

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

APRIL 16, 2024

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting of the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee (SEC) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on Tuesday, April 16 at 7:03 pm.

The following members were present:

Members: Michael Buoscio
McCamie Cole
Alexa Richer
Sophia Twichell

Absent: Brian Rener, Chair
Marietta Hance

Also Present: Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)

AVA Gable stated that in Chair Rener's absence, a Chair Pro Tempore will need to be established and that Member Twichell is the longest standing member. Member McCamie made a motion to establish Member Twichell as the Chair Pro Tempore for the Tuesday, April 16 SEC meeting and the motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

2. Consideration of the February 20, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

There were no edits to the meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Member Buoscio and seconded by Member Richer to approve the minutes as presented.

3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment)

There were no non-agenda items.

4. General Business

a. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Presentation

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell stated that Dan Bounds from Baxter and Woodman is at tonight's meeting to present on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES"). Mr. Bounds will talk about the NPDES permit the Village has held for a long time.

Mr. Bounds stepped up to the podium. He shared that he will provide some information about the Village's stormwater quality program and where residents can ask questions about local water quality or express concerns about any water quality issues that might be happening within the Village. Mr. Bounds briefly explained the Illinois EPA program known as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System program ("MS4"). He noted this simply is called the Village's stormwater quality program and the Public Works Department is the lead agency for implementing the requirements from Illinois EPA for this program.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked Mr. Bounds to clarify if the word separate was referring to a separate system and not combined sewer overflow. Mr. Bounds replied yes and stated this program covers discharges from the Village's separate storm sewer system, not the combined or sanitary system that goes to treatment at a wastewater treatment plant. This system utilizes storm drain inlets and storm drain infrastructure where water flows- it receives no treatment and discharges to local waterways.

Mr. Bounds presented on the Village's stormwater quality program. He shared when stormwater hits land surfaces within the Village, it does pick up whatever has been left behind on the land surface and brings it into storm drain inlets (again noting the storm drain system receives no treatment before it goes into discharge).

Mr. Bounds noted that stormwater can contain a lot of material. If left behind, pollutants will get into our waterways through stormwater. So, things like sediment, dirt, and disturbed soils can pollute our waterways. Nutrients like phosphorus or nitrogen from fertilizers or other chemical compounds can get into our waterways if misused, mishandled, or spilled. Dissolved metals, bacteria, and any detergents or oils or greases from washing equipment, vehicles, or maintenance of equipment can get into our waterways along with the general trash from roadway surfaces. Mr. Bounds explained that the Village is required by the Clean Water Act and Illinois EPA to implement programs practices to protect local water quality and prevent pollutants from getting into our storm drain system to the maximum extent practicable. He continued to describe the Illinois EPA programming and the steps the Village takes to monitor water quality.

Member Buoscio asked what the small numbers indicate on the map presented on the screen. Mr. Bounds responded that those are reach designations. So, every reach of a stream or a creek has a numeric code associated with that two-mile or a five-mile segment that have been defined by the water quality monitoring program.

Member Buoscio asked how many stream branches Lake Bluff has. Mr. Bounds stated that he does not know the exact number of stream branches specifically in Lake Bluff as there are several, but they are depicted on the graphic presented and every stream is divided into segments and coded. However, he said only select ones are on the impaired water list that have been monitored and show excessive pollution levels.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked where the exact location of Pettibone Creek was and Member Richer echoed her question. Member Richer identified that the creek was in North Chicago near the naval station, but it is in Lake County and the SEC continued discussing the location of creek.

Mr. Bounds outlined the required Illinois EPA program documentation as a part of the stormwater program including notices of intent and annual reports to describe the implementations of plans to preserve water quality.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked for the duration of the stormwater management plan, specifically asking if this was a 5 or a 10-year program. Mr. Bounds explained that the Village will need to apply for an intent to comply with the new permit and its requirements every five years. He continued discussing more in-depth documentation the Village complies with and shared where this information and recent documentation can be found on the Village's website.

Mr. Bounds moved to discuss the minimum control measures (program areas) that have been established to date and how the Village takes part in each of these categories. He presented on the six categories including: public education and outreach on storm water impacts, public involvement/participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site storm water runoff control, post-construction storm water management in new development and redevelopment, as well as pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations.

