



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

WHEATON CITY HALL, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

7:30

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman Ted Witte called the meeting to order at 7:30.
Present were Susan Bachraty, Cathy Coleman, Nancy Flynn, Kay McKeen, Tony Pope, Stephen Siemer, Seema Wadia, Jim Wozniak, and Bob Young. Absent were David Popham and Allison Torrence. Also in attendance was Wheaton resident Brian Malone.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:**
Bob moved that the minutes from the February meeting be approved. Tony seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.
- III. **Budget Report:**
Bob reported that \$23,593.01 remains open to spend.
- IV. **Public Comment:**
None
- V. **Reports:**
 1. Electronic Recycling (March 11): Tony reported that he, Bob, and Susan from EIC, volunteers Thuy Le from SCARCE and Loni Kiene of Schaumburg High School, and seven workers from EWorks manned this event. Traffic was moderate, the collection of electronics was busy as usual, and a significant amount of textiles, clothing, shoes, and scrap metal was collected. Approximately 200 fluorescent bulbs, 10 gallons of cooking oil, and 6 smoke alarms were recycled.
 2. Adopt a Highway: Nancy reported that on Friday, March 24, she, her husband Brent, and Bob cleaned our area. It was very dirty, and they were able to collect five bags. •Nancy reported that she was contacted by the group from the Democratic Party of Milton Township, who work on the Adopt a Highway project and have for many years. One of their key volunteers passed away, and Di, who has organized this group of volunteers, is ready to retire. Di is hoping some younger members will step up.
- VI. **Upcoming Projects:**
 1. Electronics Recycling (April 8): Bob and Tony will work this event.
 2. Adopt a Highway: Nancy suggested May 6 for the next Adopt a Highway event.
- VII. **Unfinished Business:**
 1. Recycling Extravaganza (Apr.1,2023): Kay reported that SCARCE employees contacted all the vendors on Monday. Kay took pictures at the DuPage County Fairgrounds and discussed what needed for set up. Bob will put signs on construction horses at both entrances to the city parking lot where this event has been held in the past, in case residents come to the wrong location, and he will contact the police department to deliver cones. Kay will check with the DuPage County Fairgrounds to see if they have cones. Ted will make additional signs due to the larger area. Steve will bring 5 gallon buckets for batteries. Many volunteers are needed for this event.

2. Native Plant Sale (Apr. 29, 2023): Tony reported that Annette has 16 volunteers for Friday and 20 for Saturday, in addition to EIC members and Wheaton Park District employees.
3. Illinois Prairie Path Clean Up (Apr. 29, 2023): Seema reported that 70-75 people are signed up for this events, including some new people.
4. Arbor Day (Apr. 28, 2023): Kay reported that it will be at Edison Middle School at 9am.
5. Business Composting: no report
6. No Mow May: Seema reported information on surrounding communities that participate in “No Mow May” or “No Mow Til Mother’s Day” initiatives to help pollinators. The idea is to not clean out all the brush and leaves from last season or mow the lawn till sometime in May, because pollinators often lay their eggs there, and don’t hatch till it’s warm enough. Communities that participate in this campaign provide or encourage a sign to explain why the lawn isn’t mowed and suspend enforcement of lawn height ordinances for participants until the date selected. Seema moved that we send a letter to the City Council asking that willing residents be allowed to try this during this spring to spark interest, and that the details of the program be more formally worked out for next year. Kay seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
7. Wheaton Sustainability Awards: Cathy reported on the work Shamili and Susan Bishel had done last year on this project. Except for changing a few dates, this project is ready to go. Cathy will contact Susan Bishel and update the information to send to the City Council. We hope to be able to present these awards at the City Council meeting closest to America Recycles Day, November 15.
8. Light Pollution—Energy Savings: tabled
9. Single Use Plastic Bags—finding facts: Steve presented information on area communities that charge for single use plastic bags. Plastic bags are a huge problem for the environment and recycling contractors. When a nominal fee is charged, research shows that most people bring their own bags. Costco and Aldi charge for bags already. Steve will investigate ordinances to see how situations such as drive up and self-serve are handled in other communities.
10. Monarch Project—Researchers wanted: Kay reported that the Forest Preserve District is looking for researchers to identify pollinators and their food plants in a particular area once or twice a month from April to September.
11. Bio-swale public awareness: tabled
12. Erosion Control Blankets: tabled

VIII. New Business:

1. Earth Day Proclamation: updated
2. Arbor Day Proclamation: provided by the Arbor Day Foundation
3. Funding for EIC Events: none
4. Marketing Material thrown in driveways: A resident contacted EIC about advertisements thrown in her neighborhood in a plastic bag with a stone. Most residents pay no attention to these, and they end up as litter and possibly clogging the storm sewers. The resident and EIC members wonder why these are not placed in doors as other vendors do. Then residents would actually see them, and they would not litter neighbors.
5. Scented dryer sheets: EIC has been contacted several times by residents concerned about the use of dryer sheets. Dryer sheets contain formaldehyde, they can build up in dryer lint filters and cause fires, and some residents are sensitive to strong smells. The smells also cause problems for pollinators. We should consider an awareness campaign to encourage the use of dryer balls or at least unscented dryer sheets.
6. National Night Out (Tuesday, August 1, Memorial Park): EIC will participate again this year.

IX. Adjournment:

Cathy moved that the meeting be adjourned. Bob seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10.

The next regular EIC meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2023, at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Coleman

APPROVED
Ted Witt
EIC CHAIR
4/24/2023
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