

**City of Champaign, Illinois**  
**Minutes of Meeting**

---

**Stormwater Utility Fee Advisory Committee Meeting**

**July 16, 2012**

**Advisory Committee Members Present:** Steve Cochran, James Creighton, Karen Foster, Vic McIntosh, Carol Jo Morgan, John Pope, Andrew Timms, Anna Maria Watkin, Judy Wiegand

**Advisory Committee Members Absent:** Eliana Brown, Clif Carey, Jim Jesso, Seamus Reilly

**City Staff Present:** Alex Nagy, Dennis Schmidt, Jamie Vermillion

**Consultants Present:** None

---

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Introductions**

Committee members were introduced.

**Stormwater Utility Fee Advisory Committee – Purpose**

Schmidt explained that a memorandum was included in the meeting packet for any committee members who did not attend the June meeting. The memo outlines meeting dates and agenda topics for each future meeting.

**June 18, 2012 Stormwater Utility Fee Advisory Committee Minutes**

The minutes from the June 18, 2012 Stormwater Utility Fee Advisory Committee Meeting were reviewed and accepted.

**Stormwater Utility Fee Credit and Incentive Manual**

Nagy described the components of the “draft” Credit and Incentive Manual, which describes improvements a property owner could make to reduce their stormwater utility fee bill. Credits are a recurring reduction in a property owner’s stormwater utility fee bill while incentives are a one-time payout. Credits and incentives are available to all properties.

Creighton asked if items reducing stormwater runoff which are not specifically identified in the Credit and Incentive Manual would be eligible for a credit or incentive, i.e. French drain. Nagy explained that staff will be flexible and review proposals from citizens for credits and/or incentives that are not listed in the “draft” credit and incentive manual. Staff will review these proposals and make decisions on a case by case basis.

Watkin asked if it is accurate that a property owner would only be eligible for one rain barrel incentive per property. Nagy indicated the “draft” Credit and Incentive Manual proposes one rain barrel incentive per parcel. Watkin suggested giving incentives for more than one barrel on a property. Schmidt pointed out to the Committee that the purpose of this meeting was to review the proposed Credit and Incentive Manual. The August meeting will focus entirely on changes the Committee recommends to the proposed Manual. Schmidt asked the group to keep a list of items they wish to modify for discussion during the August meeting.

Cochran asked if a rain garden over 100 square feet would be eligible for three incentives. Nagy indicated they would be eligible for the rate reduction incentive, the volume reduction incentive and the water quality incentive.

Cochran asked if detention basins are currently required to undergo regular maintenance. Nagy indicated the City’s 231 detention basins are supposed to be maintained, however, many are not. This incentive is intended to encourage residents to come together to maintain detention basins where regular upkeep has been overlooked in order to receive an incentive.

Cochran asked what the City’s detention basin requirement is for detention basin volume. Nagy indicated detention basins are currently required to be sized to hold a 100-year rainfall event.

Schmidt commented that for the Educational Credit, he would recommend visiting the Water Environment Federation website ([www.wef.org](http://www.wef.org)) for model curriculums.

Watkin asked if lesson plans would be required from every single teacher in order for a school to be eligible for the Educational Credit. Schmidt explained that the “draft” Credit and Incentive Manual only requires approval of the class curriculum.

Creighton asked if staff had an estimate of what Unit 4’s stormwater utility fee would be without any credit or incentives. Schmidt estimated that Unit 4’s twenty-two properties have approximately 2.5 million square feet of impervious area equating to an annual fee of approximately \$43,000. Creighton then asked how many students are in Unit 4. Wiegand indicated there are 9,300 students enrolled in the Unit 4 school district.

Pope asked if an estimate for the Champaign Park District has been calculated. Schmidt indicated the Park District has just under 1 million square feet of impervious area which equates to an annual fee of approximately \$18,000 dollars.

McIntosh asked if the City will be taking over maintenance responsibilities for inlet and outlet structures for private stormwater detention basins as a result of the stormwater utility fee. Schmidt explained that after a discussion with City Council it was decided the City would not maintain inlet and outlet structures at this time.

### **Public Participation**

Eric Green provided a calculation showing costs incurred for construction of a 172 square foot rain garden installed by his students and volunteers in the John Street Watershed. Green would like to use the stormwater utility fee to help motivate property owners to install rain gardens on their properties. Green suggests allowing a property owner to recoup their rain garden installation costs up to \$750.

Furthermore, he proposed a rain garden installation to be considered a credit rather than an incentive. Green reasoned that rain gardens do not stop functioning unless they are not properly taken care of.

Pattsi Petrie shared five comments on the proposed Credit and Incentive Manual as follows:

- Petrie thinks that giving an incentive for one rain barrel per household does not encourage residents to have rain barrels at each corner of their home. A significant amount of runoff could be diverted if each property had rain barrels capable of capturing 220 gallons of water.
- Petrie is unclear as to why the three categories - rate reduction, volume reduction and water quality are not grouped together into one category with a maximum of \$750 since each of these categories are exactly the same with the exception of the addition of a cistern in the volume reduction category.
- Petrie believes in discouraging the use of detention ponds and encouraging more sustainable maintenance and handling of stormwater management such as pervious surfaces, cisterns, green roofs, etc.
- Petrie would like for the Champaign Park District to be eligible for an educational credit for educational programs involving students (i.e. rain garden construction).
- Petrie feels the proposed incentives and credits do not move properties to attain zero runoff, which should ultimately be the goal.

Creighton suggested that educating residents on the benefits of reducing stormwater runoff will help people change their behaviors more than monetary incentives.

Watkin commented that education needs to go beyond the schools. She would like to see the City develop a more in-depth sustainability plan.

McIntosh suggested broadcasting a program on CGTV educating residents on the benefits of stormwater management.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be August 13 from 4-5:30 in Council Chambers. Meetings may be viewed on CGTV or "On Demand" through the City's website, should a Committee member miss a meeting. Staff is also available to meet with Committee members if one is absent.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:14 p.m.