



# Village of Westchester

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NIKKI WAY  
ELIZABETH WISEMAN-  
CHASE  
WALTER WOJCIK

## GROW Ecological Commission Regular Meeting

June 6, 2024 @ 6:30pm

Village Hall Board Room

Attending Commissioners: Liz Wiseman-Chase (LWC), LeeAnn Kruszynski (LAK), Lee Kaufman (LK), Mariana Nicolae (MN), Kari Roberg (KR), Walt Wojcik (WW), (Absent: Nikki Way (NW))

Attending Staff Representative: Annie Canavan (AC)

Attending Board Representative: Evie Slavic (ES)

Attending Residents: Leann Pettis (LP), Bill Burns (BB), Nicole Molinaro (NM)

### 1. 6:35 pm - Call to Order

### 2. Pledge

### 3. Roll Call – All present except NW

**A. Inspiration** LeeAnn Kruszynski presented Mary Meade's quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

**B.** Next Month: 7/11/24 inspiration will be provided by MN

### 4. Review of Minutes – Some corrections and misspellings identified by LWC, EV, and MN. LWC will correct draft of minutes and, upon those corrections being made, LK motioned to approve with corrections, and KR seconded motion with approval by all commissioners.

### 5. Quarterly Reports -

**A.** First Quarter – LWC identified few areas that needed corrections. Upon those corrections, the modified Quarterly Report had a motion to approve with corrections by MN, seconded by LK, with approval by all commissioners.

**B.** Second Quarter – WW will create 2<sup>nd</sup> report.

### 6. Old Business

#### A. 2024 Newsletter Calendar

- i. June's newspaper article on Electric Vehicles by WW is available.

- ii. The article for July's newspaper on "Summer Travel" by KR was submitted as a draft to GROW. MN will send KR her comments via e-mail. LK liked section on walking and biking. ES recommended a bio on KR but be mindful of space. AC comments that all newspaper articles also located in GROW web site, but not in weekly e-news. KR proposed a future article on digital carbon footprint as there was no space in WW's August's article on using a carbon footprint calculator.
- iii. LAK proposed providing info (blurb/ad) on new waste pick up service and how to dispose of yard waste/organic waste. Discussion between GROW, ES and AC on clarification of how to dispose of organic (compostable) waste in new black carts with white tags affixed – differ from black carts contents that are headed for landfill. AC agrees a snippet on the organics program can be included.
- iv. Water Conservation tips by MN has been sent out to GROW Commissioners for approval. Per ES, because of increased water bill, these tips on saving water can offset higher cost of water used. ES and AC plan to include tips with residents' water bills. LWC agreed with info/tips to be sent to all residents
- v. August Newsletter topic: "Carbon Calculator" by WW. A recent version of article sent e-mailed to all GROW Commissioners. Because article somewhat long, WW to re-read and make corrections. Due date is July 10. Because article is long, KR will write a future article on digital carbon footprint.

#### B. 2024 Planning Calendar

- vi. *Debrief:* Air Quality Awareness Week – LWC, MN, WW manned a table/tent in front of Roosevelt Fire Station on May 6<sup>th</sup> am and 10<sup>th</sup> am. Passersby were provided info on Westchester air quality and on EVs. LK brought in his electric lawn mower and hedge trimmer. WW had on display his EV – Model Y.
- vii. *Debrief:* No Mow til Mother's Day – ES sent out article on "Slow Mow Summer" and discussed whether there could be a change in plan for spring '25. NM commented that she and GROW in early '25 could provide residents with up dated info for next spring. KR mentioned Sierra Club had info. MN agreed that a decision in early '25 on how to mow lawns next spring was a good idea. LK commented that having less lawn and plant more perennials is another option.
- viii. Juneteenth Table Event – LWC proposed a table-chairs/tent (set-up provided by Village) on Sat June 22<sup>nd</sup> event. MN will be at table with info on Water Conservation from 11am to 1pm. WW will man table from 1-4pm and hand out info on EVs. WW will contact other EV owners if they could bring their EV and WW to bring in Model Y for showing. LK will man table from 4-6pm with info on e-lawn care equip/composting. EWC will overlap covering air quality with handouts. Because MN will be at table first, she agrees to pick up banner and info/handouts from AC/Village beforehand. ES recommended having GROW info handouts available. LWC would like Village to bring rain barrel from Board Room lobby to event too.
- ix. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Updates – WW says that there will be 7 EVs in parade. WW to affix GROW banner to roof of his Model Y (consider option that MN and KR hold vertical banner posts from within back seat of Model Y). ES recommends id of model of EV on each car window. WW will get old GROW and "EV are the future" signage from Village before parade. WW to get Village forms filled out by all other 6 EV owners. WW handed his application to ES on 6/6/24 at meeting. LWC did not want EVs to follow behind Village public works vehicles. GROW

bookmarks might be handed out to residents along parade route. NM may be able to help pass these out.

- x. Reuse A Palooza September 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> – Event registration is open, the cost of listing the event in Eventbrite was \$30 instead of \$50. Now there are 2 registrants so far. LAK asks AC to place notice of event in Village e-News in all of July, August and Sept – up to event. LAK believes old signage is with Public Works. LAK is putting together tips on how to have a successful garage sale, will store on Eventbrite page and collaborate with NW on content and visuals.
- xi. Tree Walk and Planting Demo discussed by LAK and AC confirmed date as October 5, 2024.
- xii. Tour of IBEW Powering Chicago Training Facility in Alsip – LWC suggested possible field trip with invitation to Village and especially potential young residents interested in becoming an electrician. IBEW showcases training programs in solar & wind energies and EV charging technology. LWC to get more info on this topic for future meetings.
- xiii. Guided Tour of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District – MN will get more info on Stickney's Plant (i.e. days open for tour - Nov 14, 2024, # of people per tour, and what will be covered in tour). This might be a 2.5 hour tour of plant. More info to come during future meetings.

