



Village of Westchester

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

August 4, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

Village President
NICK STEKER

Village Clerk
JENNIFER HALL

Trustees
TRACY JENNINGS
CATHY KURATKO
TRACY MARKEY
ROBERT MORALES
EVELYN SLAVIC

Village Manager
GREG HRIBAL

1. Call to Order

Call to order at 6:31PM.

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:** NM

Absent: Nikki Way, Jasmine Pope, Steve Crowley PW liaison

Residents: LeAnn Pettis (**LP**), Jim Lewandowski (**JL**) & Kris Jacobson (**KJ**)

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

- a. L. W-Chase, "The environment is in us, not outside of us. The trees are our lungs, the rivers our bloodstream. We are all interconnected, and what you do to the environment ultimately you do to yourself." — Ian Somerhalder
- b. Next Month: E. Slavic

4. Roll Call **LK** came in at 6:35

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 6-2-22 minutes
- b. Approval of 7-7-22 minutes

Scott motions to approve both sets minutes of 6-2-22 & 7-7-22 and L. W-Chase seconds

VOTE - AYES >

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

VOTE - NAYS > (None)

Motion Carried Unanimously.

7. New Business

- a. Depave Chicago (Lee) <https://www.depavechicago.org/> LK & ES, DC has seminars and water lab with UoI Extension to focus on urban area of opportunity and bringing resources and building community and gaining buy in from stakeholders. Open areas of community to more users. Roosevelt Road along Drury Lane and tracks and Addison Creek which is flood plain to remove concrete and improve conditions that are deplorable. Some parts village may own? How much? Mostly privately owned. New org to remove pavement and replace with usable functioning properly draining green spaces. NM- Planting near train tracks allows pollinators to catch a cheap ride and pollinate farther. LWC-what are we proposing? LK-good to be aware of whats going on, bridge that crosses creek with garbage and over grown and misused and neglected. If there is one spot this is a space at the top of list. Permitting is what they are helpful with supporting. ES-Some MWRD cleanup happening with a timeline and some collaboration with MWRD and Railroad to include all stakeholders involved with the area identified. Some buildings for sale. Process with code and citation. Some work stoppage. More to come to see if resource we can utilize.
- b. **Vote Yes Campaign for the Cook County Forest Preserve** referendum on Nov. 8th ballot (Diane) <https://www.voteyesforestpreserves.org> To keep up 70 thousand acres in CC they maintain which is 11% of county. .025% or \$20 per year per family with Master Plan to restore acres of trees and water. Lost money in pandemic with triple the usage. Great loss to future generation if we aren't thoughtful in the present time. Can become Ambassador. Tell friends and talk about it..
- c. **Anti-Liter Campaign** (Nicole) <https://wordcc.com/anti-litter-campaign/> Stash your trash in these bags at parks and waterway areas. Winter project for Spring in conjunction with our water district MWRD. Take a state park concept and bring to community level since we are near a watershed. To engage residents to grab a bag on their walk and have clean up be a daily act verses a one time event. ES-Identify areas to clean up and spot light to help keep Westchester liter free. Break up into more days, maybe monthly, and allow to become a good habit and repetitive. Sign hours for volunteer hours. LAK-a competition LK-what if more of a see something say something to identify areas of opportunity. MD-water balloons at Mayfair park were abundant when cleaning up park. LP-if cleanup on Sun could leave bags for PW. ES-less participation on a Sunday or time on Sunday. Is it budgeted? Let NM know if interested
- d. **Bee City USA** (Nicole) <https://beecityusa.org/> Initiative for Invertebrate Conservation by Xerces. Increase habitats, decrease pesticide use and climate change to bring back pollinators and decrease lawns. Similar to tree city with designation. ES-In conjunction with GGG nfp. NM-Form a committee, Assign facilitation to a local government body or non-profit, Designate local government dept. as sponsor, LK-Park District or Library as sponsor, Complete application and draft BeeCity USA resolution and submit. Fee of \$200 (could be in our budget).
Aug 25 10-11a Bring Back Pollinators online event
<https://beecityusa.org/event/bring-back-the-pollinators-get-the-word-out/>
- e. **ComEd Funding Opportunities for Municipal Electrification** (Liz) <https://www.comed.com/News/Pages/NewsReleases/2022-07-06.aspx> 7/1 ComEd **submitted its Beneficial Electrification Plan to the Illinois Commerce Commission. The funding plan, in its current form, would provide a variety of resources to municipalities, including fleet assessment assistance and fleet vehicle rebates. Funding available 2023. MMC also has an opportunity for the Village to participate in their EV readiness cohort for vehicle charging preparation (EV Ready). This may be something to consider in the planning for the new village hall.** Provide how to and planning, no commitment but need to know interest by end of year and village is aware per ES. Always find out the tail cost of grant money for upkeep. MD-used another villages free EV charger and checked an app. LWC-meeting with IBEW contact in future. DS-part of C4 group, can we reach out to see what their EV and EV chargers are at? JL-grid system of other areas a concern, what can our grid handle? How much are those upgrades to utilities? Lightbulb efficiency is really preventing a grid upgrade. Liz to check further.