Mr. Bounds then explained the water quality monitoring program the Village complies with, such as annual water sampling in the Skokie River and two stormwater outfalls to Lake Michigan. He also shared that Lake County has its own water sampling that the Village also benefits from.

Member Buoscio asked if the inspections completed are timed after rainfall events to catch the outflow after it has formed on the streets and is picking up things. Mr. Bounds replied yes, the team is storm chasing, so they aim to test immediately after wet weather to catch the outflow as a majority of the time the separate storm drain is not flowing.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if the samples are taken once a year or multiple times throughout. Mr. Bounds answered these are taken once a year. Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if this was best practice. Mr. Bounds explained that sampling once a year does meet the requirements of the permit—that they could do it more often, but there is a cost associated with that and mentioned a few different approaches other communities may take to sample stormwater.

Member Richer asked what time of year the sample is typically taken as there may be other things such as algae that may affect the reading. Mr. Bounds answered that they target either spring or fall. He continued to explain how the Village's Public Works Department is trained on stormwater management and pollution prevention. He noted that they are also able to recognize when there may be illicit discharges. Mr. Bounds shared with the SEC that this Public Works training is also part of an annual requirement and outlined more details about this training program. Additionally, Mr. Bounds discussed how the Village's stormwater webpage has a lot of information about the impact that stormwater discharges may have on local water quality and what residents can do. He also offered the residents can contact the Village for questions on the stormwater quality program.

In terms of what is coming soon with this program, Mr. Bounds explained that within the months of April or May, the Illinois EPA should publish the new permit along with the new requirements.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if the Village needs to wait for the Illinois EPA to open the application process to renew the Village's permit. Mr. Bounds responded yes and explained that the Village can continue to comply with the current permit until the Illinois EPA gets the next version out.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if Mr. Bounds notices any particulates that are higher than others when testing. She stated that she knows the Village focuses on public education and does well in general, but asked if there are items that the Village should focus its attention on such as pet waste or native plantings based on what the test results are showing. Mr. Bounds says they usually see elevated levels of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen from fertilizers.

Member Cole noted there was a seasonality of the different types of pollutants with spring for example being heavier with fertilizer while winter is heavy with salt. Mr. Bounds agreed with Member Cole's comments stating that in the spring they see higher levels of chloride because the salt is washing off the watershed and as the summer goes on you expect to see lower concentrations.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell offered that even though the salt use in the winter is mostly in the Village's control, the nutrients are something the SEC can focus on.

Mr. Bounds also highlighted that it is important for dog owners to understand that they should not drop dog waste in storm drain inlets as they contribute to the pathogen levels seen in the water.

Member Cole asked if all of the storm drains in Lake Bluff lead to Lake Michigan. Mr. Bounds answered that he believes there are separate storm drain systems.

Member Buoscio added that this is a great transition to discuss the Village's deep tunnel project. He outlined the project and asked what the impact will be in terms of the volume of water going out to the lake from one point versus multiple in terms of the concentration and volume of elements that are being measured. Mr. Bounds responded it would not be different for those individual locations because if there is a certain pollutant load, it is just going out into different areas.

Member Buoscio asked if the Village monitors water quality at the beach as one of the discharge pipes is about 100 yards away from the beach. Member Cole mentioned that the water quality is tested daily during the swimming season and the other members of the SEC agreed.

Member Buoscio discussed efforts the Village has put forth in order to meet watershed requirements for water quality, such as scrubbing devices to trap pieces of hard sediment for example. However, he noted that education and awareness also tie into this, offering additional outreach and awareness through campaigns especially during the rainy seasons may be beneficial. Chair Pro Tempore Twichell echoed Member Buoscio's comments and highlighted that this is especially important for the outfalls going to Lake Michigan. A conversation continued. Mr. Bounds stated that the SEC has brought up good points and added this program does say if a community is conducting a flood control project to look for ways to improve water quality from discharges in the flood control. He also offered that Village Engineer Jeff Hansen and Lake Bluff

Public works are excellent resources to ask questions and they know exactly what portions of the underground infrastructure are separate and combined.

