



Village of Westchester

10300 ROOSEVELT ROAD, WESTCHESTER, IL 60154

(708)345-0020 FAX (708)345-2873

WWW.WESTCHESTER-IL.ORG

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

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2025 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

A. 6:32 PM - Call to Order

B. Pledge

C. Roll Call

- a. Attending Commissioners: Lee Kaufman, LeeAnn Kruszynski, Mariana Nicolae, Kari Roberg, Nikki Way, Liz W-Chase, Walt Wojcik
- b. Attending Staff Representative: Annie Canavan
- c. Attending Board Member: Evie Slavic
- d. Attending Residents: Mike Doman, Pam Doman, Alex Pergams, Leann Pettis

D. Inspiration – Lee Kaufman

- a. Paved Paradise – "The greatness of a city was once measured by how easy it was to park. Tiny parks, as they were once called, now describe the opposite—moonscapes of asphalt, sprawling fields of concrete devoted to storing cars. This abundance of space for parking became so great, it eventually came to dominate the largest portion of urban land."
- b. Next Month – Kari Roberg

E. Review of Minutes – LeeAnn Kruszynski (5 min)

- a. Approval of 1/8/25 regular meeting minutes

Motion to approve minutes (as amended) Lee motions, Kari seconds. All approve.

F. Quarterly Reports – Lee Kaufman; Walt Wojcik (5 min)

- a. Kari suggested to add pumpkin smash and tree walk.

Motion to approve fourth quarter as Report as amended: LeeAnn motions, Mariana seconds, all approve.

G. Updates from Village Staff and Board Representatives – (10 min) Annie Canavan, Evie Slavic

- a. Community Energy Grant – RFQ Status
 - i. Annie made changes to RFQ for more responses and it is now on website.

- ii. LeeAnn mentioned that Broadview also received the grant and that there could be synergy there.
- b. Recruitment – Update
 - i. Will discuss later. There is a fourth candidate who would like to hold off until he retires.

H. Old Business (70 min)

- a. Greenest Region Compact (GRC) and Subcommittee Updates – LeeAnn (20 min)
 - a. Water – Mariana Nicolae/Walt
 - i. Need to meet with Annie and Evie to discuss.
 - b. Municipal Operations – Kari Roberg/Lee
 - i. Met a few weeks ago, covered municipal operations and climate. There were a few recommendations that the Village has moved on.
 - c. Climate – Lee/Kari
 - i. One area is education and outreach, but the other items need more attention.
 - d. Energy – Liz W-Chase/Walt – table

Next steps for subcommittees: Need to list steps and items to send to Village liaisons. Lee suggests reviewing scoring for things that were not considered before. GROW can call a special meeting to review. Deadline to email feedback: Feb 20th. Following the 20th, the input will be aggregated and sent to Liaisons for review and feedback at the March meeting.

Also, we can talk to other towns ecological commissions once GROW steps are drafted (must be commission, not committee.) LaGrange Park has commission; we can check Mayor's Caucus for more information.

- b. SBC Stipend Proposal discussion – LeeAnn (20 min)
 - a. Need to spend funding by April. Of the proposals received, the following were determined to be feasible during the current fiscal year:
 - i. Bike Racks – Annie suggested portable, since those have been requested for Village events.
 - ii. Water purification education – Purchase of an Aquasana, portable, electrically powered system for tap water and educational poster.
 - iii. Native Seed Packets/Native Plants – Would be distributed at July 4th parade and/or at tabling events.
 - iv. How to Compost Education – Purchase a Polder Kitchen Composter and educational storyboard. Liz has photos of her home composting practice that could be used for the poster.
 - b. The following proposals will be deferred for consideration during the upcoming year:
 - i. Community Yoga classes – healthful activity to help people live in a thoughtful way. Nature meditation.
 - ii. Electric Lawn equipment rebate program – consider next FY. Has been successful in Naperville. Anyone receiving a rebate provides a testimonial about electric lawn equipment.
 - iii. SCARCE Municipal consultant – Need to know cost and timeline with SCARCE – use next year.
 - iv. Conservation @ Home presentation – speakers book up quickly.

