

**WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 8, 2023**

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Environmental and Forestry Commission of the Village of Winnetka, which was held in the Council Chambers at Village Hall, 510 Green Bay Road, Winnetka, Illinois, Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Commissioner Kunkle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Voting Members present: Commissioners Elizabeth Kunkle, David Varca, Gregory Frezados and Brendan Andrew. A quorum of presently appointed members was present. Village Council Representative present: Robert Dearborn. Student Representative Present: None. Interim Staff Liaison present: Erik Jensen, Assistant Public Works Director. Public present: None.

1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:

Commissioner Kunkle noted that Chair Hanley was unable to attend that evening. A motion to appoint Commissioner Kunkle as Chair Pro Tem was made by Commissioner Frezados, seconded by Commissioner Varca. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

2) Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

3) Review and Approval of Minutes

a) Approval of the October Regular Meeting Minutes

Representative Jensen noted that Chair Pro Tem Kunkle had e-mailed to request a name correction for a member of the public which would be reflected in the final minutes. A motion was made by Commissioner Andrew, seconded by Commissioner Frezados to approve the minutes as amended.

AYES: VARCA, FREZADOS, ANDREW, KUNKLE.

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: HANLEY, ECK, RING.

4) New Business/Old Business Updates:

a) Metra/UPN Salt Use

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle briefly explained that there were large deposits of rock salt that had accumulated at the Hubbard Woods Metra station this past year. Representative Jensen noted that railroad crews had removed the majority with Public Works crews removing the remainder.

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle explained a recent finding of high salt levels in a soil test in a neighboring community and discussed salt use as a regional issue. A brief conversation ensued on the use of rock salt as a deicing material on roadways. Representative Jensen stated he would present on salt use at the next EFC meeting.

b) Pumpkin Collection

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle stated that this year's Pumpkin Composting event was held on Wednesday, November 1 and asked about turnout. Representative Jensen explained that it was down this year but likely due to the fact it snowed the evening before and was unseasonably cold on the collection day.

A brief conversation followed on other ways pumpkins can be composted, including placing them in yardwaste bags for collection.

A separate brief conversation followed on scheduling future pumpkin composting dates to avoid being so close to Halloween. Representative Jensen confirmed that staff would consider alternatives in the future.

5) Communications:

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle discussed some proposed communications on food scrap composting and the "Wasted Food Scale." A brief discussion followed on the items and approving them.

6) Commission/Staff Reports:

No reports.

7) Open Forum:

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle explained that this would be the time for each Commissioner to give any updates on their areas of interest.

Representative Dearborn shared that funding for a sustainability coordinator position was included in the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget and read the job description. A conversation followed on the history of and potential opportunities for the position. He stated the final budget was subject to Village Council approval in December.

Commissioner Andrew discussed his progress to date and his research into the burning of refuse as a potential alternative energy source. He surveyed some facts about refuse burning in Europe and the United States and discussed some active applications on the east coast.

Commissioner Frezados asked if there are any retrofitted facilities using this method. Commissioner Andrew stated he was still researching and would need to explore that question further.

Commissioner Frezados stated he was doing some research with accountants to better understand the intersecting issues for public financing including bond issuance and related issues. He stated that he hoped to have more information for the next meeting.

Commissioner Varca described his work so far on researching intergovernmental sustainability initiatives. He stated that his evaluating next steps and researching how sustainability is approached by the various entities.

Chair Pro Tem Kunkle explained that she was continuing work on composting initiatives including discussing adding residential drop sites. She stated she was also interested in native plantings in parkways and exploring that initiative further.

8) Adjournment:

There being no further business, Chair Pro Tem Kunkle asked for a motion to adjourn which was moved by Commissioner Andrew and seconded by Commissioner Varca. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote; the meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.