

Environment Committee

Minutes of the Meeting on
March 6, 2023

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

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Co-Chair Consolino.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**3. Roll Call.**

Members present were Co-Chair Jennifer Consolino, Carina Cirillo, Andy Panelli, Joe Turrise, Gary White, Staff Member Melissa King and Staff Member Taylor Udarbe.

Members Absent: Co-Chair Ruben Pazmino, Member Chris Chiappetta, Member, Member Bob Moses and Member John Walters.

Also present from the public was Fran, Susan, and Brittany.

4. Approval of Amendments to the Agenda.

There were no amendments to the agenda.

5. Minutes.**a) January 9, 2023**

The motion was made by Member Panelli seconded by Co-Chair Consolino. Motion passed.

b) February 6, 2023

Staff Member King explained that they did not have a quorum at the last meeting and the minutes reflect opening and ending the meeting. The motion Member Cirillo and seconded by Member Panelli.

6. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

7. Old Business.**a) Creation of a Memorial Tree and Marker Program and establishment of related donation amounts**

Staff Udarbe told the committee the email was sent out with more details on the final two marker options, or three options all together with the tree alone, that they were looking at. She explained that pricing for a plaque in concrete, the pre-made plaque in stone, and the DIY with a plaque affixed to a boulder by staff. She told the committee the premade boulder from last meeting is no longer available and as the company had ceased operations. She found another company out in Ohio who gave her price estimates which were included in the packet.

She explained she added Member Turrise's two trees to the excel spreadsheet and told the committee they should decide the trees they want to offer on the application.

Co-Chair Consolino asked if the packet had the current two options in the packet, Staff King confirmed and that the first option is plaque in concrete and the second is the boulder from the Ohio company. The three options will be tree only, tree with concrete marker, and tree with boulder marker.

Member Panelli asked about the price for the boulder. Staff Udarbe explained that the cost was an estimate for the boulder with the bronze plaque including approximate shipping is \$1,167. She reminded that they will charge around \$300 for the tree, too. She said this is the more expensive option, but if the committee is still okay with it, they will offer a concrete marker option which is around \$750.

Member Panelli asked about concrete marker cost and Staff Udarbe explained that international bronze quoted \$270 for the bronze plaque. She then used a concrete quantity calculator to estimate around 1.5 bags of concrete per marker, depending on how big the footer will be, at \$4 to \$5 per concrete bag. She said they estimated the \$750 to include a margin for tree or plaque damage.

Staff Udarbe recommended the stone marker be priced at \$1,750. She added that this is a higher end option and explained that Co-Chair Pazmino had said he would be okay with up to \$1000. Staff King asked for clarification and Staff Udarbe thought that price came from the \$700 quote from the last company plus the tree.

Co-Chair Consolino asked if they need to choose one marker over the other and Staff King said with the boulder, the options are limited. She asked Staff Udarbe the cost of just the boulder and explained there would be cost savings if they do it like Mike De Vivo's boulder. The road district picked out a boulder and bolted the plaque in themselves. She added that it is not the same as getting this premade but there are costs for that.

Staff Udarbe said she spoke with Brent Portfilio and he said they used Allied Landscaping. She called and they estimated the boulder for our plaque would be around \$150 plus \$140 for delivery, though staff can probably pick it up so we could also choose boulders with the flat face. Staff Udarbe also pointed out that in Mike De Vivo's case, even after picking out specific boulder, one of the markers is hard to see because the flat face is not sitting up.

Co-Chair Consolino asked if people were leaning toward the concrete options, and Staff King said they would do that option anyway but they should discuss if they want to do the boulder option, too. The committee had discussed providing the two marker options since one is higher end plus tree only option.

Member Panelli asked if anyone else's program offered trees only. Staff King said her family personally had a tree for their family with no marker. Member Panelli said that he didn't think of this before but thought it was a good idea. He added that if they do a boulder they should make it simple, use the company, and not screw around with it.

Member Panelli also added that trees should maybe cost more and wanted to clarify if they will be 2" trees, and Staff Udarbe did not recall the committee specifying the tree size but 2" trees were around \$200 to \$250 which is what they based the pricing on. Member Panelli asked if they would warrant them for 10 years and Staff Udarbe said they should discuss. He added that they will have some trees dies so that replacement cost needs to be built into the program and Staff King said they can increase the program costs to cover it all. Member Panelli said that it couldn't hurt.

Member Panelli noted at other communities charge \$800 and Staff King said they could add \$150 to \$200 as a contingency fee. Co-Chair Consolino added that on top of that, prices for everything do not seem to be going down. Staff King said they could revisit the program every year to adjust if needed.

Co-Chair Consolino confirmed the bronze plaque in stone boulder around \$1,167. Member Panelli confirmed this is the premium option. The committee was also looking at the plaque and concrete option, as well as just a tree option.

