

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MINUTES

May 20, 2025

Board or Commission: Environmental
Meeting: Regular
Quorum: Yes

Date: May 20, 2025
Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.
Adjourned: 9:09 p.m.

MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Christy Truitt | Chairperson | Present |
| Jeff D. Abeln | Commissioner | Absent |
| Jacquelyn Casazza | Commissioner | Present |
| John Day | Commissioner | Present |
| Chris English | Commissioner | Present |
| Mark Frigo | Commissioner | Present |
| Barbara Kwiatkowsky | Commissioner | Present |
| Karen Lilly | Commissioner | Absent |
| Maggie Frigo | Student Commissioner | Present |
| | | |
| Also Present: | | |
| Kristina Christie | Management Analyst – Public Works | |
| Elisa Pollina | Recording Secretary | |
| Sonya Desai Bhagwakar | Village Trustee-Elect | |
| Chris Gutmann | Park District Liaison | |
| Monica Miller | Commissioner Candidate | |
| Steve Heller | Commissioner Candidate | |
| | | |
| Public | | |
| Nathan Lamkey | 600 Euclid Avenue | |

I. CALL TO ORDER

The May 20, 2025 meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Chairperson Truitt at 7:00 PM at Glen Ellyn Civic Center.

Chairperson Truitt introduced Environmental Commission (EC) commissioner candidates Monica Miller and Steve Heller. Miller has been a Glen Ellyn resident since 1987 and recently retired after 16 years in academic support at the College of DuPage. Heller, a Glen Ellyn resident for the past nine years, is also recently retired from his role as a high school English teacher and currently volunteers at the Morton Arboretum.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Glen Ellyn resident Nathan Lamke shared concerns about the visible algae buildup around Lake Ellyn and inquired whether any plans are in place to address the issue. Chris Gutmann from the Park District responded

that Lake Ellyn is an open system lake, and its location creates ideal conditions for algae growth. While there is no long-term remedy currently in place, the Park District began physical removal efforts yesterday, with the initial focus on cleaning up the shoreline.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 15, 2025

Commissioner Day motioned to approve the April 15, 2025 meeting minutes as amended and Commissioner Kwiatkowsky seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

IV. LIAISON REPORTS

A. Trustee Liaison Report: No report

B. Staff Liaison Report – Staff Liaison Christie reported that the minutes from the May 5 meeting will be included in next month’s meeting packet for commission approval. She also noted that if the commission moves forward with hosting two recycling events, only one certificate of insurance will be needed to cover both events.

C. Park District Liaison Report – Park District Liaison Gutmann shared several updates, noting that the Park District, in partnership with Go Green and the Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI), recently planted 33 trees at Churchill Park. A total of 31 volunteers, including children, participated in the planting effort. Long-term care for the trees has begun, and they will be caged this fall to ensure protection. Additionally, the Park District has welcomed two new team members: Hannah, a tree care specialist, and Ryan, a forestry assistant. The Park District has also officially assumed management and restoration responsibilities for Panfish Park and Manor Woods.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Strategic Planning Priorities

Recycling Extravaganza Update – Commissioner Kwiatkowsky provided a recap of the recent recycling event, reporting a turnout of 533 cars—approximately 100 fewer than last year. Despite the lower vehicle count, many collection numbers increased: 673 pounds of food were donated to the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry (up from 597 lbs. last year), and 491 eyeglasses were collected compared to 210 last year. Paint collection was lower than average, with 463 cans collected versus the typical 1,000.

Eco Ship, the packaging materials vendor, collected 2,667 gallons of materials, including enough bubble wrap to fill two vans—some of which was donated in advance. Electronics collection totaled 14,874 pounds, and 65 bikes were donated. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky noted the event’s overall success and emphasized the need for more mini recycling events. She is still waiting for final data from a few vendors.

Commissioner Casazza shared that many attendees praised the event's organization and extended thanks to Barbara for her hard work. Kwiatkowsky added that Eco Ship's total cost was \$250, with no additional expenses incurred by the Environmental Commission.

