

Environment Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
January 9, 2018

**Village of Homer Glen
14240 W 151st Street, Homer Glen, IL 60491
Village Board Room**

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Trustee Sharon Sweas.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Roll Call.

Members present at 6:33 p.m. were Nancy Carlson, Randy Juras, Cynthia Rataj (left at 8:30 p.m.), Margaret Sabo, Trustee Sharon Sweas, Joe Turrise, and Gary White.

Members Absent: Kathy Kudla, Bob Moses, and Larry Witsoe.

Also Present: Sue Steilen, Staff Liaison and Roger Ross, Village arborist.

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda.

None.

5. Approval of Minutes From Previous Meetings

a) December 5, 2017

Member Rataj made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2017, meeting. Second was made by Member Sabo.

All were in favor. Motion carried.

6. Public Comment.

Andy Panelli, resident, is working on some local environment initiatives. One organization, Citizens Climate Lobby, works to lobby Congress on taking action to address global warming. The organization has 80,000 members. In 2016, Orland Township had an advisory referendum on their ballot, "Shall our Representatives and senators in the U.S. Congress sponsor and/or support measures that will: Acknowledge the serious threat posed by climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a clear transparent and effective way." On the ballot, 73% voted yes. Mr. Panelli would like the Environment Committee members to support a resolution identical to this in Homer Township for the upcoming election in 2018. The wording would be the same on the ballot. It would be a nonbinding call to action to signal to local politicians what action on a local level would be appropriate.

Mr. Panelli also presented information about how Working Bikes collects discarded bicycles and gives them new life by redistributing them as tools of empowerment in local and global communities.

7. Announcements/Committee Member Communication

Member Turrise reported that the Canal Corridor Association will have their 6th Annual Canal Alliance Congress on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center. He suggested that someone from the Environment Committee attend. Member Turrise also mentioned that Joliet Junior College is offering classes on beekeeping and that the Sierra Club has taken a stand against fracking because it endangers the water supply.

Member White shared an article from the Southtown that Will County is encouraging Solar Farms. He also reported that Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve has become America's first gold-tier International Dark Sky Reserve. The Reserve is a 1,416 square mile area in central Idaho. The area is so pristine that interstellar dust clouds are visible in the Milky Way.

Member Sabo reported Josh Barrett has been trying to work with Frankfort to use his solar program. She also reported that Fountain Hills, Arizona was designated as an International Dark Sky community on January 8, 2018. In addition to Member Sabo's report, The Conservation Foundation is launching an initiative that links nature to health, with the message that being out in nature is good for you.

Roger Ross announced that there is a *Community Habitat Symposium: Making a Richer Home for All Life* at Joliet Junior College on February 24-25, 2108. On Sunday, February 25, there will be a session on Winter Tree and Shrub Identification at McKinley Woods Forest Preserve.

Member Juras announced that there is an *Environmental Town Hall* on Thursday, January 25, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the Homer Township Town Hall. Leader Jim Durkin, Senator John Curran, and Representative David Olsen will be there to discuss environmental topics related to clean energy and solar power, urban flooding, recycling and composting.

Member Turrise also reported that The Conservation Foundation has certified 10 homes in Homer Glen in the Conservation@Home program and TCF Bank is their main supporter.

8. Old Business.

a) Tree Trimming Policy

A draft copy of the Tree Trimming Policy was reviewed. Village arborist Roger Ross answered questions and explained the industry standards and process for tree trimming.

Member Rataj made a motion to recommend approval of the Tree Trimming Policy to the Homer Township Road District and the Village Board. The policy

should be presented to the Village Board in February. Second was made by Member Juras. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion took place about the caliper size for planting parkway trees. The current standard operating procedure states the tree size is to be 1.5 to 2.5 inches. Roger Ross stated that smaller trees are preferred. Reasons for planting smaller trees include:

- More availability from nurseries;
- A larger tree that is balled and burlapped loses more of its root system;
- Transplant shock is longer, the larger the tree;
- Smaller plants are raised in containers which saves 80-90% of the root system;
- The cost is less.

Mr. Ross also recommended that the Village hire an urban forester.

The committee consensus was to mix the size of trees planted and seek more trees in containers. However, stay with the 2.5 inch caliper trees to satisfy residents.

b) Big Tree Contest-Earth Day/Arbor Day

The deadline for the Big Tree Contest deadline was discussed. Items to consider for the deadline:

- Board approval (February)
- Publicity deadlines (March)
- Article to appear the week of Arbor Day
- Search for trees (April-May)

The deadline will remain as May 31, 2018. Wording to change to say “will receive recognition” and form of recognition is to be decided.

Sue Steilen will send an email to past Earth Day/Arbor Day participants thanking them for their participation and let them know that there will not be an Earth Day/Arbor Day event in 2018. A notice will also be placed on the Earth Day/Arbor Day website.

c) Recycling Event

Money has been budgeted for a recycling event this fiscal year. However, due to the construction in the parking lot, a fall event will be easier to coordinate. The committee agreed to a recycling event in the fall and possibly include a working bikes collection.

d) Stargazing Event

Trustee Sweas spoke with the astronomy groups and they are available May 11 and September 14 for a stargazing event. The committee chose to confirm the dates. The location is to be determined and will be decided at the next meeting. The astronomy groups will be asked to look at the site before it is finalized.

e) Long Run Creek Cleanup

Sue Steilen reported that Long Run Creek is clogged with debris and residents have asked for help from the Village. The Homer Township Road District is willing to provide assistance. The creek is surrounded by private property and property owners would need to be involved. Concerns about liability were expressed. Sue Steilen will contact the IEPA to see if they can provide assistance.

f) Tree Ordinance Discussion

Concern was expressed that installation of a cell phone tower may require the removal of a large number of mature trees.

9. New Business.

a) Discussion on Fracking

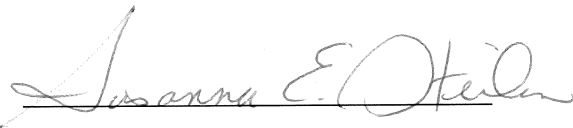
Member Juras is going to a Food and Water Watch monthly campaign meeting. They will be talking about legislation to put a moratorium on fracking. A couple of senators have signed on.

Member Juras will reach out to Food and Water Watch to have representatives come to an Environment Committee meeting to discuss privatized water systems.

10. Adjournment.

Motion made by Gary White, seconded by Joe Turrise to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Sue Steilen
Community Relations Coordinator