

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 9, 2023

MEETING CONVENED: 7:05 p.m. Council Chambers/Microsoft Teams Hybrid

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheila Smith (Presiding), Helga Huntley, John Mateyko, Andrew O'Donnell, Mahi Palanisami, Savannah Sipes

STAFF: Stu Markham, Mayor of Newark
Jeffrey Martindale, Chief Procurement and Projects Manager
John Kennel, Planner
Jordan Herring, Administrative Professional I
Tara Schiano, Director of Legislative Services

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. AGENDA TIME LIMITS – SHEILA SMITH:

Mr. O'Donnell notified Ms. Smith that he was running a timer for each item of the meeting. Ms. Smith stated that at last month's meeting, the conclusion was made that they needed to pay better attention to their time of each item at the meeting. She asked that speakers look at the agenda and remember how much time was allotted for their item. Either she or another member of the Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) would remember to stop the discussion about that item. If the time was approached, perhaps another thirty seconds or so would be allowed, but it was important to conclude. Last month the members and staff were at the meeting until almost 9:30 p.m., which she believed was too late and unnecessary. She asked that if there were any additional questions or ending items, the speaker could bring it up as a topic for the next agenda. She said they would try to be respectful of the time limits.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES HELD ON MARCH 14, 2023 AND APRIL 11, 2023:

MOTION BY MS. PALANISAMI, SECONDED BY MS. SIPES: THAT THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (CAC) APPROVE THE MINUTES HELD ON APRIL 11, 2023.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: SIPES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, HUNTLEY, MATEYKO, PALANISAMI.

NAY: 0.

ABSTAIN: 0.

MOTION BY DR. HUNTLEY, SECONDED BY MR. MATEYKO: THAT THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (CAC) APPROVE THE MINUTES HELD ON MARCH 14, 2023.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: SIPES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, HUNTLEY, MATEYKO, PALANISAMI.

NAY: 0.

ABSTAIN: 0.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Wanda Simons, 808 Baylor Dr, came across an article from the Newark post last fall regarding the invasive plants that were banned from being sold in Delaware. She said that she had at least three or four of those plants on her 100 ft. wide property and would love to get rid of the English ivy but when she looked online for how to dispose of it, the response was to put it in the regular trash. However, this was illegal in Newark, and she asked for their recommendation.

Ms. Smith mentioned that Newark had yard waste pickup. She herself did ivy removal in Phillips Park and ideally, it would be chopped up. She would pull it, chop it, and if the pieces were small enough, they could not regenerate and would biodegrade. She also suggested that if Ms. Simons had a lot, she could put it on her driveway and let it dry up so it would not pose a problem. If it was sent to the landfill, it could possibly start growing there instead. Ms. Smith mentioned she wanted to discuss English ivy later this evening. She stated once more that she helped others get rid of their ivy and said Ms. Simons could contact her, and Ms. Sipes mentioned that she would be happy to help as well. Ms. Simons asked if it would go into the yard waste once completely dried up. Ms. Smith stated that this was so and pulling the ivy was the best way to get rid of it.

Ms. Simons stated as well that she witnessed euonymus plants growing in the wild and had cut them back; when the flowers would grow in those plants, she would cut them off and make sure they were to dry up as well to prevent berry growth. She informed she did have a few volunteers to help her. Ms. Smith believed that euonymus plants could be pulled as well, but another strategy was to paint the ends of the plant with Round-Up. She once again offered her assistance in getting rid of the English ivy.

4. POWERING OUR FUTURE FUNDING REQUEST – MICHAEL SMITH

Michael Smith, Powering Our Future, stated that his organization was focused on energy efficiency and electrification, and came to pitch a proposal to the CAC regarding a program to distribute electric leaf blowers across the City of Newark. He knew that he as well as others would prefer residents allow the leaves on the ground to biodegrade, but many residents did not like doing so. His proposal would present a compromise that would encourage residents to switch from heavily polluting gas-powered leaf blowers to cleaner electric alternatives. He stated that these leaf blowers specifically were inexpensive and only cost about \$20 when bought in bulk. Being that they were also very lightweight, between 4-5 lbs., they were more accessible for use, especially to those the disabled or elderly. They were also significantly quieter than traditional leaf blowers.

He explained that regarding their past work, in Fall 2022 Powering Our Future gave out over 450 electric leaf blowers across New Castle County, and approximately 50 of those were Newark residents at the Newark Senior Center. The remaining 400 were across the county. Powering Our Future also currently offers any New Castle County residents to buy an electric lawn-care tool and then apply for up to a \$100 rebate. However, they saw much success with their model last year, and as the leaf blowers only cost \$20, it would be cheaper to sell them distribution-wise in comparison to rebates.

Mr. Smith shared that Powering Our Future currently allocated \$1K from the City of Newark's revenue sharing program to do a pilot project at Dickey Park where demonstration events of both corded and non-corded electric leaf blowers would be conducted. That inspired his present proposal to the CAC

to use this as a kick-off event to demonstrate, such as during the fall season, to help the City of Newark change to electric leaf blowers. This would be the first event to share demonstrations and witness that the leaf blowers were very reliable, and anyone who was interested could obtain a leaf blower by filling out a form on either their or the City's website. Mr. Smith or someone else from his team would deliver them to the customer's house. He informed that the budget of the project, as there were three-line items, could be scaled up or down to whatever the CAC deemed appropriate. 500 he deemed as reasonable as 2022 resulted in 450.

Dr. Huntley asked, regarding the \$1K for the pilot program, if Powering Our Future was not actually giving away leaf blowers. Mr. Smith responded that they were only giving away about 50.

Mr. Mateyko asked for clarification if there was an exchange that took place, and Mr. Smith explained that initially there was a plan to do a 1-for-1 trade. However, after careful consideration, to him it seemed very complicated to ask everyone that received a free electric leaf blower to trade their previous leaf blower in. This was why he was considering making that nonmandatory, where a customer could choose the option of trading in their old leaf blower. Once the trade was made, the old leaf blower would be given to the consignment shop, and the money profited off so would be used to purchase more leaf blowers. He estimated it would not be a huge percentage, but he could make it as strict or lenient as the CAC preferred.

Mr. Mateyko asked how much money would be received for turning in a gas-powered leaf blower. Mr. Smith explained that the customer would receive nothing, and his organization would get rid of the leaf blower for them. Many times, people looked for ways to get rid of electronic waste or old tools, so it was completely voluntary. If a customer did not have a leaf blower, they did not have anything to give away, and if they wished to keep their gas-powered leaf blower, they could. There was no payment, but there was a free leaf blower.

Mr. Mateyko explained that in the whole life cycle, there were two options. One was to keep the gas-powered leaf blower operating in society. He stated that Mr. Smith was highly motivated, but once the leaf blower left his organization, everyone else viewed it as a commodity and would even want \$2 if that was all it could sell for at a garage sale. The other option would be to destroy the leaf blower. He pointed out the embodied carbon of the system and thought it was better to remove it from society, so it did not accumulate at the bottom level. Gas-powered leaf blowers cost very little, but even with their flaws, stayed in operation. He believed it was an easier moral explanation to say they wanted clean and healthy air and to get these leaf blowers off the streets as quickly as possible. Mr. Smith responded that the program could be laid out the same except omitting the step involving the consignment shop, and this was originally what the plan was going to be, but he was unsure of how strict or lenient the CAC wanted to be. He could easily omit that step if that was their preference.

