



Village of Westchester

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Village Attorney
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GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

September 1 2022 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

1. Call to Order

Call to order at 6:34PM.

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

Recorder: Nikki Way (**NW**)

Absent: Steve Crowley PW liaison

Attending Residents: Lenn Pettis (**LP**), Jim Lewandowski (**JL**) Lynn Baker (**LB**), Moses Troyer (**MT**), Steve Drent & Michael Romain

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

- a. Evie: Rachel Carson quote:
- b. “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.” — Rachel Carson, Silent Spring
- c. Next Month: [Nikki Way \(10.6.22\)](#)

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.

6. Review of Minutes

- a. Approval of 8-4-22 minutes
- b. [Nicole proposes two changes from LWC.](#)
- c. [Nicole motions for a vote to defer minutes – LeeAnn approves, Lee seconds](#)

7. Old Business

- a. Yard Sale Update/Final Questions (LeeAnn)
 - i. [No fee or permit required for this event. Will take place on September 17, rain date on September 18. Approx. 95 households will be participating. Logistics – Every Saturday/Sunday email out FAQ to new households. Q - How do we call a rain date? How do we communicate? A - Evie will get in touch with the person. Has been posting on all the free sites. Westchester](#)

free box, Nextdoor, go green Westchester. Everyone participating is encouraged to post about it – including outside of Westchester.

b. *Tree Canopy* (LeeAnn)

- i. Grant Opportunity for Trees <https://chicagorti.org/program/urban-community-forestry-grant/>
- ii. Community engagement (LeeAnn)
- iii. Tree Trimming and Canopy Health (Lee)
- iv. Working with Steve at Public Works on grant opportunity, many opportunities are Inventory related. Evie pointed out that Steve does keep an inventory, but it can be more complete.
- v. In order to be competitive, they are looking for collaborations with community groups – Grassroots Garden Group can issue a letter of support, but is at capacity (including maintaining a village area).
- vi. There is a desire by the State of IL for community engagement around trees in a formal way, as a bonus.
- vii. Tree trimming and canopy health (Evie) – We have a tree trimming program that is accounted for when roads are looked at – including roots that have grown too big – are treated carefully to preserve the tree. There is an engineer who is accountable to ensure that the trees are taken care of.

1. Public question (Jim) – is this put into bid contracts? Would like to see that so they can be obligated to pay and hold them accountable. Evie: It is being done, but not sure if it is in the contract. It would almost have to be. Evie will verify.

c. *Solid Waste Contract Review* (LeeAnn)

- i. Negotiations will start in January. GROW has time to think of what would be wanted in the contract. Evie cautioned that you cannot compare contracts “apples to apples”. **Would like to have baseline thoughts from GROW by end of September.** That way she can see what is being discussed and what would need to be added based on the 7,000+ homes would be happy with.

d. *Climate Action Plan: Endorsement of 2021 Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region* (Liz)

- i. Part of our duties is to make recommendations based on the Mayors Caucus of Climate Action. Need a vote to endorse and approve. Evie will take the documentation to staff and leadership, including legal review, then it will be put to the board for a vote.
- i. Liz motions to approve, and Dianne seconds. All approve the recommendation to Support the Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region.**

VOTE - AYES >

Commissioner Kaufman, Commissioner Kruszyński, Commissioner Scott, Commissioner W-Chase, Commissioner Molinaro, Commissioner Downs

VOTE - NAYS > (None)

Motion Carried Unanimously.

e. *Bee City USA* (Nicole) <https://beecityusa.org/>

- i. A lot of requirements could easily be met. However, the pesticides are a question – We would need to get four separate boards to adopt this including the park district.
- i. Nicole – could we have a subcommittee for the trees and bees that would also help us with the grant opportunity? LeeAnn – the committees need to be separate. There are different

requirements. Steve would need to be leadership, LeeAnn wants to ensure this work is useful for Steve, and not overwhelming.

ii. Nicole requests an amendment to share application documents with the board.

1. Nicole motions to a vote to share the Bee application and documents and add them to the Tree Canopy application and documents to send to the board. All approve.

VOTE - AYES >

Commissioner Kaufman, Commissioner Kruszyński, Commissioner Scott, Commissioner W-Chase, Commissioner Molinaro, Commissioner Downs

VOTE - NAYS > (None)

Motion Carried Unanimously.

8. New Business

a. November Pumpkin Smash Planning (Matt)

i. Waste Management donates the dumpster. Do we put it on village property if it is village sponsored this year? This is a question for Greg. Matt will send an email to Evie with his name. Nicole – likes continuity, the place is the same as last year. Matt wanted to expand it. The first year, Waste Management brought a cherry picker to check them off the top. Matt is writing the article for the October newsletter – 2 weeks to deadline – September 15th! Lee – does the dumpster have to be so big? We missed opportunity because people have their pumpkins out longer. Nicole – we did talk about extending through November 5th. Evie wants to make it an event with a smash! Lee is concerned a lot of people are throwing food in the trash.

i. Opportunity to extend Reuseapalooza into pumpkin-palooza to reuse pumpkins with people who do not cut their pumpkins. Online event? Or work with the Food Pantry to see if people want them.

b. Active Transportation

i. Tour de Proviso, Saturday, 10/1/22 (Diane)

ii. October 1, will center in riverside at 7:45am from Guthrie Park to the zoo, about an hour ride. A way for different suburbs to get featured. Next year is Westchester! You must register by September 14th for a free t-shirt!