Member Turrise told the committee that Roger said they get the best bang for their buck with a 2" tree, and Staff King explained that any bigger gets transplant shock.

Co-Chair Consolino asked how many trees they should offer, and Staff Udarbe said around 5 then read staff's tree recommendations. The committee discussed the types of trees and also determined that after the 10-year warranty mark, they will work with applicants on tree replacement at the program tree rate should the tree die. After discussing all of the tree options, the committee came to a consensus to offer seven trees: Red Maple, Linden, Oak, Norway Spruce, American Hornbeam, Hackberry, and Red Bud.

They discussed how they will offer the concrete and boulder markers as well as a tree only and then discussed pricing. Staff King explained that the supplement sheet recommended \$300 for a tree, \$750 for the tree and concrete marker and \$1,500 for the tree and boulder marker. She added that based on the discussion on the contingency pricing, she asked if they should be even at \$500, \$1,000, and \$2,000 for those options. The committee agreed that this adds cushion for the program.

Member Turrise asked what the punishment would be if people are caught vandalizing and Co-Chair Consolino said she can put it on public safety committee to discuss deterrents and added they wanted to talk about lighting.

The committee motioned to approve the following details for the program: \$500 for tree only; \$1,000 for tree with a bronze and concrete marker, and; \$2,000 for tree with a bronze plaque and boulder marker. They will offer the following trees: Red Maple, Linden, Oak, Norway Spruce, American Hornbeam, Hackberry, and Red Bud.

They further discussed the option to replace a tree after the ten years at the price of a tree at the time. Staff Udarbe asked if that is an SOP or part of the application and they decided to put it in the application.

A resident present at meeting noted that Lockport only charges \$300 for a tree. Staff noted that Lockport is supplementing their costs and have recently also increased tree prices to \$400. Staff found that Lockport has a foundation and that the details explain that applicants pay, at the time, \$800 for a bench, then they foundation pays to install a \$1,000 bench. It was also added that the new bench pricing is at \$1,500.

Member Turrise asked if these tree planting will help the Tree City USA and Staff King said that they will be included.

Co-Chair Consolino asked about what months they will be doing the program planting and Staff King said maybe the motion can say the planting will be done per code, which Staff Udarbe confirmed is September 15th to December 15th and March 15th to June 15th. Staff King said those dates are very liberal, where as they should be more conservative when it comes to memorial trees. Staff Udarbe pointed out the program details explained they will accept applications year-round, but trees can only be planted in spring and fall and that every effort will be made for timely-fashion. She added that this is broad and would allow staff to make that decision and the committee agreed this is best.

The committee also agreed to not allowing ashes and Staff Udarbe said that detail will be added to the program. They also agreed that they will send a photo to the applicant after the tree is planted and this can also be added in the details.

The committee reviewed the application and the SOP for the program. The committee discussed that they are open to all parks for planting and Staff Udarbe said if everyone picks the same park, then this can be revisited.

Staff King asked if they need approval from Parks and Environment Committee and wanted to know if this committee would make final approval. The committee think the planting should go to Parks committee first and go to environment committee.

Member Cirillo made a motion to approve the SOP seconded by Member Panelli.

b) 2023 Environment Committee Event/Activity Dates

Staff King told the committee that she had put in the order for the free trees and that she will hear back mid-March and with provide an update then.

She discussed big tree with the marketing group and added dates for all of the stuff coming up. Staff King explained that they are usually not so proactive but she wanted a schedule for dates to push out. She said Fridays seem like a good

day to push stuff out every two weeks and said the idea was every 2 weeks until the event.

Staff King asked Member Turrise if he wanted to get more people to help measure trees and she added that staff members are also interested. Member Turrise said that he wanted the property owners to be present when he is on the property measuring. Co-Chair Consolino said they can push it on social media and it will be in the newsletter.

The committee discussed starting pushing out this event Mid-March and doing weekly reminders instead of every other week. The committee came to a consensus that it would be a good idea and Staff King said she will get with Alana.

Member Turrise asked if Roger will be involved and explained to the committee that he is a great teacher and works to show other how to identify trees. He added that this is super beneficial to everyone when he gives this.

Co-Chair Consolino asked if big tree should be a separate board meeting in May, Staff King said she want to talk to Member Turrise – she asked if they wanted to pull it back to February. Co-Chair Consolino said she would prefer to do it now and Community and Nature in Harmony later in the fall. She said they weren't too late to move it up and thought it would be a cool to do it the same night as the arbor day proclamation. Member Turrise said that Roger needs to see leaves in order to identify, otherwise he tried to bring him branches as a sample to use to identify. Staff King said they could wait until May then and do the presentation then.

