

WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 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, January 8, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Chair Hanley called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

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

1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:

Chair Hanley welcomed the group and introduced Elyse Steiner, the new Sustainability Coordinator and Staff Liaison.

2) Public Comment:

None

3) Review and Approval of Minutes

a) Approval of the July Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner King, seconded by Commissioner Varca to approve the minutes as presented.

AYES: KUNKLE, FREZADOS, VARCA, RING, HANLEY.

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: ANDREW, ECK

4) Old Business Updates:

a) 2024 Accomplishments and opportunities for 2025

Chair Hanley noted the following 2024 EFC accomplishments: Friends of the Green Bay Trail project; Sustainability Coordinator hiring, IMEA education and awareness, Tree-keeping, solar incentive research, and power alternatives presentation.

Opportunities for improvement in 2025 included: Improve communications to the council including EFC initiatives and reporting; Continue to “move the ball,” EFC meeting attendance (4 meetings were canceled due to lack of quorum)

b) 2025 Green Award

Elyse Steiner presented a draft online form for Green Award nominations to replace paper forms. The new form along with some other edits to the Green Award page will be published on February 1, 2025. Nominations will remain open until March 5, 2025.

Commissioners agreed to each identify/ submit at least one nomination. Elyse will follow up with Liz Dechant to get word out to businesses. Scarlett Harper volunteered to also visit businesses to encourage participation.

c) Communications and collaborative process

EFC to revisit environmental tips by season/month for village emails and content for quarterly Winnetka Report.

Kristin Kazenas summarized OMA and EFC appointment rules as a refresher for commissioners. Membership on the EFC will be reviewed and updated by President Rintz.

Elyse will send a reminder email to commissioners 10 days before monthly meetings soliciting input on Agenda items. Commissioners agreed to respond to Elyse and Chair Hanley by Wednesday prior to the meeting. Elyse and Chair Hanley will draft the final Agenda based on input received and any other input from the Council.

5) New Business

a) Website review

Commissioners agreed website is out of date. Elyse will work on changes, remove obsolete links, and move some content from EFC to Sustainability pages.

b) 2025 priorities/ planning

Chair Hanley confirmed commissioners' ongoing areas of interest.

The topic of the Sustainability Plan was tabled until next month.

6) Communications:

7) Commission/Staff Reports:

Elyse Steiner informed the commissioners that she is working with Water & Electric staff to prepare a mailing about IMEA with information about the contract and deliberative process. The mailing will be sent to residents in March.

8) Open Forum:

The January 22, 2025, Plan Commission meeting and beachfront permitting was raised. Commissioner Kunkle will represent environmental interests.

9) Adjournment:

There being no further business, Chair Hanley 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 8:15 p.m.

DRAFT