

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Village Hall, Room 201

Commission Members Present: Liz Lukehart (Chair), Lisa Boone, Laura Derks, Darryl Baker, Cassandra West, Ramona Blaber,

Commission Members Absent: Carly Provost-Rizor, Emily Neumann, Madisyn Burke

Staff Present: Marcella Bondie Keenan, Chief Sustainability Officer; Abby Zielinski, Sustainability Coordinator; Rob Sproule, Director of Public Works; Erica Helms, Environmental Services Manager

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lukehart at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of Agenda:** A Motion was made to approve the agenda, and it was unanimously approved with no revisions.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** A Motion was made to approve the previous meeting minutes, it was unanimously approved with none opposed.
3. **Public Comment:** Staff Liaison Marcella Bondie Keenan read a public comment aloud from Chris Donovan. The written comment is attached with these meeting minutes.
4. **Waste Hauling Contract:** Rob Sproule and Erica Helms presented information on the Village's waste hauling contract with Lakeshore Recycling Systems (LRS). Rob and Erica explained that the Village entered into a contract with LRS which extends from 2022 to 2027, and that contract provides waste and recycling services to residential homes and multi-family homes with up to 5 units. The contract also includes an opt-in compost program and a fall leaf pickup program. The contract includes a 5% yearly rate increase. Rob Sproule explained that an administration fee, a fee to the sustainability fund, and the disposal cost are added to LRS's rate to create the total rate for customers. The following comments and questions were discussed:
 - Laura Derks asked about the possibility of providing composting for all eligible Oak Park residents. Rob explained that approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of eligible households currently participate in the compost program, and it was not cost effective to do an opt-out program for composting in the current contract.
 - Lisa Boone asked about the Village's impression of LRS's pickup services and e-waste. Rob Sproule and Erica Helms replied that there was a transition period since LRS is new to Oak Park, and now the frequency of

residential complaints has been similar to the Village's previous contract with Waste Management. Rob Sproule explained that LRS uses a mechanical arm and they use same truck to pick up all recycling first, then return to pick up all refuse. Lisa Boone also asked if a resident survey could be conducted regarding LRS's service, and Rob Sproule replied that there is a national survey every 3 years and the results will be received soon. E-waste pickups are available once each month. LRS has a customer service center to help with Oak Park resident's calls.

- Ramona Blaber asked for clarification on where the e-waste is sent, and Rob Sproule replied that a contractor collects the e-waste from LRS and separates it by component for recycling. Public Works can confirm where the materials are sent.
- Liz Lukehart asked if composting could be included into the refuse rate, similarly to recycling. Rob Sproule explained that the rates from LRS are set in the contract, and an incentive for composting would need to come from a Village fund. The EEC could make a recommendation to the board. The Village sets rates in November, so the EEC should present their recommendation by September.
- Laura Derks recommends educating residents about using leaves as compost on their lawns instead of paying for them to be picked up, and Rob Sproule replied that the leaves that are picked up are also composted. The possibility of using fewer, larger compost bins to be shared by multiple residents was discussed. Rob Sproule explained that the likelihood of contamination would increase. Laura Derks also recommended that any changes in waste, recycling, and composting procedures should be communicated to all residents
- Laura Derks asked for clarification on the end result of downed parkway trees. Rob Sproule answered that they are chipped and stockpiled, and the chips are available to residents.
- Ramona Blaber asked why some residents have witnessed the recycling being emptied into the refuse truck. Rob Sproule and Erica Helms explained that the recycling may have been contaminated, or it could have been that the residents observed the same driver picking up both recycling and refuse.
- Rob Sproule and Erica Helms will return in July or August to allow the EEC to comment on the draft Forestry Management Plan.

5. **Recommendation to the Village Board concerning the Single-Use Plastics Ordinance** :

The commissioners voted all opposed to the ordinance as it was presented. The commissioners unanimously approved of recommending the ordinance with the following amendments:

- 1) In Section 20-8-4 A, revise the effective date for the polystyrene foam packaging ban to January 1, 2024.
- 2) In Section 20-8-5, revise the section to state that if there are any conflicts between this article and state law, then state law shall govern,

with the exception of the effective date of the polystyrene foam packaging ban.

- 3) In Section 20-8-6, revise the section to state that the requirements in section 20-8-4 A. are exempt from enforcement between January 1, 2024 and January 1, 2025.
6. **2023 EEC Work Plan Updates:** Lisa Boone is working with the Park District of Oak Park on piloting a smart waste program at Scoville Park. The Park District has received a proposal from Bigbelly, and they are determining how to fund the project.
7. **Community Engagement Opportunities:** Upcoming events and opportunities for commissioners' participation were discussed. Ramona Blabler was tentatively available to attend the presentation on geothermal energy in historic buildings, Liz Lukehart was available to participate in Arbor Day activities, and Lize Lukehart and Darryl Baker were available to table at Day in our Village.
8. **New Business:** Laura Derks met with West Cook Wild ones and talked about partnering with them regarding parkway pollinator gardens and signs about "leaving the leaves". Lisa Boone sent an example ordinance for native plantings in the parkway to the sustainability staff.
9. **Adjourn:** At 8:14 p.m. a motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.

Zielinski, Abigail

Subject: FW: 3-7-23 Meeting Agenda Item #7 Public Comment

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Commission Members,

I am submitting this email in response to the Environment and Energy Commission's discussion of my written public comment submitted for the November 15, 2022 meeting on the proposed 2023 Work Plan requesting that the Commission work plan include the adoption by Village of Oak of a residential exterior lighting ordinance. My comment this time takes umbrage with the Commission actual discussion during the meeting four months ago.

Having viewed the video recording of the November 15th meeting I object to the rationale of how the Commission came to conclude not to advocate for the adoption of a local residential exterior lighting ordinance. One Commission member said that she had done research on the history of the request and her conclusion surmised that the request made by Mrs. Bonita Robinson and her son Vernon in 2018 was an attempt on their part to get around what they perceived was a lack of adequate response to their complaint to the Village Community Development Department regarding an issue with a neighbor's installation of exterior light fixtures and resulting light trespass onto their (the Robinsons') property.

I don't know from where or whom this Commission member got her information or how and why during the November 15th meeting the other Energy and Environment Commission members accepted her opinion on the purpose for originally requesting the Village adopt a residential exterior lighting ordinance. That wasn't the purpose of the Robinsons' or my proposals to the Commission in 2018 or the public comment made last November.

What that E&E Commission member and all of you failed to do was review the documents that had been submitted to the Commission on March 13, 2018 by the Robinsons and me supplementing our request that the Village of Oak Park adopt a residential exterior lighting ordinance. Had you done so, perhaps the conversation on November 15, 2022 would have included an actual discussion of the recommendations for reducing light trespass in residential neighborhoods made by the International Dark Skies Association, a review of the residential lighting trespass ordinances of other Illinois municipalities, or considered the proposal for adoption of an ordinance as compatible to the Village's own exterior lighting ordinance for commercial buildings, thereby possibly preventing problems by other households similar to those experienced by the Robinsons, and possibly furthering the goals and objectives of the Energy and Environment Commission.

Having not done so was/is just plain lazy.

With all due respect,

Chris Donovan
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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows