



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

#1 GARY K. ANDERSON PLAZA DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1196

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 3, 2022

City Council approves solar canopy project for Civic Center parking lot, begins Watershed Protection Program

Decatur, IL – Highlights from the October 3, 2022 Decatur City Council meeting include a \$5 million solar canopy project for the Decatur Civic Center parking lot, an agreement within the Lake Decatur watershed to reduce sediment from entering the lake, and trick-or-treat hours have been set.

Solar Canopy Project for Civic Center parking lot

The Decatur City Council on Monday approved a project that will bring covered parking canopies with solar panels to the Decatur Civic Center parking lot. The agreement allows Hawk-Attollo to build parking canopies over most of the parking spaces and attach over 2,600 solar panels to them. The City will benefit by saving nearly \$100,000 per year on its energy bill, along with receiving covered parking.

The project is estimated to cost \$5 million and will be fully paid for by Hawk-Attollo. The City will incur no installation or operating expenses as Hawk-Attollo will own and operate the system. The City has agreed to purchase the power generated for the next 15 years, with the potential for two 5-year extensions. The City and Civic Center will save approximately \$100,000 a year thanks to this agreement for cheaper, cleaner energy.

The City will have the right to purchase and own the system at any time should the City Council choose that option. The project is expected to be fully operational in the first half of 2024.

Lake Decatur Watershed Protection Program

Also on Monday night, the City Council approved a cost-sharing agreement with a local landowner in the Lake Decatur watershed to help reduce sediment from entering Lake Decatur. This is the start of the Lake Decatur Watershed Protection Program, which should see many similar agreements in the future.

The project will involve the construction of a terrace system to control nutrients, sediment, and erosion. This program aides the Council's goal to assure good water quality and proper watershed stewardship for the future. Moving forward, these types of projects will be funded by the \$9.88 million USDA grant recently awarded to the City.

Other business

In other business, the Council authorized the City to move forward with upgrades to HVAC and water heaters in eight City facilities, should we receive grant funding for these replacements. The City applied for up to \$350,000 in grants from Ameren Illinois to make the necessary updates. We will move forward with as many of the upgrades as we receive funding for. As part of the grant parameters, work needs to be completed in 2022. This will save the City thousands annually on reduced gas usage.

Finally, the Council approved this year's Halloween trick-or-treating hours – unchanged from previous years. Trick-or-treating may be done on Monday, October 31st, between the hours of 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

More information about these topics can be found in the City Council Agenda packet, downloadable/viewable here: www.decaturil.gov/mayor-and-council/council-meetings/

###