MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
May 21, 2025,
City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. on Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at Crystal Lake City Hall by Amy Olson.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following Committee members: Emilie Hoffman, Steve Platt, Amy Olson, Dean Farr, Jen Oliver, Terry Dieckhoff, Lisa McLaughlin, and Vignesh Tiruvannamalai by phone. Members of the public in attendance: Community Development Analyst Victoria Wojcik and Assistant to City Manager Ryan Oates.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Approval of Minutes from the February 19, 2025 Meeting

Lisa McLaughlin made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2025 Sustainability Committee meeting. Emilie Hoffman seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

5. Litter Clean Up Initiatives

Ryan Oates explained that Mayor Haleblian has directed the Sustainability Committee meeting to focus primarily on litter cleanup initiatives and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. He stated that the Crystal Lake Adopt-A-Highway program is an existing program that is an option for the Sustainability Committee to participate in. He also proposed that the Committee can promote the Mayor's Monarch Pledge at clean up events hosted by the Sustainability Committee.

Amy Olson stated that businesses and community organizations should get involved in the Adopt-A-Highway program. Businesses can receive good recognition for participating in this program. She further stated that the Committee can reach out to businesses to "adopt" roads near their location, which followed the example of General Kinematics adopting Pingree Road as mentioned by Ryan Oates. Dean Farr and Lisa McLaughlin discussed that the Chamber of Commerce hosts an event around Earth Day every year, which has also included recycling pickup, prescription taking, and electronic recycling in the past. They further stated that these previous events have had successful turnout, and that the Sustainability Committee should partner with them for this event.

Ryan Oates and Dean Farr discussed proposing getting schools involved by picking up litter in their local area or property. Amy Olson also stated that homeowners associations can have litter pickup events on their property as well. Emilie Hoffman mentioned that churches can also get involved. Dean Farr stated that these groups would encourage community pride by keeping their environment

clean and by creating intrinsic value of the area. He also mentioned promoting education to businesses to properly fill and secure their trash dumpsters to prevent litter from coming out.

Ryan Oates showed the current map of Adopt-A-Highway roads on the Crystal Lake website. Amy Olson stated that the Committee should further develop the program before reaching out to businesses and organizations, such as identifying more areas close to businesses and organizations that they can target. Lisa McLaughlin mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce may have a list of what businesses in the area are sustainable. Ryan also mentioned that the City of Crystal Lake can promote the trash pickup events on social media once they are finalized. Additionally, Amy Olson proposed the idea of hosting a concert or handing out seeds at these events to show appreciation for the participants.

6. Mayor's Monarch Pledge

The Committee reviewed the selected action items for the 2025 Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Ryan Oates announced that Nancy from the Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee (WPPC) is looking to host an educational event at the rain garden in front of City Hall, and she would like the Sustainability Committee members to be present. Ryan Oates and Victoria Wojcik stated that they will confirm a date with Nancy and let the Committee know. Dean Farr and Ryan Oates discussed that if any properties in Crystal Lake are certified habitats by the National Wildlife Federation, the property owners can send in photos to the City to potentially be featured online.

The Sustainability Committee further discussed a potential community art project to meet one of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge objectives. Amy Olson presented the idea of a monarch butterfly photo contest. Emilie Hoffman proposed the idea of painting a mural on areas such as the Route 14 tunnel or part of a building on one of the Crystal Lake Park District properties. Steve Platt said that high schools would want to participate in mural painting. Amy Olson said that she will consider the idea of a mural on Park District property, and that art teachers can also be included to organize the project.

7. Open Discussion

Dean Farr discussed that the Girl Scouts recently planted oak trees that were donated by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the City is maintaining the trees. Dean also showed two pictures of Cress Creek and one picture of McHenry Avenue. He was proposing the idea of not mowing these City-owned areas to promote habitat. Amy Olson brought up that not mowing could lead to invasive plants growing. However, if the area were maintained, then no invasive plants would grow. The Committee agreed that educating workers about invasive plants would be proper first thing to do.

Emilie Hoffman asked if Crystal Lake had composting services. Ryan Oates said that the City does not have composting services at this time, but the City has yard waste services. Amy Olson suggested that homeowners associations or management companies can hold local compost sites.

8. Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, Lisa McLaughlin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. Dean Farr seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, all voted aye. Meeting adjourned.