



Village of Westchester

GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

May 12, 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
PAUL NOSEK

1. Call to Order

Call to order at 6:41PM.

Commissioners: Lee Kaufman, Nicole Molinaro, Diane Scott (*Phone*), LeeAnn Kruszynski, Evie Slavic (VB)

Recorder: N. Molinaro (Absent: Nikki Way, Steve Crowley (PW), Matt Downs, Liz Wiseman-Chase, Jasmine Pope)

Residents: Kris Jacobson (Library)

2. Pledge

3. Inspiration

a. L. Kaufman

What If? A poem by Ganga White
What if our religion was each other? If our practice was our life? If prayer was our words? What if the Temple was the Earth? If forests were our church? If holy water—the rivers, lakes and oceans? What if meditation was our relationships? If the Teacher was life? If wisdom was self-knowledge? If love was the center of our being

b. Next Month: L. Kruszynski

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 4-7-22 minutes Motion to discuss edit from LeeAnn - edit approved

LeeAnn motions to approve the minutes, Lee seconds of 4-7-22. Tree distributions on private through CRTI, and MWRD trees, milkweed and EQ compost. Kris - Library 50 milkweed plug and trees from MWRD with public giveaways Thursday, June 16th @ 12:30pm, Prairie Rising. It's a two-way conversation in ecology.

VOTE - AYES >

Commissioner Kaufman
Commissioner Kruszyński
Commissioner Scott
Commissioner Molinaro

VOTE - NAYS > (None)

Absent - Downs, W-Chase, Pope

Motion Carried Unanimously.

7. New Business

a. LeeAnn - Community-Wide Yard Sale for Fall 2022

Brookfield concerned residents putting on community wide yard sale and giveaway day. Interested houses put on map, on day of put on lawn to sell or giveaway. Attendees follow map and go around to different sales they may need or want in effort to reduce waste in landfills, repurpose, keep things in use, reduce overall footprint, enable neighbors to help neighbors, declutter my house. Replicate in FALL to avoid June for Westchester Food Pantry. Register and get permit, traffic, a coordinated village event. Pick a good day. Get map out in paper and get paper maps available in businesses and centralized location. Maps can be found on day of event. Maps in Little Free Libraries. QR codes and have map electronically. See how Brookfield does and find detailed information on how it went, they have 200 households. Advertisement on Facebook groups. Google Form and Google Map. Don't reinvent the wheel. Traffic issues and the concern with number of cars. Can we conserve? Biking map too. How do you bring stuff home on a bike? Street repair concerns and the construction detours or residents cannot. Can we section off into zone to reduce traffic? Canterbury meld into big yard sale by garbage zone and month long sale? Connect with Police Chief, Evie. Traffic by Canterbury Sale can get rough. Or spread out between the 4 garbage zones. Underutilized parking lots could be used maybe, can be a liability. By zones in entire month, sounds like a great idea, Diane. Evie, if in a purging, cleaning, recycling, repurposing, if advertising done then they won't have another sale and sold a lot more than if alone. See best way to do it with least impact and consideration for construction.

b. Diane - Discussion: House State Rep. Ann Williams, Head of Energy & Environmental Committee Nick mentioned connection and to have Ann to speak with us, speak with entire community and have energy conversation. Spoke with Liz and get ball rolling. Starting place for public engagement. Could have additional speakers in government, in Broadview or MWRD. Attract people interested in state government, environment and legislation and hold at village hall or library. 70-80 in board room. Outdoor event, could be issue with weather. Also, sound and people hearing in group that large. Nicole has local resource for outdoor amplification/mic at events if needed. No timing yet and unsure of availability of Ann with reelection. No cost events and an intro into environment. Diane to follow-up with Liz and Nick.

c. Nicole - *Recommendation*: Endorsing the 2021 Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region - see attached "Climate Action Plan Template Resolution for Municipalities"

NEED MORE INFO - Standard municipal template village commitment to targets in line with GRC and overall GROW air, land and water goals. Unite and align with local towns like Broadview who was Advisor on MMC GRC and starting C4 initiative more to discuss next meeting in June. LeeAnn and Diane support. Evie, need backup information to discuss on COW and attorney to review and all departments align. Are there costs? Put together a packet. Lee, to set a baseline and no traction as a result of situation with village mgr. Are there other resources? Not really with all the additional hats village employees are wearing right now. Looking for permissions and specifics with departments with availability. Is it Liz, Evie and Nicole to meet and try and bust through baseline? Some departments more busy right now and may not be accessible. GRC checklist (baseline), okay to have slow start as village does better than most and we have broad goal of community engagement. Pivot and try another strategy on how we get information. Pick a piece of the GRC and have each GROW member start baseline work. Preliminary review and keep big picture. Liz very involved and have input in organizing and prioritizing, Diane. Maybe a Katerina conversation from Broadview in understanding a bit more along with C4? Lee may be able to assist in connecting with other towns. Defer to Liz on data packet and gather the information.