- f. Funding Opportunities for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Friendly Transportation (Liz) https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YokpWmA7v_niN_6ha_dgLhGTTVwxd8zPqH_VFNEt2c/edit?mc_cid=3005845146&mc_eid=UNIQID#gid=0 - DEFER to another time.

8. Old Business

- a. *Update* - Open Meeting Act Due w/in 90 days - OMA Training, all commissioners completed
- b. *Update* - Village consideration re: participation in Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' Solar Clearinghouse (end date for application 8/31/22) – (Evie) LWC-village opportunity to work with group thru MMC to negotiate discounts, terms and conditions as well as exit clause for community solar program. Village was not able to move forward at this time. Will shift plan to replace with CUB education on Community Solar offers that are out there to save money on utility bills. This is a climate action item. ES-continue with educational opportunities. LP-asked about solar power hours which is purchase of rooftop panel specific and group buy not community solar farm.
- c. *Discussion*: Comprehensive Development Plan (Lee) Cancellation of EDC meeting Monday mornings. ES-lots of talk about old plan and needing a new one which is 8 years old now. LK-engaging with universities? ES-lots of other fires though on the list to be addressed and some stuff happening already to update CDP. NM-Community Heart & Soul grant program an option? Sets up the structure to build out the CDP. ES-need baseline information first including land use on where we are at. Working through process and residents will be involved.
- d. *Update*: IL Lead Service Line Replacement and Water Meter Replacement (Diane) ES-LGP preparing for their survey with the website. Westchester doesn't need to do anything as everything in works. All residents getting new water meters paid by village with federal dollars. Those new meters will do the work for us and complete village survey for us on who has copper vs lead. Village responsibility is water main to buffalo box and buffalo box to home is resident responsibility. 1960s homes should be good since when ordinance changed. NM-ETA on when residents getting meters? ES-residents will be notified should be soon and we will more than meet requirements. In a better spot than realized with some newer homes and older homes updated. DS-Funding the biggest concern, where is coming from? ES-Need to identify scope first before funding. Meet requirements till 2027 and once we have data/inventory we will have a better understanding of how to proceed. DS-Steve's estimate \$37.5 million dollars. ES-Water mains from 1920, 65 miles of water mains, a lot of lead in our water mains. The Referendum only covers 20%, set money aside and budget. DS-Charge on water and sewer bills that should go into fund for infrastructure? ES-Residents will be charged for actual water usage with new meters, that difference from old meter is charged back to village to pay in long term. A two-week process to connect water lines in clean way per regulations and everything tested.
- e. *Discussion*: Waste Management Expectations (Who, What: renewal timeline, recycling change, expectations, yard waste, compost, educational event on recycling, opportunity to pair with GRC scoring?) WM asking to increase to larger recycling bins, every two weeks. ES-Other vendors do not offer customer service, WM does and we have a rep on a weekends available. NM-Not a matter of staying or leaving vendor, really making sure we have options available for all our residents and are mitigating what goes into waste stream. Would love more outreach and educational opportunities to be better residents to WM. Meet a representative. LWC-Would like for them to come out and do an educational event on how to recycle. ES-We have a known with WM, have ideas lets gather them and send to ES. What do we want to see in a contract? Offer for residents to share with ES what we want out of a contract to accommodate each of our needs. Rates need to remain as close to current.

