



Village of Westchester

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

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KARI ROBERG
NIKKI WAY
ELIZABETH WISEMAN-
CHASE
WALTER WOJCIC

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

May 2nd, 2024 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase (LWC), LeeAnn Kruszynski (LAK), Lee Kaufman (LK), Mariana Nicolae (MN), Nikki Way (NW), Walt Wojcik (WW), Kari Roberg (KR)

Staff Representation: Annie Canavan (AC)

Board Representation: Evie Slavic (ES)

Recorder: N Way

Attending Residents: Michael Doman (MD), Pam Doman (PD), Jeanne Keane (JK), Leann Pettis (LP)

1. 6:35 - Call to Order

2. Pledge

3. Roll Call

4. Inspiration

- A. Kari Roberg – Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan social, environmental, and political activist ~ started her journey by planting one tree. Went on to found the Greenbelt Movement (NGO focused on planting trees, conservation, and women's rights) and be the first African woman to win a Nobel Peace Prize. Her words are similar to GROW's mission of education: *"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them."* And, *"The future of the planet concerns all of us, and all of us should do what we can to protect it."*

- B. Next Month: 6/6/24 - LeeAnn Kruszynski

5. Review of Minutes – Nikki Way

- A. Approval of 4-4-24 regular meeting minutes

KR: Item 3 old business – should be target "residents" not "restaurants"

WW motions to approve, KR seconds, all approve.

6. Quarterly Reports

- A. First Quarter – Nikki –
NW: Updating format to be more accessible, will be for approval next meeting.
- B. Second Quarter – Walt Wojcik

7. Old Business

a. 2024 Newsletter Calendar

- i. June Newsletter Submission due 5/10/24 “Electric Vehicles” – Walt
WW: Sent second draft for EVs
- ii. *Proposals:*
 - 1. “A Healthy Climate-Friendly Diet” – Walt
LWC: October
 - 2. “Climate Change – What is a Carbon Footprint Calculator?” – Walt
EV: August for this open.
 - 3. “Reducing your Digital Carbon Footprint” – Kari
KR: Will focus on being conscious of what sending and saving digitally
 - 4. “Summer (or Winter) Travel Tips to Reduce Environmental Impact” – Kari
MN: This should be for July when people are traveling
 - 5. “How to Host Zero Waste Events” – Kari
EV: Connects to Reus-a-palooza for September

b. 2024 Planning Calendar

- i. *Debrief: Arbor Day-*
EV: Planted White Oak. Taught children about how to plant trees, dos and don'ts, kids were engaged.
- ii. *Debrief: Shred Event –*
EV: WW helped, the event was extended half an hour due to interest in electronic recycling (this was the first time it was offered). Well received, perhaps over 350 people. Will need to think about new space and an additional truck for October 19.
LK: What was done with electronics? EV: The County took them along with medication. WW: They said they melt down and look for metals.
- iii. Air Quality Awareness Week – May 6th – 10th – Liz W-Chase
LWC: We have poor air quality in our area, and have an F rating for Ozone from the American Lung Association, and a failing grade for annual particulate matter. Propose that we do a pop-up tabling event at Village Hall with education, EVs.
AC: Approved by Village, use green space by post office/fire department (can't use high-traffic area due to congestion). WW – times? It's going to rain. LWC: Monday due to rain. EV: Will set up meeting, communicate with AC to figure out details.
- iv. Tree Walk and Planting Demo – May 18th – LeeAnn Kruszynski
LAK: Discuss potential dates in the fall? Will need volunteers – Nicole Molinaro and Nikki Way volunteered. AC: Early October? (October 5 is tentative)
- v. 4th of July Parade Ideas – LeeAnn
LAK: WW volunteered to have EVs in parade, a few models of vehicles. KR: make something out of repurposed and upcycled waste, or wildflower seeds. We could encourage other participants to also reduce, reuse, and recycle. Explore ways to reduce waste at the hot dog event.

EV: Should have signs on cars for what they are, there is also a waiver to participate with an EV car.

