

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK, TERRACE ROOM
JANUARY 19, 2023**

Chairperson Ross called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Village Hall, Terrace Room. Present were Trustees Israel and Trustee Collison. **Also Present:** President Ciesla; Trustee Hebl; Trustee Pepoon; Trustee Ebhomielien; Village Manager Cara Pavlicek; Deputy Village Manager Madeline Farrell; Sustainability Coordinator Tessa Murray; Director of Administrative Services Debra Ford; Chief Financial Officer Iwona Petryszak; Director of Public Works Kelly Hamill, Management Analyst Sam Reiss, Village Attorney Steven Elrod (late), Deputy Public Works Director Matt Morrison, Director of Development & Planning Services Michaela Kohlstedt, Village Interim Engineer Jack Bielak,

Guests: Shital Pandit

Hear from the Audience

None

Climate Action Plan Priorities

Sustainability Coordinator Tessa Murray opened the meeting by providing a review of last year's Climate Action Plan (CAP) priority items. In 2021, The Board prioritized a list of 10 items provided by paleBLUEDot. All items are ongoing. Ten new priority actions items have been added that were recommended by paleBLUEDot and reviewed by the Sustainability Commission for the upcoming year, along with the proposed expenses related to those items and current items. These are up for review by the Board tonight.

Ms. Murray stated that building energy, transportation emissions and solid waste make up most of the community wide carbon emission in Northbrook with building energy making up almost 75% of the emissions within the Village.

A slide with the Top Ten Priority Items was shared for FY 2021-22. The Sustainability Commission worked on those priorities. A slide with the Proposed CAP Top Ten Priority Action Items for FY 2023-24 was also shared. The information is included in the packet. All of the projects related to the ongoing and new proposed priorities require ongoing staff time. Some are associated with needed funding. Examples of projects with associated costs were provided to the Committee by Ms. Murray.

Trustee Israel inquired about Greenspace and Ecosystem Health (GS 3-3) controlling the types of pesticides used within the Village. Manager Pavlicek answered that the Village cannot use

home rule authority to regulate lawn pesticides in a manner more restrictive than the State of Illinois due to a statutory home rule preemption.

Chairman Ross stated that the Commission looked at some of the work that was completed on the Waste Audit (WM 2-1). The number one contaminate in the waste recycling stream was plastic bags.

Trustee Israel inquired about the uptick of EVs in the community. Ms. Murray is able to seek information by looking at the ongoing registration with the State.

President Ciesla asked what other communities are implementing that the Village might not be aware of but might be interested in investigating, i.e. new solar initiatives. Ms. Murray answered that some communities subsidize energy efficient appliances and push the ComEd Energy Efficiency Program.

President Ciesla stated that solar installations now total 116 in the Village and wants to grow the solar program by offering more solar events. Grow Solar Chicagoland Program previously gave some free assessments. Trustee Israel suggested identifying the people who drive EVs as potential candidates.

Trustee Hebl suggested adding information with “Renew your Sticker” and publicize the number of people that have gone “green”.

Trustee Pepoon questioned solar panels on Village Buildings. Manager Pavlicek answered that new proposals for energy and new construction are on the horizon with the Facilities Assessment.

Ms. Murray asked if the committee finds the new proposed priority item list acceptable starting with Buildings, Transportation Emissions and Waste Management. Chairman Ross stated that everything should be lined up for the final budget in April.

President Ciesla asked for suggestions. Ms. Murray stated the Village could offer its residents low cost compost bins for free or at a reduced rate. Ms. Murray stated that outdoor do-it-yourself compost bins cost \$30 each. They are a great way to lower an individual’s carbon footprint and keep food from landfills where it generates methane. President Ciesla stated that this would be a good way to build sustainability into the culture of the community.

The Village may provide 100 compost subscriptions for a year at a cost of \$12,485 with Waste Management for curbside pickup. President Ciesla would like to set aside funds for 100 more, for a total of 200. President Ciesla wants to create a marketing initiative for the bins. Trustee Hebl wants to make the bins more attractive with decals, saying attractive bins will market themselves.

