

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

Chairman Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Terrace Room. Present were Members Becky Lee, Aaron Stash, Ethan Stepen, Sandra Weiss (exited meeting at 6:30 p.m.), Ying Wang

Absent: Sandra Dold, Bernadette Knight

Guests: Terri Rudd, Jill Franklin, John Novison

Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Member Stash and seconded by Chairman Reynolds to approve the August 17, 2023 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes. The motion passed by voice vote.

Hear from the Audience/Public Comments

An invitation was received from Go Green to attend a Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) Kirie tour on October 11, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. If interested, please make contact with Go Green.

Community Planning Report

Ms. Murray reported that native plants will be given away at the October 4, 2023 Northbrook Farmers Market. Members Lee and Member Weiss volunteered to help.

Pumpkin Smash will take place on Saturday, November 4, 2023, noon – 3 p.m. at Northbrook Court. Member Stash, Member Weiss and Chairman Reynolds volunteered to help.

Member Weiss volunteered for the November 28, 2023 Community Moment – Food Waste. Member Wang will send the write-up to Member Weiss.

Member Stepen asked for a Sustainability Volunteer to speak on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) at a GBN Environmental Group Meeting held on Tuesdays after school.

Buckthorn and Northbrook's Invasive Species List

Ms. Murray provided a short history on the native plant, Buckthorn. Information regarding how other municipalities are handling enforcement is included in the packet. Staff met and discussed: regulatory framework how we handle invasive plants, define noxious invasive species, appropriate place in the Zoning Code is unclear, Buckthorn can be a groundcover,

1 shrub, or tree, potential impact of regulation is significant, Buckthorn is part of the tree
2 canopy, enforcement and staff time, incentive programs.

3
4 Director Mendel stated that the intent is good but one needs to look at it from the
5 capability of enforcement and definition. He stated that given the pervasiveness in our
6 environment, it adds another level of challenge. Approximately 30% of the Village Canopy is
7 Buckthorn. It is found mostly on private property.

8
9 Member Weiss believes the Village needs to be a role model for removing Buckthorn.
10 Deputy Director Morrison stated that the Village responds to every complaint received of
11 Buckthorn on Village property. The Village works with public right-of way if it is a site line
12 issue. The Village will come and fetch up to three yards of Buckthorn material from a
13 resident's parkway if notified.

14
15 Director Mendel reported that the Village can reach out to the Park District with best
16 practice suggestions.

17
18 Member Wang and Member Lee realize the importance of educating the student
19 population. Member Lee will investigate the work of Openlands and report back.

20
21 Member Stash would like more information on the Village of Wheeling's Buckthorn
22 Remediation Practices. He is interested in regulations that protect the environment.

23
24 Director Mendel suggested that the Village not regulate for removal but instead offer a
25 "carrot" or incentive to private property owners.

26
27 Member Lee thinks that there is yet no solution to eradicate Buckthorn. More information is
28 needed.

29
30 Member Knight was unavailable for tonight's meeting but sent a letter that was read aloud
31 by Chairman Reynolds. The letter provided suggestions for the removal of Buckthorn in
32 stages and is included in the packet.

33
34 Chairman Reynolds is in favor of an expanded incentive program. Ms. Murray stated the
35 Village could investigate budgeting for a cost sharing program to replace Buckthorn with
36 other accepted species. Ms. Murray suggested creating an education pathway with
37 solutions. Chairman Reynolds worries about social justice issues involved.

38
39 Member Stash suggested expanding the parkway tree program to replace Buckthorn.

40
41 Director Mendel reminded membership that the Commission can make a specific
42 recommendation to the Village Board. He reminded membership that this is a policy
43 discussion. The Commission is tasked with providing direction to staff. Discussion took place
44 whether the recommendation should be incentive driven or punitive driven.

45
46 Member Stash made a motion seconded by Member Lee for the Village Board to explore
47 additional incentive and educational programs to remove Buckthorn cooperatively with an

1 end period of five years at which time regulatory enforcement is considered. The motion
2 passed by voice vote.

3

4 **Earth Day Planning**

5 Ms. Murray stated that the Village response to host a 2023-24 Earth Day celebration is that
6 the item is not budgeted for FY 2023-24. The event would have to be flushed out for FY
7 2024-25. The Village fiscal year runs from May 1st – April 30th. If an Earth Day event is
8 planned for April 2025, it would need to be budgeted before February 2024. Ms. Murray
9 stated that if an outside organization is interested in handling the event, it would be private
10 sponsorship. She asked if membership wanted to move forward with a non-Village event for
11 2024. Membership inquired if Go Green would sponsor the event. Mr. Novison answered
12 that Go Green would help with an event but would not privately host the celebration. Mr.
13 Novison suggested adding an amendment to the current budget to provide funding for a
14 2024 event. Director Mendel answered that was not an available option.

15

16 Mr. Novison suggested that membership contact Mary Bernier for more information
17 regarding Earth Day planning.

18

19 Chairman Reynolds stated that membership is fully committed to hosting an Earth Day
20 event for FY 2024-25.

21

22 Member Stepen suggested rebranding the event with a new name, Climate Action Day and
23 hold it in the beginning of June for budgetary purposes. Membership liked the idea of
24 keeping tradition but moving in a new direction.

25

26 A motion was made by Member Wang and seconded by Member Lee to ask the Village
27 Board to rebrand the Village Earth Day celebration to World Environment Day, to be held on
28 any Saturday in June beginning in the year 2024. The motion passed by voice vote.

29

30 **Updates on Other Items**

31 a) Communication Initiatives & Messaging

32 1) Promote reusable bags; 2) Feature on the Northbrook Water Plant; 3) New high tech
33 trash bins at thirteen locations in the downtown; 4) September Emergency Preparedness
34 month; 5) E-news, Renewable Ricky; 6) Native shrub give-away; 7) Grow Northbrook Garden
35 Harvest Sessions; 8) Northfield Township; 9) Discount on Annual Composting; 10)
36 Northbrook Community Solar.

37

38 Ms. Murray noted a change to the format of waste data collection. The new statistics show
39 the same thing as before; there is more landfill collection and less recycling.

40

41 b) Solar Permit Data

42 2023 Installation locations were identified.

43

44 c) Recycling & Waste Data

45 Same trends.

1 **Old Business**

2 Member Stash inquired as to the next CAP items. Ms. Murray answered that the
3 Greenhouse Gas and Inventory Report will be ready for the next meeting.

4

5 **New Business**

6 None.

7

8 **Remarks for the Good of the Order**

9 Go Green will be present at the 45th Annual Shermerfest celebration on October 1, 2023.
10 They are looking for two individuals that own EVs to volunteer their cars for the festival.
11 Member Stash will work with Mr. Novison on the possibility of having his EV auto at the
12 event for viewing.

13

14 Ms. Murray announced that she is resigning from her position as the Sustainability
15 Coordinator for the Village of Northbrook. Her last day is October 6, 2023. Membership
16 thanked Ms. Murray for her dedication for the sustainable efforts made by the Village and
17 wished her well on future endeavors.

18

19 **Next Scheduled Meeting**

20 The next regular meeting of the Sustainability Commission is scheduled for Thursday,
21 October 19, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

22

23 **Adjourn**

24 A motion was made by Chairman Reynolds and seconded by Member Wang at 7:15 p.m. to
25 adjourn the Sustainability Commission August 2023 meeting. The motion passed by voice
26 vote.

27

28 Respectfully submitted,
29 /s/ Sue Anetsberger
30 Recorder

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