellus Anderson.

1. **Roll Call** – Commission members Dawn Grivetti, Don Pardridge, Elizabeth Peerboom, Anita Sorensen, and Linda Swenson were absent.
2. **Approval of Agenda** – *Ms. Aldis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Haji-Sheikh, and the motion carried unanimously.*
3. **Approval of Minutes** – *Mr. Bellah moved to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2016 meeting, seconded by Ms. May, and the motion carried unanimously.*
4. **Annual Dues**

Mr. Hiland informed the Commission that it was time for the submission of the annual RPC dues. Mr. Hiland informed them that invoices were sent out on January 10, 2017 to each member community for the \$500 dues. Mr. Hiland requested that the dues be submitted by the end of February 2017.

Mr. Bellah noted some hesitation by members of his village board. Mr. Hiland offered to go speak with them, extending the offer to speak to any of the other boards also.

5. **Member Re-Appointments – Genoa, Kingston, Kirkland, Somonauk, and DeKalb County**

Mr. Hiland reminded the Commission that the terms of five (5) of the commission members would be expiring in April of 2017. He requested that the members work with their city council / village boards to forward in writing to the County Board Chairman the names of a representative to the RPC and an alternate. He stressed that the names of the member representative and an

alternate be received no later than March 31, 2017, so that the County Board Chairman can make the appointments at the April 19, 2017 meeting of the County Board.

Mr. Gregory asked that staff send out a second letter in mid-February as reminder to the communities.

6. 2017 Agenda Items

Mr. Gregory asked the Commission members what topics the Commission should explore in 2017. Mr. Hiland added that the importance of the RPC is to discuss regional issues, to bring forth items that would not only be of benefit to one's own community but to others as well. He then gave some examples of topics explored in the previous years.

Mr. Fischer suggested exploring the topic of "how to get people involved", and discussed the difficulty in getting the community involved in local governance. The various Commission members shared some examples of what their respective communities have been doing to reach out to people, including efforts to various types of social media.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh noted that "water issues" should be a topic, noting several water-related concerns affecting the counties in the Chicago Metropolitan area. She strongly encouraged the Commission members to consider exploring these concerns in greater detail. Her concerns were echoed by several of the other Commission members.

Mr. Hiland suggested "making better use of current technologies", to aid in reaching out to the communities and to help provide easier and better access to public resources. Several members noted ways in which their communities were using social media, community websites, and GIS systems. The Commission members also discussed some of the problems faced by communities trying to establish and use these technologies. The Commission all agreed that this would be a significant topic to explore.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh noted that the lack of a State budget had been adversely affecting the County and all the municipalities, and inquired how the various municipalities were addressing this issue. Mr. Redden explained some of the actions taken by the City of Sandwich, including the City's efforts to get a 1% sales tax increase passed. Ms. Haji-Sheikh suggested exploring and comparing how the different communities are addressing budget concerns resulting from ongoing issues with the State budget and falling tax revenues.

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Mr. Bellah suggested “unfinished developments”, looking into how the various communities are addressing developments that were left unfinished or empty after the economic downturn.

Mr. Hiland inquired which topic the Commission would like to investigate first. The Commission agreed on “budget discussion”.

7. Municipal Development Projects / Issues

Ms. Aldis (Cortland) reported no new development.

Mr. Bellah (Kirkland) noted some issues with the Hickory Ridge subdivision. Mr. Gregory offered to forward him some materials related to how the City of Sycamore handled a similar situation. He also reported that 84 Lumber was expanding and that two newly opened restaurants were doing very well.

Mr. Fischer (Kingston) reported no new development.

Ms. Haji-Sheikh (DeKalb County) noted the County jail expansion was underway. She also described the conversion of the former Evergreen Mobile Home Park into the Sycamore Forest Preserve. Mr. Hiland noted that Northwestern Medicine – Kishwaukee Hospital will begin construction on a Health & Wellness Center on the north side of the hospital campus, and that the County Board may be developing language for the regulation of commercial wind towers.

Ms. Charlton (DeKalb) noted that the property formerly occupied by DeKalb Florist, located on the Northwest corner of State Route 38 and Peace Road, is to become a new Casey’s location. She also reported on a number of new restaurant developments and expansions.

Mr. Gentile (Genoa) noted a few small businesses remodeling, a permit for a new restaurant, and the expansion of a local car dealership.

Ms. May (Lee) reported that the Village was resting comfortably.

Mr. Redden (Sandwich) reported that every commercial building in the City had something in it or was changing. He also noted a 28 unit housing development. Mr. Redden then described the problems the City has had trying to relocate the police department building and in maintaining their waterlines.

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Ms. Morphey (Somonauk) noted that a new Dollar General was open. She also noted that a walking path was being constructed from the Village library to the Forest Preserve.

Mr. Gregory (Sycamore) reported the construction of 50 single-family and 20 attached residences, the buildout of Somerset Farms, that bike trail plans are being developed, the construction and opening of a new Burger King, that IDOT will be resurfacing State Route 23 from Sycamore to DeKalb, and that the Park District will be working with Action 20-20 to build a fitness center on the east side of town.

8. **Next Meeting Date** – The Commission agreed that the next meeting date would be held on March 23, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room East, DeKalb County Administration Building.
9. **Adjournment** – *Ms. Morphey motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Aldis, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Gregory
Chairman, DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission

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