1. There is a group that meets Saturdays at the fountain at 9am.

iii. Funding Opportunities for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Friendly Transportation (Liz)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YokpWmA7v_niN_6ha_dgLhGTTVwxd8zPqH_VFNEtT2c/edit?mc_cid=3005845146&mc_eid=UNIQID#gid=0

i. There could be more bike racks around town. There is a google doc linked in the agenda that are opportunities for safe streets.

1. Evie – something to look into if we are hosting Tour de Proviso next year.

2. Jim (Public Question) – going from 31 and Wolf to forest preserves – there is no way to safely get there. Evie – the forest preserve put that pathway in. We can't do something on wolf or 31, but we can do something on our major arteries like Canterbury. Nicole – the county and IDOT are not taking into account bicycle safety. Lee – outside of Chicago, it is legal to ride bike on the sidewalk. Evie would like to see a bike lane in Westchester. Moses (public) would be great to have bike lane on Westchester BLVD that could connect to Hillside and the preserves. Evie – we would love to get a grant, but we would need to look at requirements, including maintenance.

- c. Parkway Seed and Soil (Lee)
 - i. the quality of grass seeding on new construction is bad. When a tree was put in the soil was “like cement”. Evie talked to Steve – some seeding did not take due to the weather. Residents should be watering (but they can’t be required). If areas did not take, they will be going back to reseed it. Jim – the seed used was cheapest quality seed – he looked at the tag on the bag. Linda, a Public commenter mentioned that cement was dumped. Evie reminded her that they are not even starting on her work.
- d. “To be, rather than to seem” carbon credits, and our actions (Lee)
 - i. “To be, rather than to seem” Lee reminded the commission to think about our actions, and if they are impactful or just attractive.
- e. Quarterly Report – (Nicole)
 - i. Will be done eventually.

9. 2022 Goal & Priority: **Community Outreach & Engagement**

- a. Moses (public comment) – the interests and emails of the commissioners should be added to the Village website.
- a. Budget (\$1,500 for GROW booth materials and community outreach events)
- b. Expenditures (\$0)
- c. 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. Scott - Legislative
 - vi. Wiseman-Chase – Clean air, Clean energy, Climate Action Plan

Environmental/Educational Events

- a. Upcoming Events:
 - i. Need to have a buffer against the Tour de Proviso. 11am sale would work best. Goal location is the community church (outside). Nicole the – does the village have tents? Dave has one. Need to promote fall planting so that people know.
 - ii. **Promote flyers at Prairie Fest!**
 - iii. Lee Ann - If we were to do another waste focus – something on the Waste Hierarchy?
 - i. 9/10 @ 10am – Prairie Fest at Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve
 - ii. 9/17 (raindate 9/18): (LeeAnn) – Reusa-Palooza Village Giveaway/Community-Wide Yard Sale sponsored by GROW EC
 - iii. 9/24 – (Nicole) Native Plant Educational Event at Westchester Public Library featuring Dave from “I Love Plants” and Nicole
 - iv. 10/1 – (Nicole) - Native Plant Sale w/ Dave from “I Love Plants
 - v. 10/8 - (Nicole) – Community Shred Event/Medication Takeback sponsored by GROW EC
 - vi. *Update:* (Diane) - House Rep. Ann Williams, Energy & Enviro Committee sponsored by GROW EC
 - vii. 11/? – (Matt) – Pumpkin Smash

b. GROW Participation in Past Events:

- i. 4/23 – Village Shred/Medication TakeBack, MWRD Compost and Tree Giveaway (Kaufman/Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)
- ii. 4/29 – Arbor Day Tree Planting at Westchester Primary School (Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)
- iii. 6/16 – Westchester Public Library West Prairie Ribbon Cutting Event (Molinaro/Scott)
- iv. 7/4 – Village of Westchester - Fourth of July Parade (Downs/Kaufman/Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)
- v. 8/27 & 8/28 - Grow Solar Power Hour by Citizens Utility Board (CUB) and MW Renewable Energy Association (MREA) sponsored by GROW EC (W-Chase/Kruszynski/Kaufman/Molinaro/Scott/Slavic)
4. Solar Event Debrief – 21+ people attended on Saturday, 30 on Sunday (a few people came in halfway through). Half found out through the paper invites that were door to door, the other common way was Facebook and village paper. Lee also referred two neighbors. SOFT Deadline to enroll in GROW Solar Chicagoland is September 30th. Liz would like to understand how many residents have solar panels by obtaining data from the village on how many installations were done over the past 5 years. There are only 2 companies that do low-income solar, Liz would like to bring them...Evie reminded that all companies need to be vetted by the village. Liz mentioned that it is a government funded program and vendors are like vetted by the funding agency – will confirm prior to proceeding. Nicole brought up that more people from Westchester are going to the food pantry. Evie – meetings will change for December due to election day.
5. Inspiration for October – you can send it in. Nikki will do it!

8. Monthly Newsletter (DUE 15th of prior month)

- i. September – (LeeAnn) Reusa-Palooza
- ii. October - (Matt) Pumpkin Smash
- iii. November - (Nicole)Native Plants/Maintenance of trees/plants/trimming/mulching
- iv. December – WM, EPA friend conversation

9. Adjournment

**L. Kaufman motions to Adjourn. M. Downs Seconds. All approve.
Adjourn at 8:02 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. Any one 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.