Staff King said they had not decided a date for Tree planting. She explained they started talking about it last time, but moved on before deciding. Co-Chair Consolino asked when they usually do it and Staff King said around Arbor Day since it is an arbor day event. The committee discussed potential dates and times and came to a consensus for Tuesday, April 25th at around 11am. Staff King told the committee she recommended Bald Cypress, Hackberry, or Ironwoods. The committee discussed the recommended trees, their availability, and location. Staff King added that Jennifer didn't have a recommendation but wanted oaks in Lamer's Park in the fall. They came to a consensus to plant in Lamer's park and to plant all three, if they have the funding for it, but Hackberry and Bald Cypress will be the priority of they can only have two.

Member Turrise said he thought there was a planting September and Staff King said that is the fall planting for Lands Day. Member Panelli asked if this was them planting the seedlings, and Staff King said that this was the bigger tree they were planting. Co-Chair Consolino confirmed the seedlings was May 21st and explained they are doing a registration fee this year and opening up the age range. Co-Chair Consolino said they will start marketing April 7th and Staff King asked if they wanted to do weekly push out here too and the committee said yes.

Co-Chair Consolino showed the committee the Plastic Free July handout that will go out in the newsletter that goes out to all of the residents in the Village. She added that there are perforated edges for people to tear out and it looks very nice. She said they are looking to get “no lithium battery” stickers for trash bins.

The committee also discussed the May 6th recycling event and Co-Chair Consolino said they should also start marketing that and will send out a reminder email. The committee discussed future plans for magnets one day, but they are very expensive. Staff King said that the page this year was an extra 7cent per issues, around \$500 to \$600 added to the total printing cost, which was a huge savings as they typically spend around \$2,500 for the cutout. The committee thanked Member Panelli for his work on this.

Staff King asked if they are interested in running another article this year and Member Panelli said yes. They explored the options of using social media or the Patch and sharing some of the articles already written for Plastic Free July. Staff King said the committee can come up with weekly, or twice weekly, social media posts for Plastic Free July. The committee thinks this is a great idea and thought they should update the Village website.

8. New Business.

a) Mayors Monarch Pledge

Staff King explained that a resident sent an email about the Mayors Monarch Pledge and the committee agreed that it is important to protect these species and other pollinators. Staff King said they should go through the action items and decide if the program is achievable. The committee decided to pick the following action items for the application for the pledge: Issue a Proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat; Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods, and; Plant native milkweed and pollinators in a community garden. The committee agreed to take this to the Village Board.

Staff King also told the committee that Co-Chair Pazmino had recommended Fran to be on the environment committee and that it will be going to the March 8th VB meeting. The committee said they were happy and excited.

b) PFA Chemicals

Member Turrise gave a presentation on PFAs, simply known as forever chemicals, and gave a summary of the many events for PFA education he had attended. He told the committee and Will County has one of the highest levels of PFAs in the soil. He recently attended a seminar sponsored by the Sierra Club about PFA contamination in the USA, which drew in many other communities across the nation. The mayor of Lockport sponsored a presentation about PFAs in Lockport's water and wanted people to know the water is safe. This presentation was done by engineer in charge of treatment plants and community wells. Baxter Industry was also there to explain how

they test for PFAs. They tested the water and only one shallow well had slight traces of PFAs and is safe to drink. Member Turrise explained that PFAs are everywhere and clean up of these chemicals would take billions of dollars, which would have a negative impact to smaller communities. Member Turrise said a carbon filter or reverse osmosis is the only way to treat private water.

9. Announcements/Committee Member Communication

Member Panelli had an update on community solar. He reiterated this is a two-step sign up process. He said he followed up the complaint and it turned out the resident had not seen then email and was not aware of this process. Member Panelli said he also reached out and verified that other communities do not have customer service issues and that this instance was not a customer service issue, but a misunderstanding. He asked the committee that, with this background, if they can push out the program more. He added that they have a calculator on the website to see the savings. They could put out a booth at the farmer's market or do more things online to get people in and asked if they needed more budget for it. JC said they included this in the newsletter. The committee discussed other ways to push out the program and offer incentives.

Staff King said they needed to revisit the stargazing as they need to engage with potential indoor entertainment this upcoming month. She said this discussion is usually very quick and listed the past entertainment they have used in the past: critter people, wolf ranch, bird people, and cross-town exotics. The members discussed and came to a consensus to switch it up. Staff King said she will look who had come in the past, but not recently. Co-Chair Consolino said it might be cool to incorporate community solar and Member Turrise mentioned that his neighbor Josh has done solar education exhibits before. Staff King also told the committee she was thinking about doing a hot cocoa or a small food truck for the event and Co-Chair Consolino said this would be a great idea. Member Cirillo mentioned that Sandhill Coffee truck might be available. The committee discussed and reiterated that the event is on May 26th.

10. Adjournment/ Committee Members Communication.

Member Cirillo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm and Member Turrise seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:



Taylor Udarbe
Assistant Planner