

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved 03/20/2025

MEETING MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

January 16, 2025, 6:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order Establish a Quorum
 - a. *Dave Shah, Staff Liaison, called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.*
 - b. *Roll call found Chair Nazree Williams, Commissioner Bob Blaus, Commissioner Victoria Burris, Commissioner Tyler Kesler present. Commissioner Allen Rodriguez arrived after roll call at 7:00 P.M. Co-Chair Tom Cherrington was absent.*
 - c. *Aldermanic liaison, Alderman Christopher Swiatek, arrived at 7:22 P.M.*
 - d. *Staff liaison present included Assistant Director of Public Works, Dave Shah, and Public Works Administrative Assistant, Ashley Heidorn.*
 2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2024
 - i. *Blaus made a motion, seconded by Williams, to approve the Meeting Minutes.*
 1. *Voting Yea: Williams, Blaus, Burris, Kesler*
 2. *Voting Nay: None*
 3. Public Participation/Presentations
 - a. Green Power Community – Municipal Aggregation Program
 - i. *Mr. Adam Hoover of NIMEC presented information regarding West Chicago Municipal Aggregation, which allows for group purchasing for residential power. All residents would have the option to opt in/out at no cost/fee, and it guarantees residents pay the same rate as ComEd. The City would receive one of three options for participating: a civic contribution of \$30,000.00 annually, Green Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) plus EPA Green Community recognition, or free electricity supply to Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) accounts (roughly 10 residents). Discussion: *The Commissioners asked various questions to weigh the options proposed. They expressed a desire for further time to consider participation in the program and make a recommendation.**
4. Items for Consent
 - a. *None*
5. Review and Discuss the Commission Priority List
 - a. Current List
 - i. Sustainability Plan – Subcommittee Update
Discussion: *Burris is awaiting response from Batavia regarding their single-use bag fees and the results of their efforts. She also offered to reach out to neighboring municipalities to see how similar efforts may be*

operating and the results of these to determine if something similar could help reduce single-use bag waste in the City.

- ii. Holiday Lights Recycling Event – November 29, 2024, to January 17, 2025

- 1. Location: City Hall, New Hope United Methodist Church, Murphy Ace Hardware, Water Treatment Plant, Library, The ARC Center

Discussion: Shah noted the collection event ends tomorrow, so he will follow-up with the Commission regarding collection totals.

b. New Additions

- i. Spring Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up Event (Hawthorne Lane), TBD

- 1. Meet up location: Water Treatment Plant, 1400 W. Hawthorne Lane, West Chicago

- ii. Blooming Fest – May 17, 2025, 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

- 1. Location: Downtown West Chicago

Discussion: Shah noted that the Commission's application for a booth at Blooming Fest has been submitted.

- iii. Paper Shredding Event & Rain Barrels Pick Up – June 7, 2025, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

- 1. Location: West Chicago METRA Station Parking Lot

Discussion: Commissioners expressed interest in continuing the Rain Barrel Program, so Shah will submit the application to the Conservation Foundation. Blaus stated he would reach out to eWorks, the company that handles much of Kane County's non-curbside recycling collection, about possibly working together to expand the Paper Shredding Event to include additional items for collection.

6. Other Business

- a. Newsletters & Subcommittee

Discussion: Williams suggested forming a subcommittee to brainstorm topics and work with the City's Marketing & Communications Manager to determine some parameters for the newsletter. Williams and Burris volunteered to be subcommittee members.

- b. Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Ban Discussion

Discussion: The Commission thought a ban could be environmentally friendly but did not believe it to be feasible to implement due to challenges and financial burdens for the community and local businesses. The Commission would like more research and public feedback through a community survey in 2025.

- c. Recycle Coach

Discussion: Shah provided an overview of the Recycle Coach app and its functions. Heidorn provided a recap of the Recycle Coach informational webinar she attended, including some of the app's functions such as garbage/recycling pickup reminders, recycling tips, and a "what goes where?" search function. Discussion followed.

- i. Blaus made a motion, seconded by Kesler, to recommend beginning the onboarding process and move forward with Recycle Coach.

- d. Groot Contract Update

Discussion: Shah shared that the new Groot contract was approved by City Council on November 24, 2024, for a seven-year term length. He noted a 4% cap per year to reflect adjustments for inflation, and residents are estimated to save \$1.2 million over the seven-year period compared to the other waste provider proposal submissions.

e. Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Discussion: Burris noted that she reached out to the West Chicago Public Library about the possibility of hosting a native planting class but is still waiting for their response. She also suggested planting ground cover plants and/or milkweed on the medians along North Avenue west of Powis. Shah noted that it may be possible to incorporate that in the new medians to be installed along Route 38. Rodriguez similarly suggested incorporating plantings/beautification along Route 59, which Shah noted may be difficult due to space limitations and access issues as well as extensive coordination with IDOT. Shah noted that there is an open pledge to complete by the end of March for the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, and Burris expressed interest in putting said pledge together.

f. Other Discussions:

- i. *Shah shared that he would be out of town for the February meeting, and inquired if the Commission would still like to meet; there was a consensus to cancel the February meeting.*
- ii. *Shah noted that the Commission's application to participate in Blooming Fest was already submitted.*
 1. *The Commission expressed interest in distributing bare roots again at Blooming Fest and requested that Shah reach out to the County regarding such.*

7. Adjournment

- a. *At 7:57 P.M., Blaus made a motion to adjourn, and Kesler seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.*

Respectfully,

Ashley Heidorn
Public Works Administrative Assistant