- v. Conservation @ Home demonstration project - Could select households and reimburse for the certification while providing a stipend for use in their garden. Would need to do it in advance to promote it fairly. Ideally, would select homes that would currently, or close to becoming eligible for certification. The Grassroots Garden Group may be able to help identify homes.
- vi. Composting – 1) take the money to have Village buy 10 compost bins and put them in locations in Westchester or do a giveaway. (SBC has 8 households signed up) 2) Giveaway for households 3) Subsidized composting for 2025 season for 8 households as part of a community ambassadors program

Nikki motions to approve the ranked choice of spending for 1) Two Portable Bike racks (\$1,000), 2) Water purifier plus educational poster (\$300), 3) Kitchen Composter and poster (\$100) 4.) Zone 5 - Native Seed packets/plants (\$600), Walt Seconds. All approve.

- c. Succession Planning – LeeAnn (5 min)
 - a. Deferred
- d. Events
 - i. January event debriefs (5 min)
 - 1. Movie Night (Walt) – 20 people showed up. Suggested Feeding Tomorrow or Common Ground as another Movie. You can request a screening for Common Ground.
 - ii. Upcoming event support needs (10 min)
 - 1. SCARCE Collection Event – Kari said spring, Nikki offered to help.
 - 2. Solar Event will help as well.
- e. Newsletter article ideas/support (10 min)
 - iii. March – International Water Day- Mariana – 3 min.
 - iv. Discussion of newsletter space usage Kari – 5 min.
 - 1. Kari suggested basing article around a green action.
 - v. April Topic(s) Discussion – 2 min.
 - 1. Composting – Liz will send photos and we will promote SBC organic boxes. We all contribute a snippet to the article – GROW.

9. New Business (N/A)

10. Comments (5 min)

- i. Commission Comments
 - 1. Mariana – MWRD – propose to do it in May.
 - 2. Liz – shared that the Westchester BP on Mannheim @ the 290 exit was awarded a NEVI grant for 4 DC fast charging ports. Was orchestrated by corporate BP.
 - 3. LeeAnn – The work that this group is doing is more important than ever, glad to be part of the group.
 - 4. Walt – The Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation is part of the Clean Cities and Communities group. There is an annual an opportunity for the Village to obtain a free membership for a staff member upon submitting information about the Villages

annual petroleum usage and some information about the Village fleet. The free membership includes attendance at their annual meeting and assistance in identifying grant opportunities.

ii. Staff/Board Comments

1. Annie – Did not receive buckthorn grant, our location on frontage road, was not a valuable location, were looking for public access location.

11. 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.*

Alex – Thrilled about Conservation @ Home initiative, excited to see how it turns out.

12. Closed Session

5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) - Meeting to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.

Motion to enter closed session – Lee, Kari Seconds. All approve.

Executive Session: 8:40 PM

Executive Session Ends: 8:42 PM

I. Roll Call

- a. Attending Commissioners: Lee Kaufman, LeeAnn Kruszynski, Mariana Nicolae, Kari Roberg, Nikki Way, Liz W-Chase, Walt Wojcik
- b. Attending Staff Representative: Annie Canavan
- c. Attending Board Member: Evie Slavic
- d. Attending Residents: Mike Doman, Pam Doman, Alex Pergams, Leann Pettis

Lee Motions to adjourn the meeting, Kari 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.

2025 Planning Calendar		
Event	Organizer	Date
Solar Event with CUB	Liz	Spring 2025
Waste Collection with SCARCE	Kari	Spring 2025
Guided Tour of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District	Mariana	Spring 2025
Climate Action Event	Walt	Spring/Summer 2025
Home Electrification (w/ Incentives for Electrical Appliances Article)	Liz	Summer 2025

Newsletter Calendar		
Month	Article Topic	Author
Monthly	Plant Based Recipes	Kari
Monthly	Monthly Green Fact	Walt
January 2025	Improving Your Indoor Environment	
February 2025	Eco-Friendly Valentine's Day	Walt
March 2025	International Water Day	Mariana

2025 GROW Commission Priorities: Education/Engagement, Advisement, Climate Action Plan