

**WINNETKA ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**August 12, 2020**

A record of a legally convened meeting of the Environmental and Forestry Commission of the Village of Winnetka, which was held Virtual via WebEx Cisco, Wednesday, August 12, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.; Voting Members present: Chairperson Chuck Dowding, Liz Kunkle, Chris Foley, David Varca, Barry Sylvester. Voting Members absent: Rosann Park-Jones, and Ted Wynnynchenko. A quorum of presently appointed members was present. Ex-officio Members present: none. Village Council Representative present: Jack Coladarci. Student Representatives present: Marcus Buccellato and Scarlett Harper. Staff Representative present: Brendon Mendoza, Public Works Analyst. Public present: None.

**1) Introduction & Chair's Remarks:**

Chairperson Dowding called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and welcomed all Commission members and the public.

**2) Public Comment:** None.

**3) Review and Approval of Minutes:**

a) Approval of the June 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the June 10, 2020 minutes, which was moved by Commissioner Kunkle and seconded by Commissioner Varca.

b) Approval of the July 8, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Dowding stated the wrong Comprehensive Plan Community document was sent to Staff Representative Mendoza for the draft July 8, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes, but has since resent the correct document. Staff Representative Mendoza stated he will include the correct document in the final approved minutes.

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the July 8, 2020 minutes, which was moved by Commissioner Foley and seconded by Commissioner Kunkle.

**4) New Business, Old Business/Updates:**

a) WEFC Green Award Presentation

Staff Representative Mendoza stated Adam Pronto from Reprise Coffee Roasters was planning to attend tonight's EFC meeting to officially receive the award, but may have had something unexpected come up and is not in attendance. Staff Representative Mendoza also stated that Jim Stier was also planning to attend the meeting to officially receive his green award but had an unexpected emergency occur and could not attend the meeting.

Staff Representative Mendoza stated he delivered the Green Award Plaques to Adam Pronto and Jim Stier and will have the announcement posted in the Village's media outlets recognizing the two (2) EFC Green Award Recipients.

b) Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan Discussion

Chairperson Dowding reiterated the key take aways; increased corporation between the governing boards within the Village, with the goal of identifying a sustainability representative, and a single sustainability chapter within the Village's new Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Dowding stated that the Village needs to have a staff member that has sustainability in their job title. Chairperson Dowding stated that the Commission is beginning to have a need for a Village staff member that has sustainability in their job description and that this is an actionable and possible item for the Commission. He stated without someone with sustainability in their job description, it is difficult for the EFC to do much from a Commission standpoint. Outside of trees, the Commission is an advisory board for the Village Council. The Commission can advance projects forwarded by the Village Council but does not have a way to move anything forward themselves. Chairperson Dowding stated that a good idea would be to have a shared sustainability staff member between governing bodies within the Village but would be much more difficult to achieve.

Chairperson Dowding asked Trustee Coladarci for his thoughts. Trustee Coladarci stated in terms of sustainability to centralize sustainability projects by having one staff member in charge of that is important but he thought having something community would make more sense as having one office in charge of compliance for community issues would be most logical.

Trustee Coladarci stated this is a question that should go to Village Manager, Rob Bahan, to see if there is someone who could handle the sustainability issues mentioned. Trustee Coladarci also stated that due to COVID-19 and the impact on the Village's budget, that there is going to be a large impact on the Village's finances going forward and would impact hiring someone for this position. Chairperson Dowding stated this is not an

immediate request, but to be included as a recommendation later for the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Kunkle stated is important to have a staff member that has sustainability in their job title and agrees with Chairperson's Dowding comments. Commissioner Kunkle stated it should be included in the Comprehensive Plan discussions, but she also recognizes the budgetary issues. Commissioner Kunkle stated that being flexible is needed, such as hiring someone on a part-time basis. She mentioned there is a group called AmeriCorps which is comprised of sustainability volunteers, and communities in the area utilize AmeriCorps interns as their sustainability coordinators. Commissioner Kunkle stated there is a cost involved but it is less expensive than hiring a new Village staff member and could be considered during next years budget. Commissioner Kunkle and Trustee Coladarci discussed the idea of a Village sustainability intern.

Trustee Coladarci asked Staff Representative Mendoza if there currently are any Village interns that he is aware of, and Staff Representative Mendoza stated he is aware of a Forestry Intern and Engineering Intern in Public Works that work during the summer months. Chairperson Dowding stated that Commissioner Kunkle and himself will discuss/and or meet with Public Works Director, Steve Saunders, and Village Manager, Rob Bahan to discuss this.

Chairperson Dowding asked the Commission if there are any other ideas from the Commission regarding suggestions for the Village's new Comprehensive Plan. Student Representative Harper stated that the EFC does not have a "reach" with other things regarding sustainability and stated that the Commission could expand and with renaming the Commission to the Sustainability Commission to reflect what the Commission does. Commissioner Kunkle stated that she mentioned this back at the February EFC Meeting with the Lakota Group and stated she agreed that the Commission should be renamed to reflect the EFC's work.

Chairperson Dowding asked if a future agenda item for the EFC would be to review the EFC Village Code and suggest changes to the ordinance to be in line with what role the EFC is fulfilling. Commissioner Kunkle agreed with Chairperson Dowding's suggestion.

c) Village Recycling Guidelines Communications

As a follow-up from the July EFC Meeting, Commissioner Kunkle asked if the Commission had a chance to review the proposed edits to the Village's Recycling Guide. Commissioner Kunkle went through the recommended proposed changes and asked if the Commission could review the proposed changes and provide feedback at the September EFC Meeting.

d) New Village Website Discussion

Chairperson Dowding provided an update that he is working with Staff Representative Mendoza on recommended edits to the EFC Village web page.

e) Winnetka Solar Community Program

As a follow-up from the last meeting, Commissioner Kunkle stated in the agenda packet is a summary of each of the four (4) solar options; On-Site Solar (municipal buildings), Off-Site Community Solar for Residents(in Winnetka); Off-Site Community Solar for residents (elsewhere in Illinois) and Solar Development for Residents.