AC: We told new waste vendor SBC about the parade, participation tentative.

LK: Can we influence disposable materials for hot dog event (Frisbee??)

LAK: Has one pager on sustainable events.

NW: Likes idea for seeds that can be planted in July. EV: would need costs, need more than one quote.

vi. Reuse A Palooza September 21st & 22nd – LeeAnn

LAK: Would like to get registration portal up for June newsletter. Need to vote on \$50 for registration platform for EventBrite.

EWC Motions to approve, LK seconds. All approve.

vii. Proposed: Guided Tour of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District – Mariana

MN: Tour for October or November – good months to go Stickney (less odor).

We should need to advertise. Educational opportunity for residents to learn not to throw things in the water - for example, medicines will stay in the water.

EV: Village would need to contact. Difference between village sponsored, and GROW sponsored event. Need to pick a day and book a slot, etc. Will get more information.

NW: When does water quality come out? Would be good to align. EV: Once per year, it just came out.

WW: Do they publish on PFAs? MN: No, they test every 3 – 5 years, just went to an EPA article.

8. Updates from the Administrative Services Coordinator and Trustee Liaison – Annie Canavan, Evie Slavic

A. SBC municipal waste contract and service transition

AC: Waste Management contract will be terminated June 30, SBC was chosen after RFP process. Will start July 1. They will start delivering new carts in June, WM will pick up carts right behind them. People with extra carts can exchange for \$35 or put sticker on it. Pick up dates will stay the same for households. Will get two bulk items per week, 24 hour notice on special waste items. Garbage and recycling carts will default to 35 gallons (recommended by GROW), also yard waste timelines will increase. There will be an April spring clean-up that will allow for more bulk items. Also, offer senior and disability retrieval services.

NM: Is there a list of hazard materials? AC: a list will go out with materials.

LAK: Curious if there is a recycling tour? Want to know where it goes? AC: Will check.

EWC: Diesel truck? AC: will check. EV: they will be converting compressed natural gas.

EV: Because they are close to us, the amount of time they are on the road burning gas is less.

B. Proposed education in Westchester Schools

EV: What was proposed by GROW would not cost money, putting together packet for next school year. Will plan on introductory meeting to present the plan.

C. Proposed movie showings at Westchester Public Library

EV: Library is under construction, but have list of proposed movies. Will talk about adding GROW logo.

- D. Ability to show movies in Village boardroom
AC: We can show movies at Village hall, if there are prosed dates she can check and formalize.
WW: Bring food? EV: Will need to discuss.
- E. Proposed Concerts in the Park / EV Car Show
AC; Park district will discuss EV Car Show at their meeting, they are doing a two-day event in July. Village manage approved an event. Just needs further approval from rest of committees. Concerts are every Wednesday night in August. Village part is July is 12 and 13 at Community Park.
EV: Checked, no cars on grass, no cars in parking lot for paying customers, will look at where we can put them.
- F. Community calendar/tabling opportunities
AC: Printed out community events, GROW is welcome to join. Juneteenth might be a good time – Victoria asked if GROW would set up table, Party in the Park. Consultant for West Cook Bike Plan will also have a table. Is GROW interested?
LK: Has tent for tabling.
- G. GRC - Greenest Region Compact baseline scoring
AC: In progress, need to involve other departments
EV: The document GROW put together last year based on Chicago area Climate Action plan – verifying that we wanted everything on the document questioned? Can you look and answer via email? Is this still the ask?
- H. CS2 - Community Solar Clearinghouse Solution
AC: Mark at Power Bureau is working on postcard to mail to residents, will share when ready.
AC: Other utility notes – there is a proposed price update to utilities (water, sewer) with 20% increase. Something we are thinking about is a hardship grant program for people (eg: buying high-efficiency toilets and getting a grant). Any ideas?
MN: When people remodel their house, can't find 3.5 gallon, now it's 1.28 – will save water. Faucet – WaterSense saves 25%, showers, etc. If people follow guidelines, can save money. WMRD is raising rates.
EV: Need hints and tips for website to save on utilities. Website is just being created. We are having a "water study" done professionally to maintain water infrastructure.
AC: All info will be presented on May 14, please send for presentation.
- I. Commission / Liaison Communication Protocol
EV: Created document overviewing the Open Meetings Act, and Roberts Rules of Order. There is also an article on writing a newsletter article based on talking with publisher and resident feedback. The purpose of GROW is advisory and to be educational, keep articles positive, supportive. Graphics are eye-catching. Amount – one page word document.
AC: Could do a newsletter version and put full article on website.
NW: Analytics? AC: will ask Dave to have reports. Nicole asked about Buckthorn views – can't see views but can check website. EV: Might do a bi-yearly or quarterly reports on analytics.
EV: Can also do e-news blurbs, Anne doing a great job! (All agree Annie does a great job)