Ms. Palanisami explained that she was the only person in her neighborhood who did her own yard work while the others hired out and asked if Powering Our Future was able to spread to commercial companies. Mr. Smith answered that their organization applied for an Energize Delaware grant to give much larger rebates for commercial residential landscaping. However, as the application was only submitted around four weeks ago, they did not expect to hear back by the end of the month. He went onto explain that those sorts of rebates were much more expensive, in amounts of \$5K for example, as getting a zero-turn electric lawnmower was around \$20K. Acquiring a nice commercial-grade leaf blower was approximately \$500 and for this program, it was residentially focused. However, they were working

towards that in the future because of the population that used commercial lawn services, but it was a program that was out of the scope of this proposal.

Ms. Smith stated that one more question by Dr. Huntley was allotted to be cognizant of their time restrictions and stated that Mr. Smith provided a power point to the CAC for their review. Mr. Smith offered that the CAC members could message him afterwards as well with further questions.

Dr. Huntley asked if Mr. Smith could explain the extension cords on his budget. Mr. Smith explained that this was something he noticed in the fall. He informed that these models were corded, which made them lightweight, as there was little to no lithium ion in them. They were not battery-powered hence being able to last indefinitely. However, an extension cord was needed. Most people had an extension cord that could work for the job whereas others did not and requested one. Powering Our Future gave out extension cords at the Newark Senior Center but did not give out extension cords at any other locations throughout the county. They were very well received and thought the prospect of including an extension cord was something that could be useful in the application. Because they were not exactly cheap and it was so variable to the different factors each person would want of their extension cord, he included that so Powering Our Future could cover the cost of the number of extension cords requested.

Ms. Smith mentioned that there would not be a vote held at this meeting as the CAC needed to evaluate the offer and thanked him for his time. Jeffrey Martindale, Chief Purchasing & Personnel Officer, offered that if there was interest in gaining more information from Mr. Smith, the CAC could give him direction to speak with him between this time and the next month's meeting and he could bring information back to the CAC for their voting consideration.

Dr. Huntley suggested adding this vote to next month's agenda. Ms. Smith suggested giving this subject more time as well. Mr. Martindale stated that he would put a memo together with Mr. Smith's help and they would have a formal recommendation and motion that they could vote on should the CAC choose to move forward. Ms. Smith suggested giving this subject 25 minutes at next month's meeting.

Dr. Huntley recommended that Mr. Smith attend even though the CAC would try to send him questions beforehand.

5. MAYOR MARKHAM

Stu Markham, Mayor of Newark, stated that being the Chair and running the meeting was difficult position, as one had to keep track of their own thoughts as well as others' and at which point, they were at in the meeting. He recommended that everyone think about what the most important thoughts they needed to get across were, and if they focused on those, they would find it easier to keep track and the conversation would go smoothly. When starting, it was hard, but in his experience sitting in the Chair could be difficult at times.

He addressed that the CAC was about to send out their annual report, to which Ms. Smith replied that they approved it last night. Mr. Markham stated that they would have dinner with the Mayor at 6:30 on June 13, which would be directly before the CAC's next meeting. As it would be part of their meeting, they could have an informal conversation. He acknowledged that the committee had done a lot of work this year.

Mr. Markham wanted the CAC to consider what the City did daily and felt that was where they could make the most impact. For example, building codes were important. There were simple subjects to think about – if they asked for building changes to require dark sky lighting, that would be a local requirement and he thought it to be a reasonable request. He mentioned there had been a conversation about electric stoves and inductions; he did not know if gas-powered stoves could be banned but a plan to incentivize the electric stoves could be made. He thought of ways to ease residents into things as they became more acceptable, they would continue to use them, and would convince other people that was the correct direction in a domino effect. He read their columns in the Newark Post, such as those that had information on electric vehicles (EVs), and hoped they included electric bikes. He did not know where to start in his research on electric bikes, and as he lived on a hill, he needed an electric bike to ascend it. He pointed out that the Parks and Recreation Department handled trees and discussed electric mowers. The department now possessed two zero-turn electric mowers and it was discussed at last night's prior Council meeting that they lasted throughout the time needed to operate them. He believed that when there was hard proof that these things worked, it would be easier to sell the idea to the public.

Mr. Markham asked if any of the CAC members went out to help the Parks and Recreation Department plant trees. Ms. Smith asked if one date was cancelled as someone else told her so. Mr. Markham did not remember, but he knew they filled it up. He stated there were ways to encourage people to plant more trees and knew that they were a natural way of helping the environment.

Mr. Markham also mentioned charging stations and suggested that an incentive was needed in the Code to have charging stations for new homes or apartment buildings. He mentioned that the CAC needed to figure out how to work with the Planning Department, as these were all things that were very local, and that the City controlled. He pointed out that Mr. Mateyko had spoken with him, and he would be at the next Council meeting for his appointment.

Ms. Smith mentioned that the CAC had been dismissed from Planning issues in the past. Unless Mr. Markham was referring to discussions pertaining to charging stations or what was in the Code, they did not have anyone to ask. Mr. Markham pointed out that there was a new Planning Director, Renee Bensley, and did not know when the CAC talked to the department last, but she was a go-getter that cleared decade-old items off the to-do list. He shared the example of the Transportation Improvement District (TID), which was at least ten years old and had now been taken care of, to show the progress. He also suggested that the CAC ask Council to make it a priority to do their suggestions.

Mr. Markham recommended approaching Ms. Bensley with their ideas that they thought would fit the building Code and asked how they could make it work. Ms. Smith asked if this would have to be done over the phone or in a meeting, and Mr. Markham stated that Ms. Smith could have the conversation as a citizen of Newark, or they could go through their staff contact. He suggested Mr. Martindale could coordinate that information.

Dr. Huntley pointed out that Ms. Bensley had visited the CAC once regarding an initiative Mr. O'Donnell proposed to oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure. She interpreted Ms. Bensley as not being interested in assisting the CAC to achieve that goal. Dr. Huntley went on to state that it was explained to the CAC that there were many obstacles, and they did not have the time to handle the matter as Council had other priorities. She suggested the new approach be to go to Council to ask the Planning Department to prioritize working through the CAC's suggestions, as opposed to the CAC communicating with the Planning Department directly.

Mr. Markham stated that if the subject was added to the Council priority list, it would have a much higher priority, as in the past staff and Council's ideas would be different and nothing would get done. However, that had changed, and now staff and Council agreed upon their priority list. Mr. Markham asked that the CAC consider the political possibility of getting through. He believed that specific ban had many more challenges than changing the lighting or charging stations. He suggested starting with something smaller to work through the process and build a relationship. He always tried to meet with people to build a relationship before discussion was required vs. only communicating pertaining to a matter of crisis. If that were to happen, a relationship would already be established.

