



Village of Westchester

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

Village President
NICK STEKER

Village Clerk
JENNIFER HALL

Trustees
TRACY JENNINGS
CATHY KURATKO
TRACY MARKEY
ROBERT MORALES
EVELYN SLAVIC

Village Manager
GREG HRIBAL

Village Attorney
MATTHEW WELCH

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

October 6 2022 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

1. Call to Order

Call to order at 6:35PM.

Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase (**LWC**), Lee Kaufman (**LK**), Nicole Molinaro (**NM**), Matt Downs (**MD**), Diane Scott (**DS**), (phone) LeeAnn Kruszynski (**LAK**), and Evie Slavic (**ES**), VB liaison
Recorder: Nikki Way (**NW**)
Absent: Steve Crowley PW liaison

Attending Residents: Leann Pettis (**LP**), Jim Lewandowski (**JL**) Michael Doman & Kris Jacobson

2. Pledge

- a. NM motions, LK seconds to have LAK on the phone today.

3. Inspiration

- a. Inspiration: Nikki shared inspiration from Braiding Sweetgrass. "Does the Earth love you back?"
- b. Next Month: Kris Jacobson (11.3.22)

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.

- a. Michael Doman : Moved from Oak Park, which is lined with trees to create canopy – it's free. Wants to do something about the tree canopy – knows it's expensive – but wants the village to do more.
 - i. Evie – We spend half a million per year on trees. We don't have restaurants or industry like Oak Park for funding. The village will plant trees for free, if you don't care which tree. In the past, Public Works listened to residents who didn't want trees. However, Public Work leadership has changed and now will plant native trees in targeted areas. You can pay for a tree and get the one you want on schedule. Or you can wait and get a tree. Planting will happen for 50/50 in November. The goal is 200 trees planted per year.
 - ii. Nicole – We enacted a tree ordinance to ensure trees get planted in areas that are lacking.
- b. Jim L: North suburbs – you have to get a permit to take down a tree on your property. They use the funds from that to plant new trees. This is a source of revenue. We can do it too.
 - i. We are applying for the tree grant with Morten Arboretum.

6. Review of Minutes

- a. Approval of 8-4-22 & 9-1-22 minutes
- b. LWC approves, MD seconds

VOTE - AYES >

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

VOTE - NAYS > (None)

Motion Carried Unanimously.

7. Old Business

a. Pumpkin Smash – Matt

- i. All set to go! It isn't actually a smash, they want the pumpkins whole. Same place, same time. Idea to have a flyer to pass out during trick or treating.

b. Reusa-Palooza Debrief - LeeAnn

- i. Over 175 households participated in the event. Marketing - put multiple posts on Facebooks, Nextdoor, garage sale aggregator, flyers, handout door to door, food pantry to put in client bags, 4 articles in the newspaper. Survey – mixed results, some areas did well. Would be best to start a sub-committee (with residents, not commissioners) for next year to plan this event. People seems to think that because the village sponsored the event, more resources would be available. Nicole – Likes the 2 day concept, or shorter hours/ earlier morning.

c. Native Plant Sale Debrief – Nicole

- i. Held a plant sale with I Love Native Plants – got more than 300 plants out in the community. There will be more opportunities to talk about native plants this winter.

d. Bee City USA - Evie

- i. Concern over the comprehensive pesticide management because the village does not have say over pesticides at the park district, and schools. Bee City has a lot of requirements that will take a greater effort than “Tree City USA”. Wants to speak with the committee. Evie wants to speak with the staff to understand what we can do/impact before bringing it to the board, because staff will be the ones who implement. Wants to know what the costs will be to implement. Next step is a meeting with the sub-committee.

e. Tour de Provisio – Liz

- i. Westchester cycle group and the GROW commissioners rode. We were in the paper! Westchester will host the bike tour for next year. Need village staff, board, fire, public works, and police on a committee. Need to pick a route so that we can ensure that the streets are in good condition for next year. Dianne – Veterans run route would be a suggestion? We might want to put a post out to have people who bike Westchester to provide input.

