

1 APPROVED MINUTES OF THE  
2 COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
3 VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK  
4 SEPTEMBER 21, 2023  
5

6 Chairman Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Village Hall, Terrace  
7 Room. Present were Members Becky Lee, Aaron Stash, Ethan Stepen, Sandra Weiss (exited  
8 meeting at 6:30 p.m.), Ying Wang  
9

10 **Also Present:** Sustainability Coordinator Tessa Murray, Director of Planning Services  
11 Jonathan Mendel & Deputy Director of Public Works Matt Morrison  
12

13 **Absent:** Sandra Dold, Bernadette Knight  
14

15 **Guests:** Terri Rudd, Jill Franklin, John Novison  
16

17 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

18 A motion was made by Member Stash and seconded by Chairman Reynolds to approve the  
19 August 17, 2023 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes. The motion passed by voice  
20 vote.  
21

22 **Hear from the Audience/Public Comments**

23 An invitation was received from Go Green to attend a Metropolitan Water Reclamation  
24 District (MWRD) Kirie tour on October 11, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. If interested, please make  
25 contact with Go Green.  
26

27 **Community Planning Report**

28 Ms. Murray reported that native plants will be given away at the October 4, 2023  
29 Northbrook Farmers Market. Members Lee and Member Weiss volunteered to help.  
30

31 Pumpkin Smash will take place on Saturday, November 4, 2023, noon – 3 p.m. at  
32 Northbrook Court. Member Stash, Member Weiss and Chairman Reynolds volunteered to  
33 help.  
34

35 Member Weiss volunteered for the November 28, 2023 Community Moment – Food Waste.  
36 Member Wang will send the write-up to Member Weiss.  
37

38 Member Stepen asked for a Sustainability Volunteer to speak on the Climate Action Plan  
39 (CAP) at a GBN Environmental Group Meeting held on Tuesdays after school.  
40

41 **Buckthorn and Northbrook's Invasive Species List**

42 Ms. Murray provided a short history on the native plant, Buckthorn. Information regarding  
43 how other municipalities are handling enforcement is included in the packet. Staff met and  
44 discussed: regulatory framework how we handle invasive plants, define noxious invasive  
45 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

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

#### **Earth Day Planning**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Updates on Other Items**

##### **a) Communication Initiatives & Messaging**

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

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

##### **b) Solar Permit Data**

2023 Installation locations were identified.

##### **c) Recycling & Waste Data**

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.

5   **New Business**

6   None.

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

9   Go Green will be present at the 45<sup>th</sup> 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.

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.

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.

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.

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