



Village of Westchester

10300 ROOSEVELT ROAD, WESTCHESTER, IL 60154

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GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

August 1, 2024 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

1. 6:30 - Call to Order

6:31 – All present

- Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase, LeeAnn Kruszynski, Lee Kaufman, Mariana Nicolae, Kari Roberg, Nikki Way, Walt Wojcik
- Attending Staff Representative: Annie Canavan
- Attending Board Representative: Evie Slavic
- Attending Residents: Dianne Scott, Leanne Pettis

2. Pledge

3. Roll Call

4. Inspiration - Lee Kaufman

From The 1975 Crosby & Nash song “Cowboy of Dreams” the chorus: “the way I live determines the way my people survive.”

- Next Month – 9/5/24: Annie

5. Review of Minutes – Nikki Way

- Approval of 7/11/ 24 regular meeting minutes
- a. Discussion of minutes, Nikki can post in Microsoft and have GROW make edits to minutes.
- b. **LeeAnne motions to approve (with immaterial changes), Kari seconds. All Approve.**

6. Quarterly Reports

- i. Second Quarter – Walt Wojcik
 - a. Walt received a few edits, will make edits.
- ii. Third Quarter - (TBD)
 - a. Walt has volunteered to draft.

7. Old Business

- 2024 Newsletter Calendar
 - i. September: Waste related article - (TBD)

Village President
GREG HRIBAL

Village Clerk
SOPHIA COLLINS

Trustees
GIA MARIE BENLINE
PETER MARZANO
ROBERT MORALES
EVELYN SLAVIC
NICK STEKER
VICTORIA VANN

Village Manager
BARRY KRUMSTOK
Asst Village Manager
JOHN SCHWARZ
Administrative Services Coordinator
ANNIE CANAVAN
Village Attorney
MATTHEW WELCH

Commissioners
LEE KAUFMAN
LEEANN KRUSZYNSKI
MARIANA NICOLAE
KARI ROBERG
NIKKI WAY
ELIZABETH WISEMAN-CHASE
WALTER WOJCIK

1. Nikki to follow up with
- ii. Monthly: Plant-Based Recipes – Kari Roberg
 1. Kari sent draft, looking for suggestions. Would like to ask local restaurants or farmers market for recipes.
 2. Evie and Walt would like to put it in the monthly newsletter, on website, and in the e-newsletter.
- iii. Incentives for Electric Appliances – Liz W-Chase
 1. Resource with Rewiring America, which outlines federal incentives, including updating electrical panels; ComEd
 2. also offers rebates. Also resources to help upgrade appliances.
 3. Walt suggests an education event on this topic (Evie notes that it would need to be a licensed speaker who would need to be vetted. The Village works with Pheonix, a consultant, to review and inspect plans related to electric remodeling, so there is no one in-house.)
 - a. Liz can check with Climate Reality to see if there are speakers.
- a. 2024 Planning Calendar
 - i. GROW Participation in National Night Out August 6th – Annie Canavan
 1. Annual community event with police department. Free family event with food, and bounce houses. GROW invited to have a resource table or have Walt bring an electric vehicle for the “touch a truck” activity for kids (but do not have to go into the car). Kari and Liz offered to do the tabling event.
 - ii. Concerts in the Park/EV Car Show August 28th – Walt
 1. Usual electric vehicle owners out of town, suggests that we put out a casting call for electric vehicle owners. Will send Annie a blurb for posting on Facebook or e-newsletter.
 - iii. Reuse A Palooza September 21st & 22nd – LeeAnn Kruszynski
 1. 50 registrations, about the right time to start promoting QR code for map.
 2. Nikki to help with marketing.
 - iv. Tree Walk October 5th – LeeAnn
 1. Planning the first meeting on Monday. Will discuss basic stuff. Steve is on board with the area location. Evie notes that it is also the Tour De Proviso. Will move until 1pm. Jim (who did the tree inventory) will be presenting.
 - v. *Proposed*: Tour of IBEW Powering Chicago Training Facility – Liz
 1. Need dates, times, and information to book a tour. Half the commission expressed interest in attending.
 - vi. *Proposed*: Guided Tour of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District – Mariana
 1. Annie confirmed that Mariana can coordinate the event, similar to the process for the Climate Action Museum. Mariana suggests November, will need a go/no go date for the tour. November 12 is the proposed date. Will coordinate offline on date.
 - vii. Pumpkin Smash – November 2nd (TBD)
 1. Matt typically does the event and writes a newsletter. He may consider doing it again. Last year we had two bins. Have two banners. Karri offered to help. Unclear of Waste Management will do it, or SBC will do it.
- b. Home Waste Reduction Resource – Kari

