



# Village of Westchester

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**Village President**  
NICK STEKER

**Village Clerk**  
JENNIFER HALL

**Trustees**  
TRACY JENNINGS  
CATHY KURATKO  
TRACY MARKEY  
ROBERT MORALES  
EVELYN SLAVIC

**Village Manager**  
DAWN WUCKI-ROSSBACH

**Village Attorney**  
MATTHEW WELCH

## GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting Meeting Minutes

**April 6, 2023 @ 6:30pm**

**Village Hall Board Room**

**Attending Commissioners:** Liz Wiseman-Chase (LWC), Lee Kaufman (LK), Nicole Molinaro (NM), Matt Downs (MD), LeeAnn Kruszynski (LAK), Nikki Way (NW)

**Village Representation:** Evie Slavic (ES) VB liaison, Steve Crowley (SC) PW liaison & Dawn Wucki-Rossbach (DWR) Village Manager

**Recorder:** N. Way

**Absent:** N/A

**Attending Residents:** Jim Lewandowski, Leann Pettis, Ryan Wright, Gia Marie Benline, Loretta Merrill & Kimberly Dobrescu

### 1. Call to Order 6:32PM

### 2. Pledge

### 3. Inspiration

- a. Lee Kaufman – spoke to energy consumption
- b. Next Month: 5/4/23 – LAK volunteered

### 4. Roll Call - Quorum Established, 6 commissioners present - 1 open seat

### 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.

**Jim:** Spoke to the origins of “Earth Day” and bipartisan support of the EPA through Gaylord Nelson.

“When it is asked how much it will cost to protect the environment, one more question should be asked; how much will it cost our civilization if we do not?” Gaylord Nelson

**Ryan Wright:** Would like to become a GROW commissioner. Spoke about starting a conservation venture crew for 14 – 20-year-olds to give them something to do that supports the ecological revolution including invasive species removal.

**Gia:** Promoted an event for a recycled fashion show in neighboring Berwyn

### 6. Review of Minutes

- a. Approval of 3-2-2023 minutes

**LAK motions to approve, LK seconds, all approve.**

### 7. Old Business

- a. 2023 quarterly board report for April (Nicole)
  - i. GROW would like to keep a quarterly report, which will fold into an annual report. Nicole will take the lead on compiling and forwarding the report to the commission and village.

b. 2023 Planning Calendar (Nicole)

- i. *Debrief:* Citizens Utility Board “Illinois Solar for All” - 3/25 & 3/26 (Liz)
  1. Had 7 and 6 participants each day. Most learned about it through GROW members as well as the township of Proviso. AV and systems worked well. LWC will write up instructions for future meetings. The event didn’t make it in the village newsletter, which may be why turnout was low. They will have another Grow Solar event (more limited number of events this year) and we can host again but need to ensure good attendance and work with other municipalities. Liz suggests live streaming through the library system so we can reach other residents.
    - a. **ACTION ITEMS: Look for a local space for this Grow Solar event that can be central for all Proviso.**
- ii. Earth Month Event: “Westchester Shred to Recycle”, Sat. 4/29, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, 2305 Enterprise Drive, (for info/to volunteer: Lynn Hanley at [lhale@westchester-il.org](mailto:lhale@westchester-il.org)) will include: (Evie)
  1. Free Shredding of personal and financial documents
  2. Cook County Sheriff Medication Take Back Program
  3. MWRD Educational Materials, Giveaways of Tree Saplings and Milkweed Seeds, and Rain barrel Raffle
    - a. We could further this effort by encouraging people to work with their neighbors to compile shredding documents. **Will include Westchester Food Pantry collection as they are in need of donations.**
- iii. “Westchester Spring CleanUp” (Evie), Sat. 5/13, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm ,Westchester Village Hall, 10300 Roosevelt Road, (Questions contact Village Hall: 708-345-0020)
  1. Need volunteers to sign up, won’t know what location until 2 weeks out. We meet at the village hall and then break out into groups to clean up areas.
  2. 5/13 is also the Grassroots Garden sale (Also children’s bike safety event, see below)
- iv. Arbor Day – Friday April 28th at Westchester Middle School, 350 kids, no time yet - Steve is working with Diane for the trees and guides. LAK will look to see if she can get more tags for the trees. Tree planted will be chinkapin oak on Kent side of school.
- v. Sustainable Landscaping Event with Ryan Anderson of Midwest Grows Green/IPM Institute  
Date: Sat. 5/20: 9:00 am – 10:00 am (Nicole)
  1. Nicole will add the event to the newsletter. Nicole will work with Liz to figure out how to print materials through the village.
- vi. Illinois Food Scrap Coalition – would like the library to engage with this event, LK did reach out but has not heard back.
- vii. Cycle Event (Lee) – Evening of May 10, will have adult class (2 hours), half-hour ride, then class. Saturday May 13 – children’s bike class (skills & drills), parents will be asked to participate, there will be two classes, need two instructors, and the police department is splitting the cost with us.
  1. Evie working on sign-up and marketing materials.
- viii. Reusa Palooza (LeeAnn)
  1. Planning committee call on Monday with 12 volunteers. Would like to expand the event to up-cycling class, and repair clinic. Village will make generic signs that we can use each year.