Looking ahead, she suggested diversifying future vendor participation, potentially adding sneaker recycling, light bulb collection, and textile vendors. She will follow up with Wheaton to learn about any vendors Glen Ellyn may be missing.

Barbara noted that the commission hosts its large annual event in April, with mini events in June/July and October/November. Commissioner Casazza suggested promoting the DuPage County website's "Recycling Coach" tool as a resource for residents to find year-round recycling options.

The commission discussed holding the November mini event on either the 1st or 8th to coincide with the Pumpkin Smash. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky will check with vendors regarding their availability for those dates.

Sustainability Baseline Assessment - Chairperson Truitt provided a recap of recent discussions, noting the Environmental Commission was asked to identify top priorities from the baseline assessment—specifically, which goals have the greatest impact and which may be less relevant. She emphasized that while the assessment is broad in scope, narrowing it too much could undermine its purpose. The Sustainability Baseline Assessment document is designed to set a high-level direction for the Village and serve as an ongoing reference point. Clarity in presenting the data is essential.

The next phase will involve identifying actionable steps tied to each goal, but ultimately, it is the Village Board that will determine the priorities and allocate funding. Truitt shared that she spoke with Ted, the consultant, and clarified that the intent of the May 5 meeting was for the EC to review and align on the high-level goals ahead of the June 3 workshop. Actionable items will follow later in the process.

Commissioner Frigo supported keeping the numeric goals as presented by Ted, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the high-level approach. Staff Liaison Christie added that after the workshop, Ted will refine the goals and document based on feedback before it is presented to the Village Board.

Commissioner Casazza noted the importance of including percentages for each goal to quantify impact and guide decision-making. Truitt asked the commission if they were comfortable with the percentages currently included in the draft. Casazza further emphasized that the overarching goal should be reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and the EC should determine if that should remain the central objective for the Village.

The commission discussed how best to present the goals, which will require both Village and resident engagement. Commissioner Kwiatkowsky reminded the group

that the purpose of the baseline assessment was to understand where Glen Ellyn stands today in order to plan effectively for the future.

Commissioner English expressed support for the plan as presented, reiterating that its primary aim is emissions reduction. He acknowledged that while the Village may ultimately pursue a different overarching goal due to other strategic priorities, the baseline provides clear, actionable targets for achieving net-zero emissions. He stated that even if not all numbers are fully understood, he supports the direction and framework outlined in the assessment.

Commissioner Kwiatkowsky concluded by noting that the Sustainability Baseline Assessment should be treated as a living document—one that is revisited annually and adjusted as needed. Phase one will be considered complete once Ted issues his final report following the upcoming June 3 workshop.

Sustainable Landscapes Update – Chairperson Truitt shared that the Conservation Foundation has agreed to promote the residential initiative and has offered to host a “Yard Certification Blitz Day,” providing free consultations to residents. The proposed date for the event is June 18. Truitt is currently waiting to hear if the Conservation Foundation would like the commission to manage the sign-up process.

The event will be promoted through the Village newsletter, and Truitt will also reach out to Go Green to see if they’d like to assist with promotion.

Additionally, Volunteer Park is scheduled to be planted next week, with plant deliveries expected between May 27–29. Truitt will notify the Environmental Commission once a planting date is confirmed.

Waste Stewardship – Recognition of restaurants that reduce distribution of plastic silverware - Commissioner Kwiatkowsky shared an update on her research into local restaurants. She found that Glen Ellyn has a total of 66 restaurants, with 27 affiliated with the Chamber of Commerce and 23 with the Downtown Alliance. Of the 66, 23 are classified as fast food, meaning approximately two-thirds are not. This insight will help guide efforts to recognize and support restaurants that actively reduce or limit the distribution of single-use plastic silverware.

VII Next Meeting & Adjournment

- A. Commissioner Frigo motioned and Commissioner English seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.

The next EC meeting – June 17, 2025

Submitted by Elisa Pollina, Recording Secretary

Reviewed by Staff Liaison, Kristina Christie