



Village of Westchester

10300 ROOSEVELT ROAD, WESTCHESTER, IL 60154
(708)345-0020 FAX (708)345-2873
WWW.WESTCHESTER-IL.ORG

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NICK STEKER

Village Clerk
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Village Manager
GREG HRIBAL

Village Attorney
MATTHEW WELCH

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting MINUTES

February 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), Diane Scott (DS) Evie Slavic (ES) VB liaison

Recorder: N. Way

Absent: Steve Crowley (SC) PW liaison

Attending Residents: Mike Doman, Leann Pettis, Jim Lewandowski, Julie Orr & Lynn Baker

1. Call to Order at 6:34 PM

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

- a. Leann Pettis – Presented a Bill Nye quote about recycling
- b. Next Month: 3/2/23 – NM volunteered
- c. We thanked Diane for her service as commissioner

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.

- a. Jim L: the amount of salt being put down by the village is “far above the standard”, and wound up with a pile of 4” of salt. He is concerned about the salt affecting the roads, salt creek and other waterways. He’s asking the village to look at ways to reduce the amount of salt used. He referenced the Salt Institute as a resource to understand salt amounts. He suggested their equipment be checked for calibration. (Follow up: Evie will but Jim in touch with Steve to discuss).
- b. Lynn B: wanted to understand if we control school recycling. (We do not).
- c. Mike: What about sand instead of salt? Jim (A): It’s not ideal due to it going into catch basins and other issues.
- d. Discussion about brining proposed by LK: Jim says it’s okay, Evie suggests that we tried it and it wasn’t effective for the village.

6. Review of Minutes

- a. Approval of 1-12-2023 minutes
 - **LAK motions to approve, LK seconds. All approve.**

7. Old Business

- a. Board Reports (Nicole)

- i. 2022 annual report (LeeAnn)
 - 1. Commissioners are to review and respond by Saturday 2/4.
 - 2. GROW will create quarterly reports, and use that to build an annual report.
- ii. 2023 quarterly reports: April, July, October, January'24 (Nicole)
 - 1. Evie suggested that we summarize our work in bullet points for the newsletter. Will be due in April, go in the May newsletter.
- b. 2023 Planning Calendar (Nicole)
 - i. Debrief Nicor Energy Efficiency Events: Sat. 1/21 (28) & Sun. 1/22 (11) (Liz)
 - 1. 28 people on Saturday, 11 on Sunday (it was cold). All efficiency kits were claimed the first day. Numbers on home energy assessments completed and free energy efficiency kits distributed will be provided by Nicor. Links for residents to access free home energy assessments and to order free energy efficiency kits will be posted to the village website.
 - ii. Planning 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)
 - 1. Needs volunteers, would love to have greeters for this event.
 - 2. Qualified Critical Service Providers (nonprofit or public entity), there are areas in Westchester that are considered environmental justice communities. We should do outreach because it could significantly reduce utility bills.
 - 3. Plan is to promote event to Proviso Township, C-4, and Proviso Municipalities as well as the Village Newsletter and Facebook.
 - iii. Cycle Event (Lee)
 - 1. Inspired by Norway where they test kids on bicycle safety. Would like to host an event for kids. NM suggested linking with Westchester Bike Club, and doing an every-other-month or quarterly program that promotes bike safety. Evie suggests doing something with the Police department – they have bikes. (Follow up: Evie will check with WPD about bike event)
 - a. Jim: there are no bike racks at Jewel and other areas. Lee: Elburn Village has a program where businesses buy bike racks and the village will install them.
- c. Climate Action Plan (Liz)
 - i. Discussion: 2023 Westchester Climate Action Plan (Liz)
 - 1. Liz shared a working document of strategies municipalities consider when formulating a climate action plan. Strategies were excerpted from the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' Climate Action Plan.

A second working document contained a subset of strategies containing those of lower cost, lower effort to implement, and higher effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Each item was introduced. Commissioners were asked to look at the lists and come back to discuss the list of select strategies prior to a vote to recommend advancement to Village leadership for consideration and implementation.

One of the action items being proposed to reduce greenhouse gases is a proposed operational practice to replace the use of diesel with B20 biodiesel. This practice is supported by the American Lung Association as it is considered a 'drop in' fuel which reduces greenhouse gas emissions and particulate matter. A discussion followed about how the fuel would be acquired for use if the Village moved to a location without an underground fuel tank. It was shared that the local municipalities of Oak Park and Elmhurst currently use this blend and was suggested that a local gas station may be a possibility.

- d. FEMA Community Rating System (Nicole)
 - i. Natural Lawn Care Solutions/ Dig Right-In Update
 - ii. NM will be tasked with looking into the document and strategizing on water mitigation. Wanted to have a questionnaire on the village website to map areas of concern to target them for awareness of what they can do/ what the village can do. Nicole wants to be prepared so we get more points. (Evie pointed out that the village knows the hot spots because they get complaints. Steve can help with that to ask so we can fine-tune to get info.)
- e. Follow-up: Buckthorn Stewardship (Nicole)
 - i. The area from Wakefield – 31 is part of possum hollow woods – there is a volunteer stewardship event on 2/18. Wolf Road Prairie has stewardship every Saturday at 1pm.
 - ii. Next up: engage with the park district.
- f. “Nature in Westchester” Vehicle Sticker Presentation (Evie)
 - i. Will be presented at 2/14 meeting. Stickers go on sale March 1. The children have signed the rights away to the village website, newsletter, etc...
- g. Recruitment of current and upcoming Commissioner Vacancies. (Evie)
 - i. Need to discuss the document seeking a new Commissioner. Need to decide term limits between 1 – 3 years.
 - ii. Need to get the word out about the vacancies.

8. Current Fiscal Year Financial Report

- a. Budget (\$1,500 for GROW booth materials and community outreach events)
- b. Expended (\$45.00 GROW Banner)
- c. Expense request/reimbursement process (Evie)
- d. Requests for reimbursement totaling \$90.00
 - i. Diane: outside printing of July 4th GROW bookmarks - \$90.00
- e. Accounting for commissioner out-of-pocket expenses/donations totaling \$243.04
 - i. Nicole: GROW event shirts - \$72.00
 - ii. Liz: July 4th GROW signage - \$93.04, outside printing of GROW Solar Chicagoland leaflet event invites \$78.00 = \$171.04

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

- a. Upcoming budget cycle process and timeline
 - i. Bike racks probably don’t belong in the budget. Education items maybe, but they can be in house.
- b. Budgetary quotes

10. New Business

- a. Last Commission meeting send-off for Diane Scott

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.

- e. Public participation: Salt trucks went through 4 times at 3am. Very annoying.

12. 2023 Goals: Community Education and Engagement

a. Commissioner interests/participation

- iii. Downs – Waste reduction, restoration, reduction in pesticide usage particularly to lawns
- iv. Kaufman – Alternative transportation, energy, landscaping, land use (placemaking), community engagement for change and improvement
- v. Kruszynski – Trash/waste, Trees, Flooding
- vi. 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.
- vii. Wiseman-Chase – Clean air, Clean energy, Climate Action Plan
- viii. Vacancy for the seat previously held by Commissioner Jasmine Pope
- ix. Vacancy for the seat to be vacated by Commissioner Diane Scott

Motion to Adjourn: MD motions to Adjourn, LCW seconds. All approve.

13. Adjournment @ 8:29 PM

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.