2. Dates: still setting on the dates but looking at late September, likely September 23/24.

ix. Climate Reality Speaker (Liz)

1. Kent Taylor, motivated Liz to take action on climate change. He asks for a donation to Climate Reality Metro Chicago. It is a visual presentation, it might not be the best suited for the village hall, but maybe the Library. Looking for June or July.

c. Climate Action Plan (Liz)

i. IPCC Synthesis Report

1. The press release from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was shared, with the following excerpts being highlighted"
  - a. "Every increment of warming results in rapidly escalating hazards. More intense heatwaves, heavier rainfall and other weather extremes further increase risks for human health and ecosystems. In every region, people are dying from extreme heat. Climate-driven food and water insecurity is expected to increase with increased warming. When risks combine with other adverse events, such as pandemics or conflicts, they become more difficult to manage."
  - b. "In this decade, accelerated action to adapt to climate change is essential to close the gap between existing adaptation and what is needed. Meanwhile, keeping warming to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels requires deep, rapid and sustained greenhouse gas emission reductions in all sectors. Emissions should be decreasing now and will need to be cut by almost half by 2030, if warming is to be limited to 1.5 degrees C of global warming."
2. According to the CMAP 2019 greenhouse gas emissions report for our region, over the past 9 years, we have only achieved a reduction of 1% per year. A reduction of 5% per year is needed to reach our 2030 goal.

ii. Community Solar Clearinghouse Solution (CS2)

1. Dawn just received the email about the CS2 recommendation and will check into it. She offered that she will also explore whether there may be an opportunity for the village to aggregate energy services.

d. Tree Canopy (LeeAnn)

- i. Parkway Trees: grant application and Arbnet accreditation
- ii. Scoped out an additional 70 parkway trees and gator bags to help public works deal with extra capacity. Resident engagement is part of the application, we will look to do a tree walk in summer 2024. Have residents observe tree planting (dos/don'ts). It is a competitive grant and \$100k over in expected funding.
- iii. Arbnet accreditation – no cost to become accredited, you can join a network of other nontraditional arboretum.
- iv. We will look to get a Tree City Growth award due to the efforts that are already in place.

e. Bee City USA (Nicole)

- i. Resolution: Nicole would like to present a packet to Village Board for Bee City USA status to compliment our efforts in increasing tree canopy. Need more than just the beans in a 7 layer dip and the same is true in our environment. Promote more layers beyond Overstory layer such as Understory, Shrub, Herbaceous, Root, Ground Cover & Vine.
- ii. Proposal for "no mow" period: no mow until mothers' day, would need an ordinance or zoning code. Dawn is researching.

1. Lee: Also we could look at changing the ordinance for the fall, when people are mowing. Evie would like for us to spread more info on “leave the leaves”
2. It would be costs savings for people
3. NEWSLETTER IDEA: What to do with your grass, mowing height, to tie into MGG event in May.

*f.* Roosevelt Road and Addison Creek Dumping update (Lee)

- i. Dawn had a convo with Jim, person was cited, did not show up, will consult what happens next.

## 8. Current Fiscal Year Financial Report

- a. Budget: \$1,500 (GROW booth materials and community outreach events)
- b. Expended: \$135 (GROW banner and outside printing of July 4<sup>th</sup> GROW bookmarks)
- c. Commissioner Donations: \$243 (GROW event shirts, July 4<sup>th</sup> GROW signage, printing of GROW Solar Chicagoland leaflet event invites)
- d. Accrual: \$170 (Midwest Grows Green Speaker honorarium)

## 9. New Business

*a.* Policy/Process (Evie)

- i. Work with Evie for requests, Dawn suggests at May meeting to put together a calendar from May – April 2023 to present to the board, so we can just plan from there.
- ii. Dawn would like to set up so that we have the hyperlink to attachments included in agenda which will follow VB process.

*b.* Disposition of yard waste collected (Lee)

- i. Yard waste collected by WM is composted at facility in Lemont.

*c.* Meeting Minutes (Nicole)

- i. We will use google docs to compile minutes, and then transfer to a word document.

*b.* GROW Ordinance – Amend to include only residents can be on GROW

- i. Motion to text amendment 2.3.09.020 membership to remove language regarding “or person whose business is carried....”

**1. LAK motions to approve, LK Seconds, all approve.**

- c.* Native Plant Sale – I Love Native Plants - Invite Dave to have booth at Tour de Proviso, Prairie Fest, other?

## 10. 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.

**Leann Pettis** – Park District is keeping pool open through September 16 and 17<sup>th</sup>, would push for Reusa-Palooza for the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Medication take-back program, there were pills sticking out, only cook county has a bin, the bin was full. Westchester clean up – dollar general has lots of trash, being thrown down the boulevard... want to know what is expected? Promote what people will get to help out.

**Evie:** We provide the bags, gloves, food, etc. (report needles, etc.) Working on more regular intergovernmental collaborations between village, park, library and commissions/boards.

## 11. 2023 Goals: Community Education and Engagement

- a.* Commissioner interests/participation

- ii. Downs – Waste reduction, restoration, reduction in pesticide usage particularly to lawns
- iii. Kaufman – Alternative transportation, energy, landscaping, land use (placemaking), community engagement for change and improvement
- iv. Kruszynski – Trash/waste, Trees, Flooding
- v. 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.
- vi. Way – Marketing, Education for green actions, position Westchester as a village that takes ecology, murals, etc.
- vii. Wiseman-Chase – Clean air, Clean energy, Climate Action Plan

## **12. Adjournment 8:37 pm**

**LAK motions to adjourn, MD seconds, all approve, Lee absent.**

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.