C. Special Events Checklist – LAK and LK discuss LAK's May 22<sup>nd</sup> GROW e-mail's attachment on Special Events Sustainability Checklist that would be provided to applicants of Special Events. GROW made recommendation for Village to adopt checklist.

## **8. Updates from the Administrative Services Coordinator and Trustee Liaison**

- A. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant award (IEPA) – AC announced and congratulated LAK/GROW for receiving \$40k grant to Village. LAK requested that ICLEI be invited to submit bid as their assistance was instrumental in assembling the grant application. LAK to send ICLEI contact to AC.
- B. Proposed education in Westchester Schools – Plan placed on hold during summer months. The plan for the next school year is to contact schools to set up project proposed by LWC and to show a Climate Change Documentary by WW. GROW to be advised when the upcoming school year begins.
- C. Proposed showing climate change movie(s) at Westchester Public Library and ability to show movies in Village Boardroom: AC comments that Westchester library is still under renovation but the Village is willing to show Documentaries (i.e. An Inconvenient Truth-2006, Time to Choose-2015, Before the Flood-2015, Climate Change, The Facts-2019) in Village Board Rm. WW will provide AC with list of dates looking for Board Rm availability. NM recommended serving popcorn.
- D. Juneteenth Community Event at Gladstone Park/ EV Car Show on July 13<sup>th</sup> Sat, Need more info from AC on location of EV showing and #. WW ok with bringing Model Y from 1pm-4pm.
- E. GRC - Greenest Region Compact baseline scoring update – ES plans to meet with Village staff concerning scoring and action plan, but only after June 19<sup>th</sup>. LWC recommends starting with Climate, Energy, and Municipal Operations as they relate

most closely to the climate action plan. She also asked if staff process owner for water quality could score that section. GROW may need to have a special meeting to work on GRC scoring.

## 9. New Business

- a. Resource Conservation (Energy/Water) – LWC tabled item for now
  - xiv. SBC organics service – KR had questions about compost carts from SBC, but said that the info provided by SBC answered her questions. Note: composting fliers do not mention there is a cost to compost carts.
- b. School supply distribution 2025 – ES proposed asking whether Westchester's schools could collect usable school items and donate to either Westchester's students or other school systems with students who are in need. ES to check in with schools on this possibility when school year re-starts.

## 10. Commission Comments

- MN was concerned with idling diesel trucks in Village. ES will look into whether Westchester has an ordinance on idling vehicles.
- KR commented that the first American Climate Corps started this month. If anyone knows of interested young adults, they can find a job with listings at acc.gov.
- LAK notified GROW of recycling app that provides info on how to dispose of items of question.
- WW informed GROW of upcoming EV show at St John of the Cross Church on June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- LWC made mention of the comments and recommendations she made "On the Matter of EV Adoption" via email to GROW on 5/22/24 following her participation on C-4 calls, the ComEd Beneficial Electrification presentation at the Village of Broadview on 4/29/24, and attendance at the 5/9/24 Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation conference: 1) Preparing for EV Adoption – recommendation to conform to the Illinois Electric Vehicle Charging Act that went into effect on 1/1/24 to support residents accessibility to charging (including renters) and utilize the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' EV ready tool to achieve the bronze level of readiness. This initial step seems reasonable to pursue, does not appear to be unduly onerous and would set the stage for future municipal planning. 2) Capital Asset Funding Resources – Is there an opportunity to get the electric school bus funding opportunities before Districts 92-1/2 and 209 for leadership consideration? 3) Technical Knowledge/Resources – Many municipalities attend the annual Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation conference and are utilizing various technologies that reduce emissions and costs. Liz has attended the last three years. Is there an opportunity for the Village to begin developing this technical knowledge by becoming an IACT member? Membership and attendance at the conference is free to municipalities that complete an annual fleet assessment tool

## 11. Staff/Liaison Comments

- AC comments that SBC has a hazardous waste list for pick-up.
- ES comments that starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, '24, SBC will have one cart Village lobby for battery drop off and another cart for LED, hurricane fluorescent light bulb drop off.

## 12. Public Participation –

- Bill Burns (BB), Westchester resident, provided a document on his survey of Westchester parkways having more than grass and/or trees. He comments that residents have planted flowers, used stone/brick surrounding tree bases, etc. He provided policies for parkways approved in Evanston and Oak Park. He was asking for Westchester Village Public Works to provide and enforce a consistent policy of parkways.
- NM asked whether GROW should get involved in providing a policy for our parkways. She is willing to work with BB to make recommendations to GROW for our input. They believe a target date could be this August (to be placed on GROW's August agenda).
- NM also commented that GROW and herself could help meet in early 2025 to determine what would be the best advice to provide the Village on mowing lawns in spring of '25.

## 13. Adjournment

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.

### **2024 Goals: Education and Engagement, Advisement, Climate Action Plan**

Lee Kaufman	School Bicycling Event, Electric Powered Equipment for Natural Lawn Care
LeeAnn Kruszynski	Tree Walk, Planting Demonstration, Arbnet, Reusa Palooza, Climate Action
Mariana Nicolae	Water Quality/Sustainability – Composting, Climate Change Awareness
Kari Roberg	Zero Waste, Connection to Nature, Climate Action Plan
Nikki Way	Reusa Palooza, Commission Marketing support, GREEN infrastructure/solar/rain and native garden/ecological interest walk, painted rain barrels
Elizabeth Wiseman-Chase	Climate Action Plan, Air Pollution/Health, Incentives for Electric Appliances, Solar Education
Walter Wojcik	Climate Action, Electric Vehicles, EV Car Show