d. DEFER - Liz - Report on 2022 Green Drives Conference

e. DEFER - *Discussion*: Police Dept. and Planned Replacement <https://www.wxyz.com/news/michigan-police-departments-consider-electric-vehicles-as-gas-prices-rise>

f. *Discussion*: Healthy Waterways w/MWRD

Environmental Events - In speaking with MWRD Commissioner wants to be more forward facing in community with events. With creek in our village we should be more engaged with MWRD and having residents be knowledgeable on what MWRD does and why we are a permit village and how that protects the residents in flooding concerns. Capable of stopping projects not up to par with waterway health. Why it is important and how to stop going back to old flood plain. Homes were removed from Flood Zone as a result of MWRD projects and reservoir

and pumps jobs. Must include EDUCATION! Include in newsletter and on village website. Educational pamphlets available from MWRD? Community outreach program for classroom, business owner meetings or events to educate on how and why they protect and manage our waterways and staff educational booths or materials and tours. Have a stand alone or include with State Rep Ann, maybe, though MWRD can have a better stand alone and broad scope with most concerned about flooding. More environmental events are needed, monthly basis. Library has monthly environmental events on YouTube. Stream about 50 and lots of views later on so people are watching. Video event and put on village website to reach more after the day of event. Nicole to reach out to MWRD, pause on Ann date maybe? Engage MWRD if no traction on Ann or another person to speak with elections upcoming. Lydia Scott CRTI maybe and have her as speaker with MWRD which is involved with FPDCC and Illinois Extension.

g. Nicole - 2021 Tree City USA Proclamation / School Event 4/29

i. (<https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/documents/proclamation.pdf>)

Tree City USA Proclamation approved although was a lag in filing paperwork in last year or two as a result of pandemic. Annual filing of paperwork and qualification required. Wonderful event, kids loved it and more with schools in future. Look through below info to engage schools in future before new school start.

h. *Discussion*: "Conservation at Home" Val Kehoe

i. <https://fpdcc.com/nature/conservationathome/>

Works with community and provide conservation at home and bring awareness to what we can do at home. Bring support to the collective when bringing new ideas like this program. Change the mindset and get off repeat of past. Do what nature does. 8 inches, mow ordinance. Let it grow too long, loose ability to mulch.

Standard template for newsletter conversation for future newsletters. Can we make cover? Uniform and standard tag lines. State GROW for acknowledgement. Formatted to fit and controlled by printer. Melissa does send out to complete layout and that may be at their discretion with communication gaps. Let Melissa know if a certain format is needed if available. Diane will format according to this conversation for upcoming newsletter for uniformity. Add Values Tree on page each month for uniform branding? Extra page for Library Prairie event, Kris. Kris to send publisher template they use and Nicole to forward to group. More than just an article, need events for better engagement.

ii. **School Application available** <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=23073>

iii. **Field Trips**: <https://www.theconservationfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2022-MDF-Programs.pdf>

iv. **School Project** - <https://illinoisgreenalliance.org/illinois-green-schools-project/> "The Illinois Green Schools Project brings together students, teachers, and staff to collaborate in a year-long project-based challenge to devise and implement creative no-to low-cost sustainable practices." Late summer is when it looks like the application opens back up again.

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

i. June - (Diane) Native Gardening & Prairie Plants (Library Ribbon Cutting) - Due 5/15

ii. July - (Lee/Nicole) Conservation @ Home article

User friendly - how we market it. Tale of two residences, certify homes or go through process. This is how it was, a before and after of conservation. Report back experiences and include in newsletter, have residents email experience and what ecological practice. Tip of the month and success stories in future newsletter.

8. Old Business

a. *Status* - Open Meeting Act - OMA Training, all commissioners

i. Goal: to do training by next Grow Meeting.

ii. **Send email, 90 day requirement to be completed**

b. LeeAnn/Matt - Facebook Page / Email Blasts

c. Special Meetings - 2 day notice

d. Brainstorming Sub-committees:

e. GROW ordinance roles and responsibilities

- i. Our purpose to advise and educate the community to improve the environment in the community and surrounding communities.
- f. 2022 Goal & Priority: **Community Outreach & Engagement**
 - i. *Specific priorities more clear once GRC graded.*
 - ii. Research and education our individual passions, culminating in a community outreach event/ educational program/presentation or Zoom to engage on topic
 - iii. *Discussion:* Survey to identify community interests
 - iv. *Discussion:* Possible small quick-win projects
- g. Matt - Citizens for Conservation - Native Plants for Seeds
 - i. QR Code + URL to the link for application in the Westchester Newsletter
- h. *Discussion:* Tree Canopy Replenishment
 - i. **Education on trees and natives, donut, not volcano**
 - ii. IDNR – grants to hire for a tree inventory, and other opportunities for planting funding.
 - 1. Canopy Counts – (<https://chicagorti.org/program/canopy-counts/>)
(App: <https://www.curio.xyz/about>)
 - 2. <https://www.itreetools.org/>
 - 3. <https://treeequityscore.org>
 - iii. Door hangers
 - iv. Continuum of iNaturalist Event “Everyday Is A Nature Day” - WRP, Park District, Library, Public Works, Resources & Community
- i. Waste Management Expectations
 - i. Evie - Copy of Contract? - Too soon, on radar.
- j. Budgeted Items
 - i. #1 – Obtain scoring of MMC-GRC from the Village
 - ii. #2 – 1 hour per month with Scott Russell or designee Steve Crowley
 - iii. #3 — \$1,500 for GROW booth materials at community outreach events.
 - iv. #4 – T-shirts for commission members
 - v. Additional funding opportunities:
 - 1. Proviso Township Services: Lorenzo B. Webber, Director of Youth Services”
(<https://provisotownship.com/services/youth-services/>)
- k. Quarterly Report - Due April
 - i. See attached **“forthcoming”**
- l. Call for Agenda Items 7 - 10 days prior to next meeting – All

9. Information Only

10. Adjournment

Lee motions to Adjourn. LeeAnn Seconds. All approve.

Adjourn at 8:01 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.