He also suggested sharing the list of possibilities and asking what had the best chance in the shortest time frame. Dr. Huntley wanted to know about the process, as the CAC was technically an advisory body to Council.

Mr. Martindale shared that his recollection of that conversation was what they were currently moving toward. As an advisory body, he believed they concluded that if the CAC had interest in pursuing it further, it would be brought to Council in terms of a resolution. He pointed out that the Mayor mentioned that would be something that Council would decide on if it made its way into the prioritization later in the year than the other items. He believed that Ms. Bensley's point of view was that she had been given her direction by the Mayor and Council on what she was focused on, and until they told her otherwise, she would continue to prioritize that list. He mentioned that if the CAC and Mr. O'Donnell wanted to pursue that further, the next step would be putting a resolution together voted on by the CAC, send that over to Council, schedule with the City Secretary to be put on the agenda, and then see what the Mayor and Council would do from there.

Mr. Markham mentioned that he wanted the CAC to have a chance of success before bringing something through. If there was no prior conversation with Planning, then the item would be brought up with many obstacles and it would not go anywhere. While he agreed with Mr. Martindale, he believed that an informal conversation ahead of time about the topic would be beneficial.

Ms. Smith repeated Mr. Markham's point of informal discussions with the departments that pertained to the CAC's interests, but pointed out that another method would be to talk to their City Council representative to bring that to the meeting themselves. Mr. Markham suggested heavy consideration to be made before sending that to Council. Ms. Smith asked for clarification that something obtainable should get the relationship going. Mr. Markham responded that it was all a balance and there was no true way of going about this. He mentioned he had conversations with people, and always said that a fraction of the things that he tried to start never made it past 50%. However, he did have the information and knew what the response would be.

Dr. Huntley asked if there was a particular time in the year when City Council would set the agenda for the Planning Department or if that was adjusted throughout the year. Mr. Markham answered that Council made an overall list of priorities and couldn't recall which month it was in this past year. Mr. Martindale informed that it was typically in April after an election, but an election this year did not take place, so it was pushed forward to either February or March. If there was an election next year, they would be eleven months away from that discussion.

Ms. Smith asked if the CAC had access to this priority list and suggested it could be something to go on. The other departments may already have had an idea in mind for topics the CAC wished to address. Dr. Huntley asked by when did the CAC need to have their own priorities straight before making it onto

that list next year. Ms. Smith responded it could go either way. While the CAC members were not the ones being paid to get certain things done, they could align themselves with ideas that were already in the forefront.

Mr. Markham mentioned that was the best thing: if they saw a priority already in progress to assist with, that would help everyone involved. Ms. Smith also mentioned they could help shape that idea to match the sustainability plan in their own vision, and Mr. Markham reminded her that the sustainability plan was voted on and accepted by Council and was still a priority for them.

Mr. Markham explained that the priority list itself was voted on by Council, so it was a public list. Mr. Martindale mentioned that the most up-to-date version of that list should be able to be viewed online. Dr. Huntley asked if he could find it and send it to the CAC, which he replied that he could. Mr. Markham pointed out that it would not exactly be the same as what was on the agenda, but there was typically a discussion before it would be brought back for final discussion.

Mr. O'Donnell recalled last month's discussion of the fossil fuel ban and at the top it held whereas statements regarding the sustainability plan, etc. At the bottom, the CAC made a list to ban gas stations as well as an array of different things. He wanted to know the process of moving that forward, if they needed to get on the priority list to have individual conversations with their Council representatives, then try to get Council get buy-in from them to put on the priority list. Mr. Markham answered that for something like that, they would need Council buy-in as that was a major change.

Mr. O'Donnell explained that it was coming from the other side, noting that Mr. Markham mentioned establishing relationships, building rapport, and taking smaller pieces forth. This would be addressing a top major issue and they expected to get pushback. However, if they could identify what the top issues were, since they had a list, then maybe one item out of that list could go through, they could find the flaws in that item, and then adjust the list from there. Mr. Markham suggested going for the low-hanging fruit first, as that it was still an accomplishment and would still make a difference. They could get to the top of the list eventually, but he believed there was a learning curve and steps needed to be taken to get to that point. If Newark banned gas stations, they would still be surrounded by the county, and there would be gas stations right at the county line.

Ms. Smith clarified that this ban would cover the construction of new gas stations. Mr. Markham explained that this would also be a dilemma as older gas stations could be contributing to the existing problem in the environment and newer gas stations could provide modern ways to prevent pollution in comparison. Mr. O'Donnell explained that it was said that this did not restrict complaints or upgrades to this existing infrastructure for safety reasons and was just a ban on new gas stations being built within the City.

Mr. Markham pointed out that competition sometimes drove those upgrades and when there was no competition, there was no incentive to make those changes. He believed that the more people accept EVs, the easier that process would be. He wished to get the boulder rolling so it could not be stopped.

Dr. Huntley pointed out that an item on the CAC's priority list for the last few years was the creation of an energy transition task force to help the City plan for moving towards completely renewable energy sources. Every time it was brought to Council, it had always been ignored. She wanted the Mayor's feedback as to why Council was not acting on this item.

Mr. Markham replied that establishing a new task force was rather challenging and he suggested that the CAC should look towards doing this plan themselves. Dr. Huntley replied that they did not have that expertise and none of them were experts in electricity or the electric system. The idea in the sustainability plan was to find experts in those areas so they could give better advice. Ms. Smith commented that those with expertise would be ready to do so as they already had ideas on how this could be done. When Mr. Markham asked if the CAC already had volunteers lined up with this expertise, Dr. Huntley responded the CAC put together a list of suggested candidates that they gave to Mike Fortner a while back. Mr. Markham stated that finding people with expertise that were willing to serve would usually be a challenge. Dr. Huntley stated she did not know if the people on this list would be willing to serve, but it was a list of people that the CAC thought to ask.

Mr. Markham asked if the CAC viewed a presentation of how the electric system works in Newark and what was planned, what the challenges were, EV capacity, and along those lines, and if that would help at all. As she began to respond, Ms. Smith stated that the CAC faced a frequent issue where they did not receive the minutes before they had to plan the agenda and often the minutes helped them to reflect on what needed to be addressed. Tara Schiano, Director of Legislative Services pointed out that the City Secretary's office was currently facing staffing issues and the CAC should receive the minutes a week prior. Ms. Smith reiterated that the agenda had to be put up at a certain time and the minutes would often drive the agenda. Ms. Schiano suggested that it could be beneficial if individuals took notes as the office could not produce them any faster than possible. Ms. Smith stated that she understood and was not complaining.

Mr. Markham suggested that a compromise would be to state items to go on the next agenda or follow-up issues at some point during the meeting. He did not want to volunteer City staff for this but thought if it were prefixed in such a way, someone would be able to record that note. Ms. Schiano pointed out that it was helpful that an agenda item would be added for next month after the discussion ended and that would be beneficial. Ms. Smith mentioned while they did that in the past, they sometimes still went off track, to which Mr. Markham suggested identifying someone on the board to keep track of that information if desired.