- f. *Continuous Discussion: Tree Canopy Replenishment*
 - Tree Canopy Replenishment - Upcoming Grant Opportunity for Trees (LeeAnn) <https://chicagorti.org/program/urban-community-forestry-grant/> New grant closing 10/7 IDNR for tree inventory and tree management plan. Money and volunteer hours, letters of support from community.
 - Tree City USA – process for Tree Board formation (Nicole) ES-Tree management and trees, \$500,000 village commits to. Pledged to plant 200 trees a year for 10 years. 187 trees planted last year, a third of that a few years ago. Fulfill every requirement of Tree City and submitted. Only planting native trees over last 3-5 years. Tree Board not necessarily needed. NM-Sounds like Steve could use additional resources to care about trees and not do anything different, utilize what we have and add more hands. LK-work with inventories and advise on types of trees and add perspective and encourage certain planting types. ES-Right now a pause though open to a tree board in future. After construction season ends. NM-More to come once fall comes and a good way to engage residents and some with knowledge. JL-Construction and damage of trees from after effects. Sidewalk or curb replacement just chopping roots and no root pruning happening. That effects our trees 3-5 years down if not properly pruned. Village getting these contract to have contingency to protect our trees and not use a backhoe and help tree reestablish to healthy standard, care of tree during construction. Have policy in place to protect trees and proper pruning of trees for long term survival. Roots exposed, disturbed and disease is most susceptible. ES-Lots of great things and knowing more opportunities for healthy tree standard. No maples planted for 5 years. NM-Tree board more accessible for tree health and communication. There is a need for a Tree Board, will touch base in winter to plan.
- f. Quarterly Report – (Nicole)

9. 2022 Goal & Priority: Community Outreach & Engagement

- a. GROW presence at businesses / table set-up / environmental education QR
- b. Budget (\$1,500 for GROW booth materials and community outreach events)
- c. Expenditures (\$0)
- d. Commissioner interests/participation - [Email to LWC or NM](#)
 - i. Downs
 - ii. Kaufman
 - iii. Kruszynski
 - iv. Molinaro
 - v. Scott
 - vi. Wiseman-Chase – Clean Air, Clean Energy, Climate Action Plan, MMC-EC

Environmental/Educational Events

1. Upcoming Events:

- a. 8/11 @ 6pm – Westchester Park District, Public Input Meeting High Ridge Park Master Plan @ High Ridge Park
- b. 8/27 & 8/28 @ 9am – (Liz) - Grow Solar Power Hour by Citizens Utility Board (CUB) and MW Renewable Energy Association (MREA) sponsored by GROW EC - Cannot put in mailbox any flyers, tuck into door or roll into handle. LWC going door-to-door, put on village website and FB.
- c. 9/10 @ 10am – Prairie Fest at Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve

- d. 9/17 (rain date 9/18): (LeeAnn) – Reusa-Palooza Village Giveaway/ Community-Wide Yard Sale sponsored by GROW EC ES-Assistance from Canterbury Sale women. Newsletter a week late.
- e. 9/24 ~~9/10~~ – (Nicole) Native Plant Educational Event at Westchester Public Library featuring Dave from “I Love Plants” and Nicole
- f. 10/1 – (Nicole) - Native Plant Sale (w/MWRD?) Compost and Dave from “I Love Plants
- g. 10/8 - (Evie) – **Village Sponsored (w/MWRD?)** Shred Event/Medication Take back sponsored by GROW EC
- h. *Update:* (Diane) - House Rep. Ann Williams, Energy & Enviro Committee sponsored by GROW EC - Zoom in Sept/Oct to partner with Library to come out and speak about issues and legislation.

2. GROW Participation in Past Events:

- a. Date – Village Shred/Medication TakeBack, MWRD Compost and Tree Giveaway (Kaufman/Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)
- b. Date – Arbor Day Tree Planting at Westchester Primary School (Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)
- c. 6/16 – Westchester Public Library West Prairie Ribbon Cutting Event (Molinaro/Scott)
- d. 7/4 – Village of Westchester - Fourth of July Parade (Downs/Kaufman/ Molinaro/Scott/W-Chase)

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

- ii. August - (Liz) Solar
- iii. September – (LeeAnn) Reusa-Palooza
- iv. October - (Matt) Pumpkin Smash (Nicole)Native Plants/Maintenance of trees/plants/ trimming/mulching
- v. November -
- vi. December –

9. Adjournment

**L. Kaufman motions to Adjourn. M.Downs Seconds. All approve.
Adjourn at 8:18 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.