- i. In draft form, will get something shortly.
- c. Discussion: Climate Friendly Diet Information – Walt
 - i. Discussion regarding Walt’s article about the impact of red meat to ensure that it is positive and non-judgmental. Suggestions include encouraging “Meatless Monday” or “no meat before 6 pm.”
- d. IDPH/IEMA Press Release on Air Quality – Liz
 - i. Encouraging people to encourage air quality like they would the weather. Annie will share it on Facebook, and in the weekly newsletter. Nikki suggested that the message can be framed as timely due to wildfire season.
- e. 2025 Event Calendar – Liz
 - i. Solar event with CUB in Spring
 - ii. (Nikki) Bike road rules with Ride Illinois, could also do bike tune-ups. Would consider doing in May, and make a note for the January agenda.
 - iii. (Kari) Tour of SCARCE in Addison, they collect all sorts of things and find new homes. Consider Spring.
 - iv. (Walt) Update on climate, lecture on reality. Fermilab environmental department or UChicago climate crisis. GROW commissioners mention that they want something that would be solutions-oriented, how to deal with the heat, and what we can do.
 - v. (All) Blurbs on what people can do without feeling like they are being lectured.
- 8. Updates from the Administrative Services Coordinator and Trustee Liaison – Annie Canavan, Evie Slavic**
 - a. Parkway Program Proposal
 - i. After discussing with Nicole Molinaro, Evie asked for and attended a meeting of applicable staff members in regards to GROW having 3 residents (which included Nicole) put together a Parkway Planting Proposal to present to GROW. Evie and Nicole discussed and agreed that prior to the smaller committee taking the time to put together an entire proposal package, that it would be better to first gauge the feasibility of such a project with staff and that an ordinance update would need to be the 1st step. The results of the meeting in which other town’s programs were discussed as well as information and facts that are specific to Westchester, was that over the next several years there are major infrastructure projects scheduled that would involve the parkways. Instead, it was suggested that GROW educate residents on the benefits of adding native plant gardens to their yards as the square footage of a resident’s lot is so much larger and can make a greater impact compared to the much smaller village-owned parkway which has infrastructure below it, in some cases as shallow as 12” below the surface. The suggestion was that GROW could work to put together design suggestions complete with plant types and recommendations that are applicable to the typical Westchester back yard. GROW could also coordinate a native plant sale in town and/or include the names of nurseries in the area that specialize in native plants.
 - b. GRC – Greenest Region Compact baseline scoring update
 - i. Have had two meetings, but no updates. Most of the items require research. For example, “measure and monitor greenhouse gasses.” Started with the ones that were known. Lee suggested that Liz join the meetings to provide insight. By the next meeting, Annie will have something to preview to GROW.

- c. CS2 – Community Solar Clearinghouse solution update
 - i. Did not get a response from Mark Pruitt, followed up with Cheryl Scott and will work directly to get a draft postcard.
- d. Business Cards/Commissioner ID Tags
 - i. Getting a quote, tentatively approved by Barry.
- e. Reuse-a-Palooza additional signage
 - i. Getting a quote, tentatively approved by Barry.
- f. Thursday afternoon showings of environmental films
 - i. September 19 first showing. “Climate Change, The Facts” from BBC/ David Attenborough . 1 hour.
- g. Anti-Idling Policy
 - i. Evie will send blurb.

9. New Business

- a. Gas Powered Blowers (Lee)
 - i. The last article got some responses and interest from residents. Lee doesn't like a ban but saw that the state of California didn't ban gas-powered, but put a law in place that gasoline powered lawn equipment cannot be sold in the state. Suggested no future Village purchasing or working with gas-powered blowers. General discussion about residents buying electric including maintenance. GROW needs to decide if it wants put a motion out for an RFP for sustainable purchasing power (saying we put value on a vendor that is sustainable). Kari will write a draft of the policy, and we can discuss during next meeting.
- b. ArbNet (LeeAnn)
 - i. LeeAnn will send more info about ArbNet level 3 for the village to decide if it wants to pursue.

10. Commission Comments

11. Staff/Board Representative Comments

Evie: Reminder of SBC \$2k, need to think about how we would like to see that money utilized via event, and purchase.

12. Public Participation - *In order to give as many visitors as possible an opportunity to speak and in the interest of adjourning the meeting by 8:00 p.m., please limit your comments to 3 minutes in length, unless further time is granted by the Commission.*

- Leanne: Tree Walk, would like a spring or April tree walk. Some trees are pretty in spring.
- Dianne: Bewildered about the process of the parkway planting. Had heard from Nicole Mollinaro about the project. Would get feedback. There was not a democratic process, felt like we were shut down. Thought that GROW was how to create change. Thinks that Board should hear it.
 - Evie clarified that she had a discussion, but it doesn't mean that GROW can't move forward. Clarified that village staff are involved. Board can't vote on items where staff

have more infrastructure knowledge and recommendations. The first step is to change the ordinance with GROWs recommendation. Community development director working with attorney to draft.

8:41 PM - LeeAnne motions to adjourn, Walt seconds. All approve.

13. Adjournment

The Village of Westchester will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the Village of Westchester, should contact the office of the Fire Chief, 10300 W. Roosevelt Road, Westchester, IL, (708) 345-0441, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

2024 Goals: Education and Engagement, Advisement, Climate Action Plan

Lee Kaufman	Safe Streets for All, Electric Powered Equipment for Natural Lawn Care
LeeAnn Kruszynski	Tree Walk, Planting Demonstration, Arbnet, Reusa Palooza, Climate Action
Mariana Nicolae	Water Quality/Sustainability, Composting, Climate Change Awareness
Kari Roberg	Zero Waste, Connection to Nature, Climate Action Plan
Nikki Way	Reusa Palooza, Commission Marketing support, Green infrastructure/solar/rain and native garden/ecological interest walk, painted rain barrels
Elizabeth Wiseman-Chase	Climate Action Plan, Air Pollution/Health, Incentives for Electric Appliances, Solar Education
Walter Wojcik	Climate Action, Electric Vehicles, EV Car Show