



Village of Westchester

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

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2025 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

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 WOJCIC

A. 6:30 - Call to Order

B. Pledge

C. Roll Call

Present: Cmr. Kaufman, Kruszynski, Nicolae, Roberg, Wiseman-Chase, Wojcik

Trustee Slavic; ASC Canavan

Absent: Cmr. Way

D. Inspiration – Mariana Nicolae (MN) acknowledged the passing of President Jimr Walt Wojcik (WW) provided the month's inspiration, calling back to President Cart placement of solar panels on the White House:

"Today, in directly harnessing the power of the sun, we're taking the energy that God gave us, the most renewable energy that we will ever see, and using it to replace our dwindling supplies of fossil fuels." President Jimmy Carter, 1979

a. Next Month – Lee Kaufman (LK)

E. Review of Minutes – Trustee Slavic (5 min)

a. Approval of 12/12/24 regular meeting minutes:

- i. Evie Slavic (ES) will send inspiration to LeeAnn Kruszynski (LAK) to include in final version of December minutes. LK motions to approve December minutes as amended. Kari Roberg (KR) seconds, all approve.

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

LK is missing some of the minutes and articles from the website, Annie Canavan (AC) will look for them. LK will try to send a Q4 draft by Feb meeting.

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

a. Community Energy Grant – RFQ Status

- i. AC- Anticipated to be posted by end of next week 1/17/25

b. Sustainable Purchasing Statement – Update

- i. AC- Part of responsible bidder ordinance overhaul; no timeframe for that process as of now

- c. GRC Subcommittees – Resident Participation and Process
 - i. AC- Residents may participate on subcommittees; what would the structure look like – does the commission want a townhall style or smaller groups with continuity of participation?
 - 1. Liz Wiseman-Chase (EWC)- The 2 commissioners on each GRC topic will define agenda for each meeting of subcommittee and predefine scope of discussion. ES- Are we recruiting volunteers (as is done with events)? Is this more of a townhall? EWC- each meeting would have predefined number of residents depending on the agenda. LAK- combination approach? Initial townhall for people to come and learn, introduce the topic, and provide a mechanism for feedback for as large a group as possible, followed by smaller subcommittee meetings that residents could engage with for their aligned interests MN- agree, townhall could introduce scope of GRC and subcommittees, should be advertised in newsletter; ES- maybe it's an opportunity to have a GROW event to engage more of the community WW- don't re-create the wheel, would like to interview other communities and learn how they have enacted changes, EWC- subcommittees should review preliminary GRC scoring and narrow down recommendations prior to engaging residents ES- Protocol must be followed when engaging with other communities; would require Village Manager approval EWC- start meeting as subcommittee groups of 2 commissioners to evaluate initial scoring and discuss more about topic scopes/processes
- d. Recruitment – Update
 - i. AC put together a flyer; will be posted as soon as it is approved by commission; Letter of Interest (LOI) and resumes will be sent to ES, which will be compiled and passed along to the group for review; then interviews can be called. EWC mentions that the term “advisement” should be included in verbiage per the ordinance. ES- commission needs to review interview questions, could be quick special meeting or closed session. KR- unlikely that body would be ready to interview prior to 2/6; could wait and do exec session during feb meeting. All agree. ES- look at questions and email EWC and LK with questions; discussion will happen at Feb GROW regular meeting (exec session)

H. Old Business (40 min)

- a. GRC Subcommittee Interests (15 min)
 - a. EWC- Climate topic still needs to be covered, LK and KR will take this on. ES- let AC and ES know when subcommittee meetings will be held, they would like to attend if possible. This will enable admin input at the beginning of the process to ensure strategies/recomendations are viable. When each subcommittee has charted a preliminary path forward, they could possibly move forward w gaining input from other communities pending Village Manager approval.
- b. Events
 - i. December event debriefs (5 min) - None
 - ii. Upcoming event support needs (5 min)

