

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Hayley, Lennon, Mezzatesta, Veazie (arriving at 7:03) and Student Commissioner Stierwalt (arriving at 7:04).

Absent: None

Also Present: Commissioners Charrette and Drury (both attending virtually, not voting pursuant to Open Meetings Act), Management Analyst Seth Jansen

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**3. LAKESHORE RECYCLING SYSTEMS**

Mr. Jansen briefly introduced Katie Neary from LRS. Ms. Neary introduced herself and provided an overview of LRS operations in River Forest. Ms. Neary answered pre-submitted questions from the Commission. Ms. Neary outlined LRS's focus on domestic recycling, the benefits of adoption of extended producer responsibility, and continued focus on new technologies and acquisitions related to both recycling and composting. LRS indicated they continue to work to identify materials that can be recycled and composted, including the addition of paper cups as a recyclable material. LRS also indicated that most further recycling opportunities for the Village are likely special drop off or collection events, rather than part of the curbside program, and noted that Flat Can Recycling is a company that specializes in drop-off collection events. When compared to neighboring communities, River Forest has a greater number of households, in terms of percentage of the community, participating in the curbside composting program.

Ms. Neary indicated that, anecdotally, community newsletters appear to be the most effective way to engage with the community and increase participation, especially if it is consistent in promoting the available programs and resources. Partnerships with local schools, businesses, and organizations to see how organizations can work together to promote programs. With regards to the Village's composting program, Ms. Neary suggested that backyard composting also be promoted and share the benefits of composting, including reductions to greenhouse gas emissions. Ms. Neary also informed the Commission that the Village's contract with LRS includes a provision for an annual informational brochure to be mailed out to all residents; she suggested this provision be used to send out a postcard mailer

promoting specific information or programs available to residents. The Village could share successes by promoting the Village's waste statistics and sharing individual testimonials.

The largest contaminate in the recycling system is soft plastic, such as plastic bags, wrappers, films, and plastic tubes or hoses. Clothing, textiles, food waste, and compost bags are also frequent contaminants. Ms. Neary stated that consistent education towards residents makes a huge difference in raising awareness of programs and reducing contamination in compost and recycling programs.

In discussing ways to reduce waste reduction, total weight of waste is the best indicator for tracking waste diversion. Recycling and compost weight are not as reliable as recyclables weigh less and compost often includes yard waste. Ms. Neary also discussed ways LRS is seeking to save costs and stay up to date with new technologies in recycling and composting.

Chairperson Simon asked about how to communicate that recycling actually does divert items from the landfill using available data. Commissioner Charrette inquired about how to reduce landfill waste, asked what landfill waste is per capita, and what the most effective way would be to encourage residents to produce less waste. Commissioner Mezzatesta inquired about providing updated information and infographics for what can and cannot be recycled and also sharing the information with multifamily residential buildings that are not on the Village collection plan. Commissioner Lennon asked for further clarification on how participation rates and weights are not the best measures. Commissioner Charrette inquired about a potential extended producer responsibility law in Illinois.

Following Ms. Neary's presentation, the Commission discussed the information provided and what actions could be taken. Commissioner Mezzatesta suggested the Village and Commission focus on the weight of garbage collected and continue working to see a reduction in that information. Chairperson Simon stated that the Village and Commission should make sure to follow up with LRS; Mr. Jansen noted the informational mailer. The Commission suggested that the mailer include the annual waste and recycling collection events that will be held over the next year. The Commission discussed the need to market successes to the residents.

#### **4. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Mezzatesta made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Veazie to approve the meeting minutes as amended from December 12, 2023.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Hayley, Lennon, Mezzatesta, Veazie

Not Voting: Commissioners Charrette and Drury

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

#### **5. PROPOSED EV CHARGING STATION OVERSTAY FEE ORDINANCE**

Mr. Jansen briefly outlined the memorandum prepared for the Commission and the various types of fees for which the ChargePoint system allows. The Commission discussed how the fee would be collected and how the ChargePoint system works. Chairperson Simon clarified that the problem this proposed ordinance is trying to address is that the cars remain parked after they have completed charging, especially given that this is the only publicly available charging station in the Village. Mr. Jansen outlined what a potential text ordinance would state and shared information regarding what other communities charge for use of their public charging stations. The Commissioners discussed what the fee should be for remaining parked too long at the charging station. Chairperson Simon indicated that a time-based fee would better address the issue than a fee starting upon completion of charge, as the latter could still result in longer charge times for some. The Commission discussed what time frame should be prior to the fee being levied and how much the fee should be. The Commission briefly discussed a fee structure that progressively increases; Mr. Jansen indicated he was unsure if such a fee structure could be implemented through the ChargePoint system. The Commission came to a consensus that a fee of five dollars per hour after two hours of free charging and a maximum amount of twenty dollars per charging session. The Commission indicated they'd like to review a draft ordinance at the next meeting before formally recommending to the Board.

Commissioner Mezzatesta made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Veazie to instruct staff to draft an ordinance establishing a fee for the electric vehicle charging station of five dollars per hour after the first two hours, with a maximum fee of twenty dollars.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Hayley, Lennon, Mezzatesta, Veazie

Not Voting: Commissioners Charrette and Drury

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

## **6. COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Jansen briefly outlined the upcoming planned newsletter and social media posts. Commissioner Mezzatesta had previously provided some suggested articles that would be utilized in the upcoming newsletters. Commissioner Mezzatesta suggested discussing the Commission providing letters to the editor of the Wednesday Journal at the next meeting; Chairperson Simon indicated it would be added to the next meeting's agenda.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jansen noted that the UIC graduate students in their planning program would be making a trip to the Village on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> as part of their plan making project for the Village.

**8. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, February 13, 2024.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Veazie made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lennon to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM.

Roll Call:

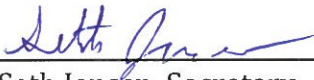
Ayes: Chairperson Simon, Commissioners Hayley, Lennon, Mezzatesta, Veazie

Not Voting: Commissioners Charrette and Drury

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.



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Seth Jansen, Secretary