



Village of Westchester

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Village Manager
DAWN WUCKI-
ROSSBACH

Village Attorney
MATTHEW WELCH

GROW Ecological Commission Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2023 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase (LWC), Lee Kaufman (LK), Nicole Molinaro (NM), Matt Downs (MD), LeeAnn Kruszynski (LAK), Evie Slavic (ES) VB liaison

Recorder: N. Way

Absent: Steve Crowley (SC) PW liaison

Attending Residents: Gia Marie Benline & Ellen Brewin

1. Call to Order at 6:35 PM

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

- a. Nicole Molinaro spoke passionately about insects, the little creatures that keep the world running
- b. Next Month: 4/6/23 – Lee Kaufman

4. Roll Call

5. **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.

No Public comment

6. Review of Minutes

- a. Approval of 2-2-2023 minutes

Evie: need to add minutes to the document

Lee motions to approve minutes, LeeAnn seconds, all approve

7. Old Business

- a. Board Reports (Nicole)
 - i. 2022 annual report (LeeAnn)

Nicole motions to approve

Lee seconds

All approve

- b. 2023 quarterly report for April (Nicole)

Nicole will work on the Q1 report (January – March)

c. Newsletter – LeeAnn will write it

d. 2023 Planning Calendar (Nicole)

- i. Citizens Utility Board Solar for All Events (*Proviso residents @ 80% of the mean income level for Cook County*) Dates: Sat. 3/25 & Sun. 3/26: 9:00 am – 10:00 am (Liz)

Marketing: Liz would like to reach out to other villages so they can refer residents to the event. Want to be cautious that not too many people show up and have to be turned away. Liz should bring flyers to village hall while the car sticker sales are happening.

LeeAnn will help Saturday, Nicole will help Sunday to help with GROW booth

- ii. Earth Day Event with MWRD speaker Sat. 4/22 / *i-Naturalist Challenge* snippet (Nicole)

Nicole needs to put together a program in order to have it approved by the Village. Nicole to send MWRD brochure to Evie.

GROW would like Earth day activities to be an annual event (all agree).

For 2022, piggyback village clean up for iNaturalist Challenge kick-off?

Liz has contacts for Climate Reality Metro Chicago, free speaker.

ACTION ITEMS: Evie to find out who can contact MWRD to see availability for Green neighborhood Program. Evie to go to the Board. Liz will call her contact and engage.

- iii. Sustainable Landscaping Event with Ryan Anderson of Midwest Grows Green /IPM Institute
Date: Sat. 5/20: 9:00 am – 10:00 am (Nicole)

Request for speaker honorarium and travel not to exceed \$200

Lawn alternatives section is a good basic addition to this presentation, much more attainable. Composting can be in-house by others.

Liz Motions to approve

Matt Seconds

All approve to host this event with the budget

- iv. Native Plant Sale (Nicole)

Look to have a fall event, late August or early September, due to plants needing more water in the summer (a conservation issue).

Possibility Place/Sticks and Stones will have a plant sale that benefits the community.

- v. Cycle Event (Lee) –

Evie had contact reach out to RIDE IL (they have classes, app, and quizzes to be a better cyclist or driver)

Activities: helmet fitting (would need someone who is licensed because of liability), bike maintenance, tire inflation.

- vi. Reusa-Palooza (LeeAnn out August 28 – September 11)

The spring is the Food Pantry garage sale, so that is no good.

- vii. Pumpkin Smash – Saturday November 4

e. Climate Action Plan (Liz)

- i. Discussion prior to vote: 2023 Westchester Climate Action Plan (Liz)

Liz will take the working document and write up asks and documentation for the Village

Tree Board ideas: pay students to help remove trees, replace with native trees? Training municipal staff? Use funding for tree care for the trees that we have already planted. It funds invasive removal.

LeeAnn has volunteered to help with the grant.

Get the baseline for the Greenest Region Compact

**Nicole motions to move forward,
LeeAnn and Matt second
All approve**

- f. Recruitment for Commissioner Vacancies. (Evie)

Nikki Way has applied for the position

**Lee motions to approve
Nicole seconds
All approve motions to approve**

8. Current Fiscal Year Financial Report

- a. Budget: \$1,500 (GROW booth materials and community outreach events)
- b. Expended: \$135 (GROW banner and outside printing of July 4th GROW bookmarks)
- c. Commissioner Donations: \$243 (GROW event shirts, July 4th GROW signage, printing of GROW Solar Chicagoland leaflet event invites)

9. Upcoming Fiscal Year Financial Planning/Budget (Evie)

- a. Upcoming budget cycle process and timeline
- b. Budgetary quotes

10. New Business

- a. Place making in Westchester with MWRD (Lee)

This would be a great target for cleanup, it is an enforcement issue being handled (Evie took care of this).

- b. Society for Ecological Restoration Meeting, Apr. 14th-16th (Nicole)

Nicole will be attending, and encourages other to join her.

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.

Gia Marie Benline: Has a contact (Gears to You) to help Lee for his bike event who can have a mobile bike shop – he is active with Tour De Proviso. She also highlighted the solar event coming up, the episode will air on Monday. Has a lot of contacts with Powering Chicago and the local union, other renewable energy.

12. 2023 Goals: Community Education and Engagement

- a. Commissioner interests/participation

- i. Downs – Waste reduction, restoration, reduction in pesticide usage particularly to lawns
- ii. Kaufman – Alternative transportation, energy, landscaping, land use (placemaking), community engagement for change and improvement
- iii. Kruszynski – Trash/waste, Trees, Flooding
- iv. Molinaro – Pesticide awareness and pollinator habitat. To reduce heat islands and make better use of our commons which includes Park District and Schools. Overall environmental literacy and ecological restoration. Flooding and reviewing FEMAs Community Rating System for Westchester.
- v. Wiseman-Chase – Clean air, Clean energy, Climate Action Plan

13. Adjournment 8:16 PM

Lee motion to adjourn

Liz seconds

All approve

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.