1. Climate Movie Night 1/23/25 WW all going according to plan; got some positive feedback on the concept from staff
 2. LK- bicycle rodeo with park district and schools at intermediate school ES_ why did it move from GROW LK- so that the Village doesn't need to commit its resources. Event will have courses to ride through, bike checks and maintenance, rules of the road, etc. ES- needs to be removed from GROW event agenda if it's not a Village event
 3. KR- any updates on waste removal event this spring? (Confusion about who was waiting on who) ES- will check emails
 4. EWC- will be reaching out to CUB for spring solar event, would like them to talk about group buy, IL solar for all, solar farm offers, someone from MC2 to speak or MMC to make more holistic solar event
 5. WW- Climate change update event. KR is certified through Climate Reality Group, is willing to present, there are a range of topics to choose from
- c. Newsletter article ideas/support (5 min)
- iii. February - "Eco-Friendly Valentine's Day" - Walt – 3 min.
 1. WW- sent article and Green Fact for the month ES- would like to see Green Fact separated with box or on top to highlight it, focus on something that people can do something EWC – fact should focus on empowerment WW- will send out a list and cmrs can prioritize and add to the list as commissioners find new facts
 - iv. March
 1. MN -International Water Day is March 22, she will write an article ES- possible Green Fact related to compost or SBC organics program (begins again from April 1- December 31) EWC- associated proclamation for Int'l Water Day? MN will review

9. New Business (20 min)

- i. 2025 Goals – Liz (10 min)
 1. EWC- Should we continue this individual format or identify a few key themes and make it collective; LAK suggests collective and overarching goals to drive home what GROW is working on rather than individual priorities; KR suggests that would also preserve continuity as cmrs step down/change. ES- Education and engagement should remain, KR suggests that CAP may overlap with GRC and EWC suggests that the goals should be Education/Engagement and CAP for now; list will be updated as GRC subcommittees meet and decide upon topic goals
- ii. Use of stipend from SBC (\$2000 per year for the life of SBC contract; fiscal year ends in April) - Liz (10 min)
 1. Previous ideas included engagement materials; rain barrels; native seeds; OneEarth
 - a. EWC – do the funds roll over? AC- needs to be used in the fiscal year; unclear whether goods need to be received or whether being under contract counts as "spending" funds

- b. EWC- Previous ideas included plant seeds as giveaway item for native seed propagation/plant scapes for lawn events; rain barrels and demonstration project paired with water conservation demonstration; similar idea for composting and story board; induction cooktop/air monitor for air quality event
- c. WW- wind turbine for the building, annual funding
- d. LK- bike racks
- e. WW- water filters for Pb in water? ES- Village is already doing that, include cost of staff
- f. EWC- come up with proposals for discussion at Feb meeting ES- send ideas with some context to EWC and LAK to be narrowed down and voted upon in Feb; ES will get clarity on whether goods need to be received by 4/30

10. Comments (5 min)

- i. Commission Comments
 - 1. EWC has December 2024 EV report, 135 EVs in Westchester, over 122,175 in IL. LK asked how many EV stations are in IL EWC- unknown; data came from IL Secretary of State
- ii. Staff/Board Comments
 - 1. Prior to meeting, AC sent notes re: Village compliance efforts on lead in drinking water, MN- link to memo within AC's notes; where are memoranda located on website? AC- they are in the Board meeting agendas/packets and e-news ES- Board meetings and agendas are useful sources of info and can be used to answer questions and help cmrs. Stay informed.

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.*

Resident Alex Silva – Teacher. Suggested that rather than focusing on curriculum and content delivery, GROW's efforts might be most useful in helping schools to access equipment that provides a touchpoint to environmental science. Ex. If there was extra funding in the budget, GROW could purchase an air quality monitor and loan it out to under-resourced schools for their use in science classes.

12. Adjournment-

LAK motions, KR seconds, all approve. Meeting adjourned 8:03PM

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

Proposed Movie Night: “Being the Change”	Walt	January 2025
Solar Event with CUB	Liz	Spring 2025
Waste Collection with SCARCE	Kari	Spring 2025
Bike Safety Event “Safe Streets for All”	Nikki/Lee	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	Spring/Summer 2025

Newsletter Calendar		
Month	Article Topic	Author
Monthly	Plant Based Recipes	Kari
Monthly	Monthly Food Fact Bullet Point	Walt
January 2025	Indoor Air Quality	Liz
February 2025	Eco-Friendly Valentine’s Day	Walt

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

Lee Kaufman	School Bicycling Event, Electric Powered Equipment for Natural Lawn Care
LeeAnn Kruszynski	Urban Forestry, Reusa Palooza, Climate Action
Mariana Nicolae	Water Quality/Sustainability, Composting, Climate Change Awareness
Kari Roberg	Zero Waste, Connection to Nature, Climate Action
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