Member Cole asked Mr. Bounds if he had any experience with UV treatment or decontamination stations as there have been great successes with these. Mr. Bounds explained how this process has been used for wastewater treatment but not for stormwater. A conversation continued on the cost of implementing this type of decontamination system.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if this program is about measuring the outfall of the water quality once a year and not water treatment. Mr. Bounds stated this program is all about pollution prevention (keeping the pollutant load out of the storm drain system), so the Village doesn't have to provide treatment or a reduced pollutant load.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if there are filters in any of the pipes to capture solids, such as bottle caps. Mr. Bounds said he was unsure and that this would be a question for Village Engineer Hansen. However, he noted there are products on the market that can go right into the inlet where the water will be flowing into a basket. Member Buoscio added that he doesn't think the Village has filters in place to date. He also noted how this links back to the deep tunnel project as well as education and awareness because many residents may not consider what they are doing consciously. Mr. Bounds mentioned he has seen a version of the EPA permit coming out and stated the SEC's discussions are already on track with the new requirements.

The SEC thanked Mr. Bounds for his presentation.

5. Village Staff Report

AVA Gable shared that next month the SEC will hear from a speaker for the Bird City Illinois Migratory Bird Day Event. The theme of this year is insects, so the speaker will talk about the role insects play in relation to birds. AVA Gable noted that the Village received some questions back from Bird City Illinois and they already sent responses back. So hopefully the Village will hear something soon in terms of the final say on the submitted application and there won't be any issues. She stated the Village's application is still above the requirements for application.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked how the Village would announce this designation should the Village's application be approved. AVA Gable replied saying that is something that can be discussed. She shared they can put this in the e-newsletter, on the website, and are open to anything else beyond that.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked who the bird speaker is. AVA Gable responded it is Professor Marianne Alleyne from the University of Illinois' Department of entomology.

Member Cole stated he will have some questions on the large cicada hatch coming this summer.

AVA Gable also shared that she will continue to work with Chair Renner on the draft lighting ordinance so the SEC can move forward with that. She is unsure if it will be on the next agenda, but it will be sometime in the coming months.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if the conversation on bike planning will also cycle back. AVA Gable stated yes.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell also asked if the Village has received any other applications for backyard bees or chickens. AVA Gable noted that they have not received new applications as of this point, but the Village has recently renewed all of the licenses and all of the current holders wanted to renew. Chair Pro Tempore Twichell stated that this is great news.

6. Member's Report

Member Cole suggested that the SEC have some sort of centrally located poster or board in the Village to help spread awareness about the different messages or topics the SEC may be discussing to get the community more involved. Member Buoscio and Member Richer added that there could be information, links, and other valuable resources based on such a poster.

AVA Gable shared that this can be something that is added as an agenda item in a future meeting. In the meantime, the SEC can suggest any editions to the e-newsletter that goes out every Friday. Also, there is also the paper newsletter that gets mailed to residents about 3 times a year so this could be another option for a “sustainability corner.”

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked if the Village uses social media. AVA Gable mentioned that the Village does and that is something they could look into as well.

Member Cole added that as a part of this agenda item they could be to discuss resources and potential funding options that are available for this type of effort.

Chair Pro Tempore Twichell asked Member Richer how the SEC is going to find a replacement for her after she graduates. Member Richer shared she has been talking about that with VA Irvin for about a year. She explained the different ways she and the SEC may be to reach underclassman to complete the application process. A discussion continued.

Member Buoscio shared that it would be helpful for the SEC to hear more about the deep tunnel project and the different environmental factors that will be impacted on this project, weighing in on the potential best practices, as the ravines are going to be greatly impacted by this project for example. The SEC agreed that this would be an interesting topic to hear more about and post project plans as a future agenda item as the engineers on the project may not always be environmentally minded.

Member Richer offered that the SEC look for an environmental engineer who could perhaps shed light on the potential concerns the SEC has. A conversation continued on the impacts of this project.

7. Chair's Report

There was no report.

8. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the SEC, Member Cole moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Buoscio seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Drew Irvin
Village Administrator