Trustee Collison asked for more information on pricing within the Sustainability budget. She stated that the budgeted money for the Organic Gardener seemed high. Trustee Collison wants to use local vendors for recycling decals. She believes more compost bins are a good idea.

Trustee Israel was in favor of doubling the number of compost bins for interested residents.

President Ciesla wants to reach out to other communities regarding single use bags and would like to jump out together. Trustee Collison stated that none of our neighbors that are close to Northbrook seems to be initiating anything. Manager Pavlicek replied that most big businesses are already involved in the single use bag program and that it is built into their systems.

Discussion took place on how to frame the motion. A motion was made by Trustee Israel and seconded by Trustee Collison to agree to the intent of the top ten proposed Sustainability Initiatives for FY 2023-24. Detailed data on the amounts will be provided to the Committee after further drilling down on the budget. The motion passed by voice vote. The committee will make their recommendation to the full Board.

Single-Use Bags

The Sustainability Commission spent considerable time on the topic of Single-Use Bags before making their recommendation. The communities in the State of Illinois that have adopted similar ordinances are Batavia, Woodstock, Edwardsville, Oak Park, and Chicago. Northbrook has the opportunity to lead the future. A draft Single-Use Bag Tax Ordinance was presented to the Board for review.

The proposed tax is a \$0.10 for each paper or plastic bag that the customer would receive at the time of purchase, when exiting a store. Businesses would split the \$0.10 in half with the Village. The Village portion of the proceeds will go into the Sustainability Fund. The ordinance affects any store larger than 3,000 sq. ft. The anticipated results would include reducing stray litter, reduce life-cycle environmental impacts due to single-use bags; reduce costs to recycling streams due to plastic bag contamination; increase zero waste education in Northbrook and promote environmental consciousness. Exemptions apply for restaurants, pharmacies, farmers markets, dry cleaners, or for perishable items. Businesses may provide single-use bags to customers that participate in SNAP, WIC. At the program's conception, reusable bags will be provided for a designated period of time.

Trustee Israel asked that the word "fee" replace the word "tax". Attorney Elrod answered that under Illinois Law, the word "tax" must be used.

Ms. Murray stated that people asked why paper bags are included in the single use bag tax. She answered that both paper and plastic bags have environmental impacts.

Trustee Hebl asked how much money the local businesses would be saving. Ms. Murray answered that some stores in Northbrook go through 20,000 bags per day and that they would save a lot. Trustee Hebl asked for information from any of the businesses that they would be willing to share.

President Ciesla would like to see the Sustainability Coordinator from Lowes, a big box store, partner with the Village.

Ms. Murray recommends a six-month lead-time to prepare for implementation that includes public notification, signage for displays at businesses, fact sheets, promotion and distribution of free reusable bags.

Ms. Murray asked the Committee members: 1) is the single use tax appropriate. 2) Is it applicable to both paper and plastic? 3) Are the proposed exemptions appropriate? 4) Is the square footage threshold of 3,000 square feet appropriate? 5) Is the tax of \$0.10 appropriate with a 50/50 split between businesses and Village? 6) Is a six-month implementation time adequate?

Chairman Ross feels the single use tax is appropriate to both paper and plastic bags. She agrees with the 3,000 square feet threshold and is comfortable with the \$0.10 tax per bag. She is comfortable with a six-month implementation time period.

Trustee Israel agrees with the single use tax for both paper and plastic bags. He is interested in changing behavior. He agrees with the 3,000 square feet threshold and is comfortable with the \$0.10 tax per bag. He is comfortable with a six-month implementation time period.

Trustee Collison is in agreement with all six considerations. She feels the single use tax is appropriate to both paper and plastic bags. She agrees with the 3,000 square feet threshold and is comfortable with the \$0.10 tax per bag. She is comfortable with a six-month implementation time period.

The Committee stated their consensus is to recommend to the full Board that the Single-Use Bag Ordinance should be adopted.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Trustee Collison and seconded by Trustee Israel at 7:12 p.m. to adjourn the Community and Sustainability Committee January 24, 2023 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Sue Anetsberger

Recorder