Dr. Huntley stated that in the meantime while they did not have this task force, the CAC should go off of the Mayor's suggestion and do as much as they could as a body. She wished to schedule the Electric Department Director or his designee to discuss sustainability, renewable energy, and the Newark electric system with the CAC, and to add that item to the future agenda.

Mr. Markham mentioned that there were plans for upgrading the electric system for another substation in the City, one reason being reliability, and the other that EVs put a load on the electric system, and that one EV equaled two house. There were challenges with capacity on the transformer to feed certain areas and would have to be checked accordingly. Mr. Markham stated that they would likely use more electricity in the future rather than less. Dr. Huntley asked if he received the rate study yet, to which he replied he did not.

Mr. O'Donnell asked for Mr. Markham's feelings on a time-of-use rate plan. Mr. Markham believed that was in discussion as well due to the charging. He believed that some things became very successful and then whole loads were moved in the nighttime when they did not have their renewables. He used California as an example, who had renewables during the day, but then during a storage issue,

that power had to be pulled during the night. Even though many used solar energy, they also used the network as their battery.

Mr. Markham mentioned that the audio and visual system would be changed soon. Mr. Martindale clarified it would start on Monday with the award. He stated that understanding trying to get things done without impacting residents with as many fees and electric costs was a challenge for Council.

Ms. Smith stated that regarding electricity, the CAC see if there was a small step that could be taken to get that going. However, she pointed out that Mr. Markham stated there was already a transition. Mr. Markham stated that they had to plan an electric way out, and last night Council voted to order a new transformer for one that was broken. Now, they were expecting that to take 65 weeks, so sometimes it would take years. He believed that the Electric Department had plans for expansion and was sure Mr. Martindale could provide information on what the City was doing in terms of charging electric motors.

Mr. Markham commented on the recent discussion of F150 Lightnings. Mr. Martindale clarified he would have the truck out front at an upcoming CAC meeting once it was marked up for the police. Ms. Smith asked if one F150 was equal to four households in energy. Mr. Markham pointed out that this situation was different as the chargers here had their own fee and did not go off that. They were put in place like such specifically for that reason. He stated the police would have their own chargers as well, and clarified the F150 was an all-electric vehicle.

Dr. Huntley wanted to thank the Mayor for taking the time to share his thoughts with the CAC and appreciated his dedication to their topics. Mr. Markham stated in response that he tried his best to be honest with them even if that was not exactly what they wanted to hear, as he wanted them to be successful. He wanted to see them use their talents and their minds to make an improvement. He reminded them of their dinner plans for the next meeting.

6. GREENFEST AND EARTH DAY RECAPS – VARIOUS MEMBERS

Dr. Huntley began by thanking Mr. Martindale for providing a tent and tablecloth as well as parking the City's vehicles in a location that could be seen by drivers of gas vehicles and then parked them in the City slots. From her perspective, Greenfest went well. Mr. O'Donnell as well as Dr. Huntley's husband showed off their electric vehicles in the center of Greenfest. It seemed in general that there were fewer people attending than last year because of competition by other events the same day, including White Clay Creek Fest. The interactions they had were very productive and positive.

Ms. Smith stated that she did the Dim The Lights For Birds at Night presentation and had many interactions, brought many items for kids, and then had handouts to share with parents. She commented to a few of the parents that she observed the lights at the Newark Center for Creative Learning (NCCL) from her neighborhood and they would not get a good grade from the Dark Sky Association. She spoke with Dr. Buehler, an expert on lighting and the health impacts of light pollution and suggested recommending NCCL to get a Dark Sky Association consultant to make changes and make them a model of a dark sky accomplishment and what needed to be done. She also mentioned that in that neighborhood, she believed the lighting to be unbelievably bright. This was near the basketball court, the maintenance yard, and now knew the NCCL was contributing to it. She mentioned that she had fun discussing the migration of birds.

Ms. Smith mentioned that she did the same thing at the Earth Day event but spoke with University of Delaware students instead. She believed that she got 80-95 signatures from students that supported the idea of UD doing everything it could to reduce their lighting through either retrofitting or making new buildings dark sky compliant. They always had safety in mind as that was part of the discussion years ago with the Newark police. However, the students agreed, and Ms. Smith believed they had great conversations with so many young people.

Dr. Huntley asked if this could be done again as both events were good outreach opportunities for the CAC. It always depended on availability, however, to volunteer, but she thought it was a successful effort this year.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that there were two EVs to demonstrate at Greenfest, a Tesla and then an EV6. They opened all the doors and the hoods to try and grab attention. He agreed with Dr. Huntley that the crowd wasn't as big as last year, as last year there was a non-stop steady flow and were brought in by the prospect of touching an EV and looking at the plugs. They were right by the main entrance, so everyone had to walk past them to go through the area. This year, there were large periods of time where nobody was by the cars and wondered if it was intimidating to have presumably more expensive EVs there. He recommended having more variety, such as three or four lined up with doors open. He mentioned that Dr. Huntley had the idea of making a price sheet of "Good, Better, Best" with the final cost of these vehicles after DMV fees, rebates, etc. For those who did visit, however, they answered many questions and dispelled many myths. The children were able to enter the cars and play with the touch screens, including Mr. O'Donnell's daughter who was there to help. Ms. Smith commended Mr. O'Donnell's daughter for her help at Greenfest. She mentioned that while those events took up a lot of time, it was very rewarding to sit and talk to the community.

7. TREE GIVEAWAY UPDATE – JEFF MARTINDALE

Mr. Martindale remarked that he would not spend much time on this topic as he only had good news to report. With the Spring Tree Giveaway program, the Parks and Recreation Department sold out all 115 in four days and the pickup was the following Saturday morning. He mentioned that this was a great success, at least on paper, as long as all customers showed up to pick up the trees. He believed this warranted a discussion about continuing this program into the fall. However, he believed they had already allocated funding for a fall tree giveaway. Ms. Smith confirmed so. She explained that she had a handout she made for the past year and would forward that to him. She would try to get it to him before Saturday, as she would not be able to attend that day.

Dr. Huntley preferred that the City follow up on the fate of the trees given away. She mentioned that nobody followed up with her regarding her own tree that she planted, so she would like to see if the trees survived throughout the season. Mr. Martindale mentioned that he already had this discussion of the best way to complete that with Joe Spadafino, Parks and Recreation Director. With 115 trees, that was up to potentially 115 correspondents that they would have twice a year. He mentioned that there was a push for customers to send a tree and follow up themselves to let the City know of the tree's condition. Dr. Huntley mentioned she had not seen anything like this.

Mr. Martindale as well informed there was the discussion of whether this was a physical reporting requirement as part of the program or something on social media. Ms. Smith elaborated on the former saying involved individuals could comment on the thread by sharing a picture of their trees. Mr. Martindale mentioned that he did not have his own tree as he was not a City resident and asked for

clarification if someone had to register for the program online. He mentioned that as this included contact information, there was a path forward if they were to put out mass communications. Ms. Smith responded it could be part of the application to where the applicant chose whether they wished to be contacted afterwards regarding the tree, so City staff did not have to do all the work.

Ms. Palanisami mentioned that she could volunteer. She noted that number meant there were many trees to check but they should have been planted within two weeks. She herself did not mind visiting and checking if the trees were planted. Mr. Martindale pointed out that the larger issue was checking to see if the trees survived in their first year. The assumption was that they were being planted to begin with.