Commissioner Kunkle stated as follow-up from her last report at the last EFC meeting, that Jon Carson, of Trajectory Energy, is reviewing options to develop a community solar plan for Winnetka.

Student Representative Harper asked how someone would get involved with going solar energy if interested. Commissioner Kunkle stated you would reach out to a solar energy contractor. Student Representative Harper stated that information regarding solar energy could be posted on the Village website to assist residents. Commissioner Kunkle mentioned the Village's participation in the Solsmart Program.

f) Deerfield Climate Resolution

Commissioner Kunkle stated that she found out that the Go Green Deerfield had adopted a sustainability proclamation which is a one-page document, that is similar to the Village's GRC2 document. Commissioner Kunkle stated this a simplified way to commit to sustainability and a way to reach attainable goals within Winnetka. Student Representative Harper stated she likes that the Deerfield example is simple and shows commitment to sustainability.

Commissioner Varca asked how you would go about this from a percentage perspective, because it is unknown how to achieve a 45% goal for Winnetka, and it would be helpful to have a basis for the percentage. Commissioner Kunkle stated that the City of Evanston sustainability plan has number goals, and stated her understanding is that the City of Evanston, just selected numbers for goals and worked towards it. Commissioner Kunkle stated that various regional municipal government organizations are putting together a regional climate action plan for the Chicagoland area and that the Village could rely on those achievable numbers once they are published. Commissioner Varca asked if there is anything measurable and how the numbers would be measured. Commissioner Kunkle stated a baseline would need to be created, such as an audit and to move forward from those findings. Chairperson Dowding agreed with Commissioner Varca that understanding the measurable goals is important.

Commissioner Kunkle asked if the Commission would be interested in developing a Winnetka version of the Deerfield Proclamation. Commissioner Foley mentioned his initial thoughts are that the goals are aspirational without steps to achieve them and he is concerned that there is no sense of cost, and thought it would be helpful to know the costs associated to make sure this would be cost effective for attaining the said goals.

Chairperson Dowding stated the Village has somewhat already completed putting together similar goals through the GRC2 document and may be already contained in the GRC2 document. Commissioner Kunkle stated the main difference is that the proclamation has a specific number goal rather than an aspirational goal. Chairperson Dowding asked Commissioner Kunkle to review the GRC2 document and the proclamation and compare.

g) Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Commissioner Kunkle stated she discovered the Mayor's Monarch Pledge through the National Wildlife Federation which municipalities commit to creating habitats for Monarch butterflies and pollinators and to educate citizens in how they can make a difference to support butterflies and pollinators. Commissioner Kunkle asked the group if they would support the request to ask the Village Council to sign the pledge. Chairperson Dowding recommended that Commissioner Kunkle move that the Commission place the Mayor's Monarch Pledge on a Village Board Agenda for their approval to adopt the pledge if there are no objections. Commissioner Varca stated that it would be helpful to include ideas of actionable items to support the pledge if it requested to be adopted by the Village Council. The Commission discussed asking the Park District to also adopt the Mayor's Monarch Pledge.

h) Light Pollution/Dark Sky Complaint Lighting

Commissioner Kunkle reported that she attended the Go Green Illinois meeting in July, and the meeting focused on air and light pollution. She stated the two (2) takeaways are the footprints of lights from an aerial view, and if you can see light from space that it is a waste of resources and that the presenter compared the City of Chicago to Berlin, Germany in terms of aerial lighting, and that Chicago is four (4) to five (5) times greater than Berlin. She also mentioned that there is an organization called Dark Sky and there is a program that tests lighting to ensure it is Dark Sky complaint which includes lighting being efficient and that lighting is pointed in the correct direction. Commissioner Kunkle stated she will follow-up on this topic as it is relevant to the Village's Downtown Master Plan.

5) Communications:

a) Approval of September Communication Items

Commissioner Kunkle stated the September Communication items need to be changed as school lunches will be different for the upcoming school year. Commissioner Kunkle stated she will update the tips to be applicable to the upcoming school year due to current events.

Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to approve the September Communications Items which was moved by Commissioner Kunkle and seconded by Commissioner Sylvester.

b) Discussion of November Communications Items

Staff Representative Mendoza mentioned the agenda item was incorrectly listed as November and is supposed to be listed as October. The Commission reviewed the upcoming October Communication items.

**6) Commission/Staff Reports:**

a) Composting Vendors in Winnetka Area Update

Staff Representative Mendoza provided the information below as a follow-up from the request of the Commission at July EFC Meeting regarding an update on composting participation by understanding how many current residential and commercial users there are from the two (2) optional composting vendors within Winnetka that are listed on the Village's website.

Collective Resource Compost – 79 residential users and 7 commercial/institutional users.  
WasteNote Compost – 47 residential users and 0 commercial.

b) Further Discussion of Trees in Downtown Streetscape Planning Process

Staff Representative Mendoza provided the information below as a follow-up from the last report provided regarding trees in the Downtown Streetscape Plan.

Elm Street from Green Bay to 845 Elm

Trees Impacted – 19

Trees Preserved - 6

Trees Removed – 13

Trees Planted - 8

**7) Open Forum:** None.

**8) Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Chairperson Dowding asked for a motion to adjourn which was moved by Commissioner Kunkle and seconded by Commissioner Foley. The motion passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

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