

**MEETING MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
March 4, 2021**

A meeting of the Sustainability Commission was held on Thursday, March 4, 2021 via Zoom.
In attendance were:

Present:

Don Anderson, Chairman
Maria Albulesco
Amy Call
Dick Heller
Karrah Krakovyak
Bill Mertes
Michael Shalen
Brian Wolkenberg

Absent:

Deborah Tomez

Also present:

Andrew Lichterman, Assistant Village Manager

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and a virtual quorum was present.

Consideration of Minutes

Commissioner Mertes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Shalen to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2021 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

Public Comment

There was no one present for public comment on a non-agenda item.

Residential Solid Waste Contract

Chairman Anderson requested Mr. Lichterman to briefly review the staff memo. Mr. Lichterman noted that the new tri-fold brochure with all the basic solid waste contract information was mailed to all Deerfield homes. He noted that the kitchen compost pails are on order and should arrive at the end of this month. 1,000 pails will be given away as part of a compost toolkit to help residents get started. He noted that staff is working with Civil Agents, an expert marketing firm, to develop a multi-month educational campaign. Lastly, the staff memo included disposal rate metrics from the SWALCO 2019 Solid Waste Management Plan to help the Commission establish a goal for our purposes. The report includes a 2030 goal of 1.35 pounds per capita per day (pcd). The Village's current rate as of the last reporting period (2018) was 1.56 pcd. Notably, the report indicates that organics account for 25% of the landfill waste in Lake County. The pcd data is a good metric to use to measure our program because that data will be readily available from the hauler.

Commissioner Shalen complimented the tri-fold brochure noting it contained a lot of useful information. Chairman Anderson noted that the SWALCO report indicated that of the 42 communities measured in Lake County, Deerfield has the third highest disposal rate.

Most of the public comments received by the Commissioners to date have been relative to the fact that residents do not want a third container; however, it helps to point out that they can be used for yard waste in lieu of the sticker program and that residents can reduce the size of their garbage container.

Commissioner Wolkenberg expressed interest in continuing to hear feedback and comments from the public related to the compost program so we can adjust, as needed. Chairman Anderson concurred and noted that he sees one of our roles as Commissioners is to engage our neighbors and send that feedback on to staff. Mr. Lichterman noted that we have regular meetings with customer service teams both at the Village and LakeShore Recycling Systems to identify the main causes for concern. At this time, most compost calls are related to finding space for the third cart.

Commissioner Heller expressed interest in moving some of our marketing and educational efforts into the schools. He also suggested some coordinated educational efforts with the library. Chairman Anderson suggested that Commissioner Heller and Commissioner Krakovyak work with staff to provide some feedback on the compost education campaign prior to the next meeting.

Chairman Anderson suggested establishing a goal for the diversion rate over a 12-month period. Commissioner Wolkenberg suggested setting a reasonable goal that could be achievable. He noted the SWALCO goal of 1.35 pcd is probably the most informed data point we have in front of us right now so that is probably a reasonable point to work towards over the next year.

Commissioner Heller asked what level of granular compost data we can receive. Mr. Lichterman noted the hauler may will not be able to provide details on the exact products that are not making it into the compost bin but we could conduct our own survey at some future juncture if we thought that was appropriate. Chairman Anderson also noted that we probably have a lot to learn from the City of Highwood's program since it has been in place for a number of years.

Chairman Anderson requested that we continue the discussion next month and try to set a goal at that time when we have some additional information relative to Highwood's experience.

Report of the Tree Subcommittee

Mr. Mertes summarized the proposed revisions to the Village's Tree Preservation Ordinance that will be voted on by the Village Board later this month. He noted that there is a new category of Heritage Trees that will require higher mitigation fees. Other updates include removing low quality trees/shrubs, such as arbor vitae, from qualifying trees that offset mitigation costs. Also, the ordinance includes language to limit monoculture plantings and includes an incentive for removing invasive species such as buckthorn.

Chairman Anderson noted that the language in the ordinance allows for mitigation fees to be lessened if invasive species are removed concurrently. He suggested that maybe the credit should be expanded to offer a greater economic benefit for removing invasive even if done separate from a tree removal. Commissioner Call agreed and suggested that the idea of providing an incentive for removing buckthorn and the educational campaign around buckthorn removal is a worthwhile endeavor that should be pursued further in the future.

Commissioner Mertes reported that the Tree Subcommittee also discussed the Tree Walk event. Commissioner Call is working with the Park District to identify a park to host the next event; targeted for either September 25 or October 2. The Subcommittee also recommends driving people to participate in the Friends of the Chicago River workday scheduled for May 8 at Trail Tree Park and Trinity Church. They are seeking 30 volunteers for each site.

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Lastly, the Subcommittee discussed the 50/50 Parkway Tree Program noting a considerable increase in recent years up from 19 tree plantings in 2017 to 61 plantings in 2020. The Subcommittee recommends subsidizing more than one tree per household and suggested the Village Arborist review the inclusion of the Chanticleer Pear since it has been identified as an invasive species. Chairman Anderson suggested the Arborist review the Pear tree further and suggest an alternative species that meets the same criteria as hardiness, aesthetics, and desirability.

Community Solar Program

Chairman Anderson noted that Go Green Deerfield has submitted a request for the Commission to partner with them by funding yard signs at a cost of approximately \$500. Chairman Anderson noted that the Village is leading the other six communities that are part of this program in number of subscriptions. Commissioner Shalen expressed apprehension with funding the program since we have a number of initiatives the Commission is actively involved in and the Community Solar initiative isn't something that has been driven at the Commission level. Chairman Anderson concurs with Commissioner Shalen's assessment and noted that our focus remains on the solid waste contract, specifically the recycling and composting initiatives, tree programs and the ComEd energy conservation program.

Ms. Call noted that this initiative does fit in with the sustainable proclamation adopted by the Village Board to drive down our greenhouse gas emissions. All of these initiatives - composting, tree preservation, and promoting solar - fit in with reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. Chairman Anderson thanked Go Green for their request and suggested that perhaps we can revisit this in the future, when election season is over and there would be less political yard signs to compete with.

100% Green Residential Aggregation Program

Mr. Lichterman reported that the NSEAC members will be issuing a Request for Proposals on March 12 and we are targeting a report to the Village Board in April or May to bring more renewable energy to our residents.

Public Comment

Mr. Art Wilde reminded the Commission that in early 2020 the Village Board approved a proclamation to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and he is bringing it up because it speaks to the magnitude of the effort and that the Village is calling on all of us to do our part to meet that objective. We need to cut our carbon footprint in half by 2030 and bring it to zero by 2050. As the Commission sets goals, let's identify what the goal needs to be to reach the objective of the proclamation. Mr. Wilde also inquired about what types of programs Go Green Deerfield can focus on to form partnerships with the Commission. Go Green Deerfield brought forth the Community Solar proposal because we thought that would be a natural area of overlap with the Commission.

Chairman Anderson thanked Mr. Wilde for his comments and noted the focus areas include recycling, energy conservation, specifically related to a ComEd energy conservation program, and the care of trees related to helping people understand the value of trees, how to reduce invasive species and how to plant and take better care of our urban forest.

Next meeting Date

The next meeting date will be April 15 at 7 p.m.

Adjournment

Commissioner Heller made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mertes. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned via a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

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Andrew Lichterman
Assistant Village Manager