Ms. Smith suggested a City map where residents could mark where they planted their trees.

Mr. Mateyko asked if in the future, a press release or flyer with verbiage such as “Green Day” could be included to make the event more inclusive for other people who did not necessarily aim to take part in the Tree Giveaway itself but to plant trees bought from Lowe’s or another shop the same day. He also asked if there was a sheet given to residents with instructions on how to care for the tree. Ms. Smith said that she had already made this flyer and planned on sending it to Mr. Martindale.

Mr. Martindale liked Mr. Mateyko’s idea and pointed out that this was the third time they had done this program and each time had been a one-off. However, it seemed as if they were reaching the point where it would be a continual event and therefore warranted finding a permanent name.

8. BUDGET REVIEW – JEFF MARTINDALE

Mr. Martindale explained that the CAC had allocated \$31.5K in the first five months of the year and was behind regarding months’ worth of meetings and actual spending. He mentioned a prior discussion in January about allocating most of their funding by mid-year to allow planning for the following year.

He commended Mr. Smith’s Powering The Future idea and thought it was something that could be done this year, though something that in the longer term would be worthwhile was for the CAC to meet with groups like that in August through December. This would allow them to get ideas about what the CAC could help these groups to accomplish and how staff would bring that to fruition, so they were not scrambling, then putting that ideal into action the following January.

Mr. Martindale mentioned that there were larger ticket budget items to discuss that could get the CAC back on track, but he wanted to make sure they were not scrambling in October like before.

Dr. Huntley asked him to repeat how much was already allocated for the budget and how much was left. Mr. Martindale stated the prior amount of \$31.5K which left them at \$68.5K to spend through the rest of the year. She suggested adding a discussion of how the CAC would use the remainder of their budget as an item to the next agenda. She did not believe they needed to finalize all decisions regarding the funds, but priorities should be set to narrow down their options.

Ms. Smith preferred if members would bring a copy of the sustainability plan and annual report goals as that would help them focus and prioritize what had already been discussed or what looked attainable.

Mr. Martindale reminded that he sent out a list of items to possibly spend the budget on back in January. Mr. O'Donnell stated he would send out the decision maker with a list of what they had so far.

Ms. Smith mentioned that while she was aware it was hard to plan things between meetings, she wanted to try to avoid the Christmas rush.

9. EFFICIENCY SMART/CAC SUPER REBATE PROGRAM – JEFF MARTINDALE

Mr. Martindale reminded that this was a pilot program that was working with Tom Coyle from Efficiency Smart and Scott Lynch from the Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DMEC.) Both met with the CAC last year and shared an overview of the Efficiency Smart rebate program for Newark residents. They had mentioned that Oberlin, Ohio had a super rebate program where the municipality itself amplified the rebates for certain energy efficient products to push residents toward those options. They had gone over this a few times and in speaking with Efficiency Smart and DMEC, they believed that a one-product pilot program going into summer could help to observe the interest and then potentially use that data to expand the program.

Last month, the discussion centered around this program rebating window air conditioner units. The super rebate program was \$100 per unit, whereas Efficiency Smart's rebate program was only \$50. The idea was that the CAC could match that by adding \$50 and that a \$100 rebate would push that towards new unit purchases. This would make for \$150 total per unit. Ms. Smith asked how many units this would allow per household. Mr. Martindale explained that Efficiency Smart had a maximum of four units and his idea, for a pilot program, was a maximum of two units in the effort to save money in the first year and prevent a small number of households from monopolizing the program. His idea was that if the CAC invested \$10K into the program, about 10% of the total budget for the year, at the low end that would be up to 50 units if every household took two, and at the high end that would be 100 units if every household only took one. He thought this was an appropriate number, and going into the summer, so it was a good time to push this program. He had been in touch with Mr. Lynch and Mr. Coyle, and they were asking for updates from the CAC. They were ready to help the CAC push this forward ASAP. Mr. Martindale wished for this to be implemented quickly with an aim date of July 1 if approved tonight.

Ms. Smith believed the CAC had spent enough time considering the program that they could make a vote.

Mr. Martindale added that while he hoped Efficiency Smart would handle this project and invoice the City, they were not willing to, and it would instead be on him and his staff to do so. However, with 50-100 total tasks to complete, it seemed feasible for them at this time. He mentioned that it was not a grant program in the same way that if they met with Mr. Smith, he would want to put together a grant agreement with him to protect the City funds, whereas if this project was handled by the City outright, they had complete control over the funding to make sure it was handled appropriately.

Dr. Huntley asked if this was how Oberlin was conducting their own rebate program. Mr. Martindale answered that it was handled in-house as well. Ms. Smith asked if he had any data on the success of that program. He stated that he did, and it was discussed at a previous meeting, but he did not possess it on-hand as it had been discussed for a while.

Dr. Huntley also believed that the program in Oberlin was different than what was presented by Mr. Martindale as they had double the rebates across the board for all the items. However, Mr. Martindale

was only proposing window unit air conditioners, so the success rate may not have been relevant to their own project.

Ms. Smith asked who would spread the news of this rebate program, to which Mr. Martindale clarified it would be the City staff as well as Efficiency Smart. He assumed that Efficiency Smart would make the flyers, but then give them to the City to share on social media.

Dr. Huntley wanted clarification that this was for anyone in the City and there was not any limit on income, etc. Mr. Martindale responded that this would be for any Newark electric customer. Ms. Smith asked if the customer could choose their model, and Mr. Martindale explained that they would be able to choose from a select list that Efficiency Smart oversaw.

Mr. O'Donnell asked if the environmental impact benefit was that they would be getting an energy star on the list that would replace the less efficient machine. Mr. Martindale responded that was correct and pointed out that Mr. Mateyko mentioned last month that there were leak and pollution issues from older models. Dr. Huntley responded that there was also the possibility that customers would not even have older window unit air conditioners and through this program they could get a more energy-efficient unit from the beginning.

Mr. O'Donnell noted that this program that if they were to vote tonight on the program, that would be \$10K of their current \$68.5K remaining funds. He wanted to consider if this program was the most valuable for minimal cost versus other topics on the table. However, he believed that was so. Ms. Smith reminded him that both programs currently up for consideration were \$10K each.

Dr. Huntley asked if Mr. Martindale could address the following budget-related item before voting on this topic. Ms. Smith agreed.

10. ENERGIZE DELAWARE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM/NHA UPDATE – JEFF MARTINDALE

Mr. Martindale explained that he spoke with Jim Purcell from Energize Delaware, and it seemed like that the City's goals were mostly in-line with how the organization would like to proceed. Marene Johnson attended a previous meeting to discuss the \$75K grant that the Newark Housing Authority (NHA) received from Energize Delaware. At that time, it was still pending, but he confirmed with Mr. Purcell that it was moving forward. However, it did leave \$20K-\$25K on the table that they did not receive funding for their initial request. Mr. Martindale and Mr. Purcell spoke about potentially working with Ms. Johnson to put in an additional request that would be a 50/50 match between the City using CAC funds and Energize Delaware's funding.

