AGENDA

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

August 16, 2023, 6:30 P.M.
City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call/Attendance**
3. **Public Comment**
4. **Approval of Minutes from the May 17, 2023 Meeting**
5. **Approval of Minutes from the July 19, 2023 Meeting**
6. **2023 Goals: Greenest Region Compact / Mayor's Monarch Pledge**
   a. **Focus: Recycling and Composting**
7. **Johnny Appleseed Festival: September 30**
8. **Discuss possible topics for event handouts.**
9. **Open Discussion**
10. **Next Meeting: October 18, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.**
11. **Adjourn**

If assistance is needed in order to participate in a City of Crystal Lake public meeting, please contact Nick Hammonds, Assistant City Manager, at 815-459-2020, at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, if possible, to make arrangements.

MINUTES
Sustainability Committee
May 17, 2023
Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at Crystal Lake City Hall.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following committee members: Steve Platt, Amy Olson, Carol Elkins, Terry Dieckhoff, and Simon Gibson. Members of the public in attendance were Vignesh Tiruvannamalai, Management Analyst Josh Allain, and Assistant City Manager Nick Hammonds.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes from April 19, 2023

Amy Olson moved to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2023 meeting. Carol Elkins seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

5. Guest Speaker: Vignesh Tiruvannamalai

The Committee welcomed guest speaker Vignesh to discuss the efforts he has taken at his local school to improve sustainability. He stated that he identified many areas in his school's operations that could become more sustainable, including the use of composting bins for the lunch room, water conservation practices, education about proper recycling, and getting more recycling bins in the school. He researched low cost options to help address these issues.

Vignesh discussed how he contacted his school council, worked with staff and custodians, and worked with students to educate and gain buy-in to adopt green practices. He created flyers and presentations to provide education on sustainable practices. He also created a map for his school to show the placement of recycling and composting bins. In addition, he created a program for recycling markers and ink cartridges for free. Vignesh also worked with his local food pantry to start food composting. Vignesh discussed numerous awards he has received for his efforts, including a clean water award and an award from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA).

Simon Gibson discussed the importance of communication as a low cost option to conduct outreach. He asked if Vignesh experienced any barriers or push back, and how he overcame those barriers. Vignesh stated that there was initial push back to change. He stated that by demonstrating the impact of sustainable efforts, and how easy they can be, helped him to gain buy-in from his residence hall community. He noticed an immediate change in recycling behaviors once the education materials were provided.

Steve Platt asked if Vignesh has benchmarked the successes of his programs in any scientific units. Vignesh stated that he has to a degree, but he has not completed a full analysis yet. He estimated that the school saved over 800 gallons of recyclable material every week in the residence hall, and 300

pounds of food waste in one day at the food pantry. He also stated that he estimates the efforts contributed to reducing 100 pounds of methane production from the composted food waste.

Amy Olson discussed the lifestyle skills class that Vignesh created, and she asked if he has promoted the use of an aerator on faucets to conserve water. Vignesh stated he had heard about the product, He further discussed his communication efforts through social media, and the Committee's posts on Facebook to promote sustainability. Steve Platt and Amy Olson stated that the Committee could benefit from a post by Vignesh to support and promote his efforts.

Carol Elkins gave praise to Vignesh for efforts in education the youth. Steve Platt asked if Vignesh has seen a higher level interest from the people his age. Vignesh stated that his age group has been very receptive. But, there were still some people who did not engage and needed more direction to pick up the habits.

Carol Elkins asked Vignesh about his plans after high school. Vignesh stated that he plans to study environmental science and sustainability in college. He has had an interest in sustainable from a young age. Simon Gibson stated that he hopes other students become ambassadors for sustainability, a train the trainers approach to getting more people to change their behaviors. This sentiment was echoed by the Committee as the Committee agrees that getting the youth to adopt sustainable behaviors will help their parents to do the same.

Steve Platt asked the Committee about different approaches to make it easier for people to properly recycle. Carol Elkins stated that, 30 years ago, there was no recycling, and people picked it up pretty quickly. Simon Gibson stated that people would feel good about recycling, but the larger issue is to get people not to buy items that are not sustainable, compostable or recyclable. Carol Elkins stated that that is a fundamental issue, since the individual buyer cannot change how a product is packaged, such as food items in a grocery store coming in plastic packaging. Terry Dieckhoff stated that it comes down to habits and education. Terry discussed his experience with the baggers at the grocery store and how he often has to tell them not to use so many plastic bags.

The Committee thanked Vignesh for his time and invited him to attend a future Sustainability Committee meeting.

6. Bike With Your Neighbor Event: Sunday, June 11, 2023

Nick Hammonds inquired the Committee for their availability for the BWYN event in June. Amy Olson and Steve Platt stated they will be there. Simon Gibson, Carol Elkins, and Terry Dieckhoff could not attend.

7. 2023 Goals: Greenest Region Compact / Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Amy Olson discussed a recycling facility for 'hard to recycle' materials in Cook County. Carol Elkins discussed the options available at the townships and the Styrofoam recycling facility in Algonquin. Terry Dieckhoff discussed how there are various locations to drop off various items, but there is not really a 'one-stop shop' to bring all items.