9. New Business –

a. Public EV charging stations – Walt

WW: Do we need an EV charging station is a question that keeps coming up? Says he needs one when he goes a long distance (ie. not in town).

MD (audience): You can charge in Oak Park for free...

EWC: State is trying to get 1M EVs on the road (currently 100k), and get 100k chargers on the road. Best practice might be 1 EV station for every 10 vehicles in the area to avoid problems with lines, stations not charging. A reason EV rental cars aren't popular is because hotels don't have chargers.

EV: Village has looked at it for a while, but question is where would it go, who would maintain it? For profit want a fee... discussion has been to put one in where people spend time, but not a high-traffic area.

MD (audience): Four Points hotel could be a good place...

WW: Apartment complex, etc. Should Westchester put in a charging station?

LK: California decided that the infrastructure is at every corner, light post (EV mentions that light poles belong to State).

AC: Village is part of C4 - that is something that is being discussed.

EWC: Attended event, there's a lot of money out there – \$20M from ComEd available, \$5M for charger installation and rebates for home. From a fleet perspective – electric school buses are impactful, Hinsdale and Huntley are working on that. Oak Park is expanding the number of EVs in their fleet.

b. Savers Papers

EWC: Trying to cancel the Saver paper because they are littering the ground. Can't seem to cancel subscriptions – it's waste, plastic pollution. Would like for the village to cancel? EV: People like it, difficult to opt-out of Village newsletter on a house by house basis. EWC: LaGrange has a person you can email to cancel subscription for Saver. LAK – email Lagrange? LK: Cancelled and hasn't seen it since. MD (audience) – Marianos and advertisers might not like that. People who deliver don't have an agency to choose which houses.

10. Commission Comments

EWC – Attended the One Earth Film Fest and saw two movies to recommend: "Common Ground"; and "Carbon, an Unauthorized biography".

WW: Church has movies – will put in e-newsletter. Contact Walt. Also setting up multiple groups for Climate Action Museum.

NW: Cicadas and small trees? LK: Yes you should protect them if they are small. AC: Put it in the recent e-news.

MN: Water Sustainability and conservation. Broadview has 83 industrial sites – can find the agenda, but not minutes. Asked the right person at the agency, but has not responded. Asks how to get minutes? Last minutes were from 2022. EV: We can ask since Barry and Greg attend meetings.

11. Staff/Liaison Comments

AC: Water quality report is on website.

MN: Annie did a great job writing report.

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 pm, please limit your comments to 3 minutes in length, unless further time is granted by the Commission.*

MD and PD: Went to an event where they did a litter pickup through Environmental Justice Committee, hooked up with Salt Creek Watershed network. Met in Bemis Woods North – put out vests, gave grippers and plastic gloves, bags. Focused on bike trail. Had table set up for kids with animal skulls (good family event), had donuts for breakfast, hot dogs for lunch. Ron Hirsh – VP of Salt Creek Watershed Networking – very interested in working with GROW. Passed card on to AC.

LK – How many people? PD – At least 50

JK – Have a list of water tips from working in Oak Park, will send to MN.

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.

LK motions to approve, LK seconds, all approve. Adjourn at 8:25 PM.

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

Lee Kaufman	School Bicycling Event, 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