Ms. Sipes asked for specification on what this grant was for. Ms. Palanisami explained that it was for updating Newark Housing Authority property. Ms. Smith stated that there were specific units identified for this project.

Mr. Martindale did not remember specifically but believed it was a case where the NHA applied for four units and only had three funded previously, so the CAC could fund the fourth. He admitted that initially he was not sold on going through Energize Delaware due to the fact it seemed more like a pass-through, so if CAC funds were given to Energize Delaware who would give funds to the NHA, he wondered if it would be better to give the funds to the NHA directly. However, he came to that idea as Energize Delaware specialized in that realm and otherwise it was another grant for Mr. Martindale to write up for

them. He stated that he was a grant writer in terms of applying for grants as opposed to writing grants themselves and wanted to keep it that way as long as possible.

Ms. Sipes asked what the CAC's contribution would be to this. Mr. Martindale responded that it was still unknown but would be a 50/50 match. He was unsure of what the figure looked like at this point and had not received an update from Mr. Purcell since he last spoke with him the week of the last meeting in April. Ms. Smith added that it was something around \$12.5K if they were to a match to \$25K. Mr. Martindale stated that it would depend on if prices had changed, if a piece of the request was added or subtracted, but it would likely be between \$10K-15K.

Ms. Sipes asked for clarification on what a unit would be if it were a house or apartment. Mr. Martindale that he believed it was in the context of townhouses. Ms. Palanisami recalled that she thought it was eighteen units that were audited, however Mr. Martindale believed that there was an additional audit, but this specific case involved townhouse units. Ms. Sipes asked if this number was four or eighteen. Ms. Palanisami believed there were upgrades from windows to heat pumps, so eighteen or thirty-five, but did not know if her math was correct. Ms. Smith noted that it may have been the case that eighteen were being worked on, a fraction was completed, and there were four more identified that needed to be worked on.

Mr. Martindale did not think the vote would be tonight, so he had work to do on this topic.

Ms. Sipes responded that she did not believe she was there for the presentation and Dr. Huntley added that the presentation was not clear between what the NHA received funding for from Energize Delaware and what was still left over. Mr. Martindale stated that he would put a memo together that was as concise as possible.

Dr. Huntley wanted clarification that the idea was the CAC would allocate money to Energize Delaware and set it aside for the NHA; then, Energize Delaware would write a contract to the NHA for how the money would be used and match the figure the CAC provided. Mr. Martindale explained that Energize Delaware had requirements for completing these types of tasks across the state and that was another reason why he was initially hesitant to jump in to get the money. He was initially concerned that if the CAC gave \$10K to Energize Delaware, and it was \$10K that was eligible to begin with, they would have given Energize Delaware money for no reason. However, it sounded like there were provisions that could be put in place to designate it specifically for the NHA. It also helped the NHA had been through the first grant process, so it was made very clear that there was not enough funding to complete the entire project. This was why he felt more comfortable putting that extra money to fully complete it. He would envision this being a three-way contract agreement between the CAC, the NHA, and Energize Delaware to designate where all the funding was going and how it would be allocated.

Dr. Huntley asked if an update on the train station could be given in next month's budget discussion. Mr. Martindale responded that he could.

Ms. Palanisami thanked Mr. Martindale as she knew this was not easy. He believed that this would have a good outcome.

Mr. O'Donnell wanted to confirm for the spreadsheet that they would be contributing \$12.5K. Mr. Martindale believed that for now that was a good number. Ms. Smith explained that this would be to make up the difference, as the NHA had a \$100K short fall. Energize Delaware would cover \$75K, the CAC

would cover half of the remainder, and Energize Delaware would match that figure.

Ms. Smith stated that they would move back to the previous topic of Efficiency Smart and asked if the rest of the CAC felt comfortable voting on that topic. She asked, while they had a suggested amount at \$10K, if anyone had an idea to go higher or lower to cover 50-100 units.

Ms. Sipes wanted clarification that their money was limited to two units per household, but with the program they could still get up to four, but it would not qualify under the super rebate program. Mr. Martindale responded that if they wanted to change the limitation of units per household, they could. Ms. Sipes responded that they thought two was enough and wanted to try to reach as many people as possible.

Mr. O'Donnell remarked that while summer was approaching, it would make sense to move this project forward now. Ms. Smith and Ms. Sipes agreed. Ms. Smith recalled that they were considering this program for a while and had a presentation previously.

MOTION BY MS. SIPES, SECONDED BY MR. O'DONNELL: THAT THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (CAC) CREATE A SUPER REBATE PROGRAM MANAGED BY CITY STAFF AND DIRECTED BY EFFICIENCY SMART'S REBATE PROGRAM. THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (CAC) FURTHER MOVES THAT \$10,000 BE ALLOCATED TO THE SUPER REBATE PROGRAM SPECIFICALLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF REBATES FOR ENERGY STAR CERTIFIED WINDOW AIR CONDITIONING UNITS.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: SIPES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, HUNTLEY, MATEYKO, PALANISAMI.

NAY: 0.

ABSTAIN: 0.

Dr. Huntley asked to add the other stipulations, that it would be a maximum of two per household and an additional \$100 per unit.

MOTION BY DR. HUNTLEY, SECONDED BY MS. SIPES: THAT THE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION (CAC) APPROVE DR. HUNTLEY'S AMENDMENT OF ADDING THE COST AND STIPULATIONS SUGGESTED.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: SIPES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, HUNTLEY, MATEYKO, PALANISAMI.

NAY: 0.

ABSTAIN: 0.

FINAL VOTE: 6 TO 0.

AYE: SIPES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, HUNTLEY, MATEYKO, PALANISAMI.

NAY: 0.

ABSTAIN: 0.

11. MONTHLY CONSERVATION ARTICLE WITH THE NEWARK POST – SHEILA SMITH

- May – PFAS Forever Chemicals – Lauren O'Connor
- June – Nature Equity Well-Being – John Mateyko

Ms. Smith explained to Ms. Sipes that some members of the CAC wrote articles for the Newark post, often seasonally themed, and discussed the articles during the meetings. It was 100% voluntary and there were times when members did not want to write articles. These articles were very popular and received positive feedback from the newspaper. Dr. Huntley pointed out that earlier, Ms. Simons gave feedback on one of Ms. Smith's older columns.

Dr. Huntley stated that if Ms. Sipes was interested, the CAC did have guidelines from Josh Shannon of the Newark Post, and she could certainly forward that to her. Ms. Smith stated they were allowed 500 words but went over it frequently. Mr. O'Donnell recommended those guidelines being sent to the rest of the committee as a reminder.

Ms. Smith stated that every article was informational. Ms. Sipes asked if the Newark Post was just online or was on paper, and Dr. Huntley replied that their column was published via both.

Mr. Markham commented that there was an article on PFAS and recommended they reach out to Tim Filasky, Public Works and Water Resources Director, as the City was currently dealing with that. They were doing tours with Senator Tom Carper and Governor John Carney down at the South Well Field Water Treatment Plant, where they would have to spend about \$4.5M to do filtering for PFAS. He suggested reaching out to them as Public Works was currently doing this. Ms. Smith mentioned that she would pass along this information to Ms. O'Connor, as she was the one writing the article but was absent from this meeting. Mr. Markham suggested using Mr. Filasky as a resource and asking about him the challenges, filtration, etc.