Steve Platt discussed the use of coal tar sealant for driveway sealing. Terry Dieckhoff stated that preventing its use in the watershed would be beneficial. Carol Elkins stated that finding a link for the

Committee to share with an article or Facebook post would help to educate residents. Steve Platt stated that the materials sold at the local store are typically fine, but the door-to-door companies with the trailer are likely not using sustainable materials.

Carol Elkins reviewed the action items for the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. The Committee discussed the upcoming plans to add plantings at the City Hall rain garden. The Committee also discussed how to contact local gardening clubs. Carol Elkins stated that she has some contacts she could reference, Amy Olson stated that she has some contacts for local gardening groups as well. Carol Elkins discussed a butterfly event on August 13th being held by the Park District at Main Beach. Amy Olson discussed increased signage for the Park District's pollinator pockets, and the possibility of having uniform signage at the pollinator pockets and the City's rain gardens.

8. Open Discussion

Nick Hammonds made an announcement to the Committee that Josh Allain will be taking over as the staff liaison for the Committee. Nick Hammonds thanked the Committee for their efforts over the past five years, and how the impact made on the Community by the Committee is important work to make the world more sustainable.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, Amy Olson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Carol Elkins seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.

AGENDA

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

July 19, 2023, 6:30 P.M.
City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at Crystal Lake City Hall.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following committee members: Steve Platt, Amy Olsen, Carol Elkins, Simon Gibson, Cordell Crane, Jen Olive, and Emilie Hoffman. Members of the public in attendance were Vignesh Tiruvannamalai and Management Analyst Josh Allain.

3. Public Comment

Vignesh Tiruvannamalai presented an item for the committee to consider for publishing on the City's social media account. Vignesh has created items in the past that the committee has had published, the committee approved of the new focus that will deviate from paste topics. Amy Olsen requested that the social media post mention the topic of plastic recycling at grocery stores, Josh Allain confirmed this will be possible. The committee discussed the importance of calling out specific recycling and disposal locations for hard to dispose of items such as plastic bags. Amy Olson, Jen Oliver, and Carol Elkins researched possible stores who will collect the specialty items. Simon Gibson inquired on how the Committee can begin to better educate and promote the topic of plastic bag recycling to the public through communications. The group discussed the possibility of having a recycling themed social media post for the following month. Following the discussion of social media posts on recycling, Steve Platt asked the committee how they can get in touch with business to partner with them for plastic bag recycling at their stores.

Following discussions on recycling and social media, the committee focused on the 2023 Green Businesses Designation program. The committee talked about taking a more active role in the promotion and recognition of businesses who have received the designation. The committee talked about the possibility of recognizing businesses on social media, with window decals showing the official emblem, and the possibility of having City Council recognition. Josh Allain explained that the City does recognition for commercial business anniversaries and new businesses on social media, so social media would be a possibility. Steve Platt brought up the idea of having some formal get together event for all business who have received this designation. The group ended the discussion of the Green Businesses Designation program and decided that recognition in newsletters, social media, and some form of council recognition would be preferred methods.

4. Chairperson and Vice Chair Selection

Before beginning the vote for the Char and Vice Chair, the committee discussed past position holders. Cordell Crane said that he believed the committee should expand their scope to discuss City wide sustainability initiatives and that they should be working with the Fire department on the City's emergency response initiatives in the case of disasters. The group discussed what could qualify the committee to be expanding its scope from environmental sustainability to City sustainability issues.

Amy Olson nominated Carol Elkins for the position of Sustainability Committee Chairperson, Jen Olive seconded this action. All committee members presented voted, Carol Elkins was unanimously voted as the Chairperson.

Carol Elkins nominated Amy Olsen for the position of Sustainability Committee Vice Chair and Jen Oliver nominated Cordell Crane for the position of Sustainability Committee Vice Chair. All committee members presented voted and unanimously elected Amy Olson as the Vice Chair.

5. 2023 Goals: Greenest Region Compact / Mayor's Monarch Pledge

a. Focus: Recycling and Composting

The committee wants to review the GRC and has requested that copies of it be sent out to the group. Amy Olson would like to have members of the committee review the documents and outline which items they believe the committee should focus its attention on. As a part of the larger discussion on recycling, Simon Gibson brought up the importance of recycling clothing. Simon Gibson and Carol Elkins spoke to methods that can be done to recycle clothing and Amy Olson brought up the impacts and benefits that clothing donations can have. Carol Elkins focused the group back on to the five pillars of the Greenest Region Compact. As a part of this, Carol wanted to know where the City was at in regards to gardens that were being created in front of City Hall.

6. Johnny Appleseed Festival: September 30

Jen Oliver talked about the possibility of setting up a table at the event that focused on recycling. The committee asked if they will have a budget for this event. Cordell Crane asked if the table will provide some form of entertainment for people at the Festival. The committee wants to create some form of a game that will get children to interact with the table, and allow members of the committe to talk to families about environmental sustainability topics. The committee also talked about creating some form branded "swag" that could be given out at the Festival.

7. Open Discussion

The committee skipped open discussion, as they had talked about alternative topics to the individual items of the agenda, during the item discussions.

8. Next Meeting: August 16, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

9. Adjourn

There will be no further business, Cordell Crane moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Amy Olson seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.

If assistance is needed in order to participate in a City of Crystal Lake public meeting, please contact Nick Hammonds, Assistant City Manager, at 815-459-2020, at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, if possible, to make arrangements.