f. Waste Management Contract – Evie

- i. Liz put together everyone's comments on the contract, and Evie has let Greg know that recommendations are coming.

g. Tree Canopy - LeeAnn

- i. i. Fall Tree Planting 50/50 program and resident instructions (Diane)
- ii. LeeAnn gave Steve a case of door hangers on tree care for every home that gets a tree. They are planting 90 – 100 trees in November. Diane – question about plows being careful around new trees? LeeAnn mentioned that the grant is due tomorrow EOD.

h. Cook County Forest Preserve – Referendum - Diane

- i. Uplifting this legislation coming to vote - First raise since they were created – it is a small percentage. It is supported by Chicago Sun-Times and Tribune.
- i. Board Report – Nicole/Liz
 - i. Have a target date of October 15th to have a draft out highlighting events, newsletters, future plans, and stress education activities.

8. New Business

- a. Community Solar (Farm Subscription) Event by CUB – Liz

This event would provide an overview of CUBs analysis of the various options available to individuals that wish to individually subscribe to a solar farm. Sponsored by GROW sometime in January– need to clear it with Greg. Nicole mentioned that her solar contact said that Westchester showed up to the last event. The window for our community to participate in the Metropolitan’s Mayor Caucus’ Community Solar Clearinghouse Solution CS² was recently extended to 12/31/22. This would also allow individuals to ‘opt-in’ to a solar subscription and may be something to consider, as well. Would require an application to be completed by the Village.

- b. Low-Income Solar Panels for All – Liz
 - i. There is a state-managed fund through the IL Power Agency – currently there are 2 vendors in our area that are state approved to accept applications from low-income residents to get solar panels. There are income requirements that must be met. Illinois Solar for All – consider doing something with Proviso Township.
- c. Vehicle Sticker Contest – Diane
 - i. Nature is less controversial than what we have had for the past few years. We have to change the sticker every year. If this is something that GROW would like to recommend.

1. Nicole motions to investigate a nature-themed car sticker. All approve.

- d. GROW Banner – Diane
 - i. Diane would like to investigate pricing and designs.
- e. Resident T-shirt requests
 - i. Will look into it in the future.
- f. 2023 Dates – Nicole
 - i. Nicole will email them out, topic for next week.
- g. Village Shred Event – Evie
 - i. Need volunteers, pictures to promote GROW
- h. November Newsletter
 - i. Due on the 15th – Trees and how they benefit the parkway. The value of a tree. Leave the leaves? LeeAnn will write trees, Nicole will write about Leave the leaves, Evie will post about how the Village is building the canopy.
- i. Tree Pruning – Evie
 - i. Root pruning is in the contracts, though they have found trees that are planted right on top of the buffalo box. Now and going forward the village is careful about planting trees.

9. 2022 Goal & Priority: Community Outreach & Engagement

- 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 FEMA's Community Rating System for Westchester.
 - v. Scott - Legislative
 - vi. Wiseman-Chase – Clean air, Clean energy, Climate Action Plan

Environmental/Educational Events

b. Upcoming Events:

- v. 10/8 - (Evie) – Community Shred Event/Medication Takeback sponsored by Village of Westchester
- vi. 11/5 – (Matt) – Pumpkin Smash sponsored by GROW EC
- vii. 1/? – (Liz) - Solar in the Community (SolarFarm Subscription) Presentation w/ Marina Minic from CUB co-hosted by GROW EC

c. 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)
- ii. 9/17 - Reusa-Palooza Village Giveaway/Community-Wide Yard Sale sponsored by GROW EC – (Kruszynski/Slavic/Molinaro/Kaufman/Downs)
- iii. 9/24 – Native Plant Educational Event at Westchester Public Library featuring Dave from “I Love Plants” (Molinaro, W-Chase)
- iv. 10/1 – Native Plant Sale at Westchester Community Church (Molinaro)

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

- i. October - (Matt) Pumpkin Smash
- ii. November - (Nicole/LeeAnn)Native Plants/Maintenance of trees/plants
- iii. December –

9. Adjournment

**N. Molinaro motions to Adjourn. L. Kaufman Seconds. All approve.
Adjourn at 8:06 PM.**

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.