Ms. Smith mentioned that Dr. Huntley completed an article on greener ways to live, and she had not received anything from Ms. O'Connor yet for the May article as she had not spoken to her recently. She acknowledged that June's article would be Mr. Mateyko's idea of Nature Equity Well-Being.

Dr. Huntley volunteered to write a conservation corner article on electric bikes due to the previous request. When Mr. O'Donnell mentioned that he had the same idea, Dr. Huntley suggested they work on the article together. Ms. Smith asked if either of them owned one, and Mr. O'Donnell responded that while he did not personally, he had a friend who owned one that he got to experience on Sunday.

Ms. Smith mentioned that she wished to write about English ivy. She stated that she mentioned it in previous articles and would like to do a full one on the topic. She explained that it was a reservoir for bacterial leaf scorch and many treetops in Newark were dying because of it, including in her own neighborhood. Mr. O'Donnell recommended she do that for the month of August.

12. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- Phillips Park Over Illumination and Human Health – Sheila Smith

Ms. Smith stated that Newark residents were living in a perpetually and increasingly illuminated environment and noted the mid-Atlantic was blazing if witnessed from satellite photography from space. The rest of the world did not look like where they lived. She brought this up previously that she discussed the over-illumination in the City park and a few questions had accumulated, such as Dr. Huntley asking why the lights were on after 9p.m. when the park was closed at sundown and were timed to stay on until 10p.m.

She stated that she talked to Mr. Spadafino regarding the lights and clarified that sports were important to Parks and Recreation and that the basketball and tennis courts were very well-maintained. She shared that she received communication from Dee Durham and the Dark Sky initiative was growing popular around the country. She stated that she was initially interested in Dim the Lights for Birds at Night during bird migration, the issue exceeded beyond that, though it still caused bird window impacts at this time.

Ms. Smith began to note a recommendation from the International Dark Sky Initiative and then asked Mr. Martindale if he was able to receive an answer regarding the Kelvins and lumens of City of Newark lights. Mr. Martindale replied it was to his understanding that the answer provided by staff at the last meeting was satisfactory. Ms. Smith recalled that he was able to answer that it was at 65% less lighting, but it did not give an exact amount of illumination. He advised that it was wise to ask Bhadresh Patel, Electric Director, to speak with the CAC soon.

When Dr. Huntley inquired what the exact question being asked was, Ms. Smith clarified it was about how many Kelvins were being used throughout the City, but they were not even 100% what this was regarding. Dr. Huntley responded that Mr. Martindale gave them that number at last month's meeting, and while she did not have those notes with her, it was the same as what Wilmington used and were too blue per the recommendations Ms. Smith cited at the last meeting. Ms. Smith pointed out that Wilmington was preparing to change their amount and Newark should not set their standards by Wilmington's statistics.

Mr. Martindale reminded that the article cited was from half a decade ago and did not come to fruition in Wilmington. Ms. Smith responded that this was not about what Wilmington had done regardless, this was about what the City of Newark was doing.

Ms. Smith recommended taking the Mayor's advice and starting with down-shielding and reducing lighting. She suggested using Phillips Park as an experimental location, and while open to suggestions for other locations, they could not use any upon Cleveland Avenue as it was not in their purview. She recalled a recommendation from the American Medical Association (AMA) as the blue light was considered unhealthy and very disruptive to the health of both humans and animals.

Mr. Martindale asked Ms. Smith if she knew if there was a proximity from a larger light source where this mattered less. Using Phillips Park as an example, he mentioned that it was directly across from the UD STAR Campus, which itself was very bright. He asked if there was a tangible benefit of reducing lights close to that specific source, where it would have a benefit. She said the benefit would be to the woodlands of Phillips Park. She recalled stating before that she could walk out of the park and all the way to B Street and still have a sharp shadow from the lights, and the same case would be if she walked deep into the woods. She thought that the brightness of the basketball court's lights was unnecessary and there were engineers who could analyze this problem.

Ms. Smith acknowledged that the CAC members as well as staff were very busy, but she wanted to continue exploring the dark sky idea. She stated that she was unable to give all the information she possessed at the last meeting and shared that the AMA had adopted guidance to reduce harm from high intensity streetlights. The question was what were the Kelvins that the City of Newark was using, and when down at 65% if they were within that healthy range of 3000-2200 Kelvin fixtures. Mr. Martindale informed that the fixtures were 4000 Kelvin units, and at 65%, it was around 3000. Dr. Huntley stated that 65% was for the brightness while the Kelvins were the color of the lights. Mr. Martindale recalled the discussion of lumens from last month and decided that 10,000 lumens were put off by those lights, and at 65% it was 6500 lumens. He explained that the issue was that this was a more involved electrical engineering calculation to make and while a good basis for this discussion, it was not a perfect answer.

Ms. Smith proposed the CAC get information from a dark sky lighting engineer and believed that the University of Delaware had an expert on it, Dr. Markus Buehler. She stated that this came from Dee Durham's constituent who wished to see Delaware move in this direction and had contacted the City of Newark. She wondered if they could ask an engineer to come in and perhaps get an estimate for the cost of having him directly analyze the situation at Phillips Park and evaluate to see if there was a way to make it dark sky compliant. Phillips Park would be a small example of a place where a change could be made and observe what the cost would be, even if it could not be done right away. She also suggested down shielding in the maintenance yard and putting in motion detectors, as that was a part of their discussion about reducing electric use.

Mr. Martindale pointed out that while the police would be better equipped to answer their questions, he knew that staff had no intention of reducing lighting as the maintenance yard. Ms. Smith asked if it could be down shielded, and Mr. Martindale replied that it could not from a security standpoint. She inquired how this was so. Mr. Martindale explained that it was a matter of protecting the equipment that was there, and Ms. Smith responded that the down shielding would only be to prevent the light from spreading outside of the maintenance yard. She pointed out that an engineer could theoretically that the equipment that was a set height and would need an unshielded light on the center of the yard for that specific equipment, for example. While there was a suggestion of reducing the lighting, down-shielding was her main point and the first step.

Mr. Martindale mentioned that if this were a pilot program, it would be a longer-term project, and from an ethics standpoint, he believed it more appropriate to use a spot instead of Phillips Park due to the fact Ms. Smith lived adjacent to it. Ms. Smith asked for examples from others if they had such but reiterated that she was concerned about this matter not because of her own home, but because of the park itself and the woodland around the area.

Mr. Mateyko said that Ms. Smith had already mentioned that this was an issue beyond bird migration. Since it was a repeated topic of discussion on the agenda, it caught his own attention, and it was his observation that in science and the evolving climate, all vegetation would be stressed to the breaking point. He suggested pushing back that breaking point so it could not be reached. He believed that a major stress that could be reduced was light, explaining that it was cumulative, much like humans. For many species in the ecosystem, the most active half of their day was nocturnal. It appeared to him that the light was so intense towards so many functions of nature that it was as if that area could not be counted as a part of it. He stated that the matter was serious as the goal was for vegetation to grow and survive in periods of drought, extreme heat, and flooding, and the unknown was the precautionary principle. All that could be done was to analyze the science and engineer this differently. There was

nothing wrong with the previous engineering as that was to cater to the old climate, but the old climate was gone.

