

**WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 14, 2025**

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, May 14, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Chair Hanley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Voting Members present: Chair Patrick Hanley and Commissioners Liz Kunkle, David Varca, Peter Eck, Tim Ring. A quorum of presently appointed members was present. Voting members absent: Gregory Frezados, Brandon Andrew. Village Council Representative present: Kim Handler and President Bob Dearborn. Student Representative absent: Scarlett Harper. Staff Liaison present: Elyse Steiner, Sustainability Coordinator.

1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:

Chair Hanley announced he was stepping down from the Commission to run for IL State Senate. Commissioner Peter Eck has replaced him as Chair.

2) Public Comment:

Ted Wynechenko and Patrick Hanley addressed the Commissioners.

3) Review and Approval of Minutes

a) Approval of the March Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Ring, seconded by Commissioner Kunkle to approve the minutes as presented.

AYES: KUNKLE , RING, VARCA, ECK.

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: FREZADOS ANDREW

4) Old Business:

None.

5) New Business

a) Village Forestry update

Village Forester, Andrew Lueck, gave a presentation on the scope and scale of responsibilities, challenges, and successes within the Village. There was some discussion of how we serve residents and can engage with them more going forward.

b) Friends of the Green Bay Trail update

Bryan Lammers represented the Friends of the Green Bay Trail and gave a presentation about the plans for the Trail in Winnetka, where they have removed invasive Buckthorn and will be planting beneficial native plants. The Village has worked with the FGFBT to haul debris, order the plants, and will contribute to an educational sign at Ash Street.

It may be possible to have the Ash Street plot designated a Hometown National Park, which recognizes hyper-local efforts to rebuild native habitat.

c) Changes to EFC leadership and priorities

Staffing changes were introduced earlier in the meeting during Chair's Remarks. President Dearborn communicated his intention for the commission to act and deliver results.

Trustee Handler wants to have a regular presence at the Farmers' Market this year engaging with residents to promote initiatives and get feedback. She will follow up on scheduling and topics. She also voiced her support for finding solutions to the Village's environmental challenges.

d) Climate Action Plan

Elyse solicited proposals from four consultants to support the Village's Climate Action Plan. The Plan's scope includes conducting a baseline GHG inventory, identifying actions to reduce emissions, and setting a long-term emission reduction target consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

6) **Communications:**

Commissioners discussed the need for a better file sharing system to save, review, and edit EFC work products. Elyse agreed to look into technical solutions to solve this problem.

Elyse shared that communications should focus on services or programs available to residents rather than suggest behavioral changes. The EFC wants to conduct a review any past communications documents or timelines.

7) **Commission/Staff Reports:**

With the elections finished and seats filled, Trustee Dearborn said the Caucus may be looking to conduct another Village survey.

Commissioner Ring shared his research into road salt practices. Partnerships such as Salt Smart and NOAA's Sea Grant program can support winter road salt practices to reduce waste and avoid excess salt washing into freshwater resources.

For the June meeting, the EFC recommended a mid-year “status check” to review the first half of the year and plan for the second half.

8) **Open Forum:**
None.

9) **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Chair Eck asked for a motion to adjourn which was moved by Commissioner Varca and seconded by Commissioner Kunkle. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote; the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

DRAFT