Ms. Smith stated that illumination was continuously added through every new building, citing the grove at Town Hall as an example. Mr. Mateyko stated an issue was that first responders were still acting properly and doing great things and that was the last thing that needed to be changed, but he did not know who else would step up to make the first change for the new climate. There were still concerns about health and safety in the previous climate. More people could experience mortality from the increase in ambient light in the City for safety rather than by muggings, for example, as the climate had changed drastically. It was incredibly hard for the police, fire departments, etc. to make that change as it was too risky and a major liability, also pointing out that the City Attorney did not wish for Newark to be the first to make this change as well due to the possibility of a lawsuit. However, when looking at the best available science as a basis, that had changed, but the operational level was still based on the old climate. He believed that part of the CAC's role was to observe that change.

Dr. Huntley stated that Dr. Buehler was not an engineer while his expertise was more in birds than in lighting, while he did analyze the attraction of light pollution and birds. She suggested that the CAC reach out to Jeffrey Summerhays, Sustainability Officer of University of Delaware, who was present at the last meeting and would have that conversation with him. She believed he would know if UD had any experts who could assist the CAC on this topic. Another discussion with him would be joined initiatives with UD as they contributed a large portion to the light pollution in the City of Newark.

Ms. Smith stated that was farther down the road, and she and Dr. Chris Williams, Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at UD, had discussions about how to go about this plan. She pointed out that her main point was not simply about birds that day, but about the overall influx of lighting. She agreed with Dr. Huntley, stating that she received a list of names as recommendations, and Herb White, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, spoke to a dark sky engineer at a recent conference. She wished to share the idea that the basketball court and streetlights by Phillips Park could be less illuminated. She was not sure how to encourage City staff to do so except by sharing that it was a health issue for humans and the wildlife at that location as well.

Mr. Martindale believed that the discussion had gone rather circularly, and the intent on the streetlights had been met, but at this time there was no intention of moving forward with anything additional. Parks themselves were up for discussion and he would like to see that follow the same prioritization discussion that Mr. Markham mentioned earlier about planning items. However, the third piece was everything that did not fall under the City but was within the City, such as the university, residential homes, businesses, etc. Everything else would be a bigger portion of anything currently done in the City, moving forward. He mentioned that he was not stating that the parks were not worth looking at, but they were not a huge contributor.

Ms. Smith reiterated that park would not be singled out even though there was good cause to analyze it; there were not many urban woods, and it was evaluated to be rather special. Mr. Martindale stated that it was his recollection from the last meeting that they were thinking about conducting an encouragement campaign of non-City entities that contributed to this issue, and he worried that they missed that portion of the discussion.

Ms. Smith stated that this campaign was started three years ago and did not know how to gather non-City entities for their support with the current recruitment methods she was using (i.e., handouts.)

She did not have the time and she believed that the CAC would have another partner in this project, but that did not happen. Her aim was for a small project in which the CAC could analyze the current situation in Phillips Park with this initiative, but over time, the overall idea of down shielding more lights would be encouraged. She was aware that the CAC helped to purchase the new LED lights before they were aware of the downsides of them. She stated that they were supposed to be dark sky, however none of them were down shielded. Dr. Huntley and Mr. Martindale believed those lights were currently down shielded. Ms. Smith stated that the illumination should be able to be seen, but the bulb should not be able to be seen from a distance, and that was the standard, so the ambient light would be cut off and not spreading. She believed that would be goal.

Mr. Martindale stated that this seemed like a good topic for the prioritization discussion and would leave them much time to speak with Mr. Summerhays. However, having that discussion in the interim would be useful to see what the CAC should do in the future. Ms. Smith stated that she believed they were setting their priorities, as well.

Dr. Huntley suggestion that since the Kelvin rating of the City streetlights were not ideal, maybe the CAC could recommend that as they were being replaced, they could be replaced with a more ideal color rating. Mr. Martindale, Mr. O'Donnell, and Ms. Smith all stated the LED lights would be there for quite a while. Ms. Smith stated that perhaps down shielding was prohibitively expectant, and there were people currently working on this problem, so the products were available. Perhaps the company that produced those lamps had one on-board.

Mr. O'Donnell suggested that the CAC look at the current commercially available products for shielding and shrouding to see if that was a possibility to invest in, such as \$1K for 100 shrouds or shields for residents to hand out at an event or to sell for a discount. Ms. Sipes mentioned that if their target was residential houses, they could conduct a rebate program such as the Efficiency Smart air conditioner program mentioned earlier.

Ms. Smith suggested she would speak about the dark sky initiative for 15 minutes at next month's meeting.

13. NEXT MEETING – JUNE 13, 2023

Ms. Smith began to overview the items to be put on the next agenda, recalling the previous mentions such as a budget review and making the priority list. Mr. O'Donnell mentioned that they would have dinner with the Mayor next meeting and that would help to shape what their priorities were. Dr. Huntley stated that they were voting on their goals, which she believed were the same thing as their priorities. Ms. Smith stated that this was to put them on their agenda, to which Ms. Palanisami explained that the conflict was that Mr. Martindale stated the budget had to be discussed, which led to the discussion of goals, meaning that they would determine how to vote and spend the rest of the budget.

Jordan Herring, Administrative Professional, began to read items that were included on next month's agenda:

- Approval of minutes from meeting held on May 9th, 2023
- Public Comment
- Efficiency Smart Funding Update
- Monthly Conservation Articles with the Newark Post

- Old/New Business

Ms. Herring then proceeded to read out her own notes that she had taken on items discussed to be included on the next agenda:

- Meeting with the Electric Director/Designee to discuss electric sustainability
- Discussion of how to use the remainder of the budget
- Powering Our Future proposal & Vote
- Discussion of Priorities

Ms. Smith mentioned that when Mr. Martindale recommended reviewing the budget, she suggested looking at the sustainability plans and the goals of such, and when there was a budget idea to be prepared to measure its applicability to the CAC's goals. She wished to keep the CAC on a straight and narrow path.

Mr. O'Donnell mentioned they did have their decision-making spreadsheet.

Ms. Smith stated that the CAC wished to look at the Energize Delaware program and to see how it fit in with their current plans, as well as the down shielding and paying an engineer to view the basketball court lights. She also wanted to see if it was possible to ask Mr. Williams or Mr. Summerhays to visit and speak with the CAC.

Ms. Smith as well mentioned that she wanted to speak about the dark sky initiative at the next meeting as she wanted to be better prepared for the next discussion and discuss what down shielding would really mean in certain circumstances. Ms. Herring asked if she wished her to make a note to add that to the next agenda, to which Ms. Smith replied that she would.

MOTION BY MS. PALANISAMI, SECONDED BY MR. MATEYKO: TO ADJOURN THIS MEETING.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Jordan Herring
Administrative Professional I

/jh