

**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 4, 2025,
MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION (ENRC)
VILLAGE HALL 6101 CAPULINA, MORTON GROVE, IL 60053**

- 1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/ Roll Call:** Pursuant to proper notice and in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the regular meeting of the Environment and Natural Resources Commission was called to order at 6:01 PM. Chairperson Georgie Brunner called the roll:

Commissioners Present: Georgie Brunner, Jenny Cleary, Ibrahim Khan, Volha Liston, Kim Moldofsky, Sarah Tag

Commissioners Absent: Andrew Hoffman, Tariq Puthawala (both with notice)

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Mike Lukich

Guests: None

- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Moldofsky moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cleary. No corrections were noted. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.
- 3. Chair Comments:** Chairperson Brunner welcomed everyone. She said that staff and the Commission are preparing for the upcoming Morton Grove Sustainability Expo on Saturday, September 13, 2025. She said she appreciated everyone's efforts in planning the event.
- 4. Staff Report:** Mike Lukich, Director of Public Works, provided a review of Staff activity since June. He noted that the New England water main replacement project has been postponed, but that other water infrastructure improvement projects were underway throughout the Village. He reported that 27 permits have been issued in 2025 for roof-mounted solar collector panels. The Commissioners discussed concerns that the federal budget changes affecting solar incentives would reduce the number of solar panel installations. Commissioner Brunner noted that her household relied on solar energy generation last month. Her solar panels have significantly reduced the household's energy costs. The Commissioners discussed making solar panel installations and improvements while incentives were still available.

Mr. Lukich continued to report on the energy savings expected through HVAC and other Morton Grove fire station improvements. Commissioner Tag asked if staff could provide thermal specifications for the Commission's review. Mr. Lukich responded that he would look into this.

Mr. Lukich reported that 160 street trees were planted in May 2025, and seven additional trees were planted by private property owners in the public right of way. In June 2025, 225 street trees were planted through grant funds provided by the USDA and IDNR. He said that the trees are overall in good health and that he does not expect any need for replacements.

Mr. Lukich then reported on WasteNot compost collection figures. To date, WasteNot Compost has collected and composted 62,870 pounds of waste in Morton Grove. The three Village properties receiving WasteNot service composted 308 pounds of waste. WasteNot will be a Platinum Sponsor at the Morton Grove Sustainability Expo through their in-kind donation of composting bins.

- 5. Programs & Events:** Chairperson Brunner noted that the Sustainability Expo is on September 13, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. She emphasized that volunteers are needed from the Commission, and that it is important that participation is not limited to staff.

Commissioner Tag raised the issue of email communications. Ms. Heidorn apologized for the lapse in communication during Commissioner Tag's leave and said that she would forward all recent email communications.

Ms. Heidorn reported on the number of event sponsors and their donation levels, the exhibitors currently registered, and the organizations accepting recycling. She said that ProAuto would be accepting drop-off at their site this year, which would minimize the need for staff assistance. She noted that not as many recyclers are involved this year. Notably, the electronic waste recycler and Play It Again Sports were not registered. The Commissioners discussed who had registered and suggested some additional businesses and organizations that might be interested. Commissioner Kim asked if there is a way to collect sports-related items and noted awareness of some green groups that may be interested. Commissioner Moldofsky asked if the Park District would be interested in accepting used equipment. Ms. Heidorn responded that they probably would not be interested, but that she could ask the question.

Ms. Tag asked about inviting local schools to participate in the event. Ms. Heidorn said that Park View Elementary is a registered exhibitor. Ms. Tag asked Ms. Heidorn to reach out to the local high schools too.

Chairperson Brunner noted that the event footprint is changing due to Fifth Third's construction activity and asked how the setup would be arranged. Ms. Heidorn said that there would be little change to the event set-up. She said that they would have a ten-minute loading zone just north of Fifth Third's fenced area. Staff would not be providing service to vehicles looking to drop-off items. Attendees would be expected to get out of their vehicles and come into the event area.

Commissioner Cleary asked about the kids' activities and described the types of materials she is collecting. She said that she would like to do leaf rubbing art with crayons and asked whether the Village had any used crayons. Ms. Heidorn responded that the Village has lots of used crayons at Village Hall. Ms. Heidorn said that people could drop off materials like toilet paper tubes and egg cartons at her office. Commissioner Cleary asked about the materials in storage from last year and said she would like to craft bugs out of the materials to provide examples to the kids.

Ms. Heidorn reported on the Adopt-A-Block Program and the number of participants. She said that she planned to have promotional banners installed following the Sustainability Expo. Commissioner Tag asked about the Community Clean Up Day. Ms. Heidorn said that the Adopt-A-Block Program served to replace the one-day event. Commissioner Tag indicated that she would like to see both programs occurring.

Ms. Heidorn discussed Earth Month activities. She said that the Greener Morton Grove Awards Program would be transferring from the Economic Development Commission to the Environment and Natural Resources Commission, which would be a better fit.

The Commissioners reviewed the list of 2025 events. Ms. Heidorn confirmed that the Tree Walk would occur at the Expo this year, and that Dave Hoffman, Village Arborist, would be leading the walk. The route would be similar to the first year's route. They discussed the Morton Arboretum host from last year's tree walk and said that they would look for an alternative host next year.

Chairperson Brunner discussed goal setting and the opportunity to review where the Commission is at and what they would like to accomplish in the coming months. The Commissioners discussed various goals and agreed that they should revisit the Sustainability Plan. Ms. Heidorn said that she would send the plan to the group.

- 6. Commissioner Comments:** Commissioner Moldofsky inquired about the existence of any Village policy regarding data centers or AI. Ms. Heidorn said that data centers are not a permitted or special use and would therefore need to be authorized by text amendment, so the Village has good control over incoming data centers. She said that no data center operator has contacted staff in her time with the Village. She said there are no sites available at this time that would be suitable for a data center, and that the use is probably not a good fit for the Village's limited land area. Chairperson Brunner added that the Village likely does not have the electricity, fiber optics, and water infrastructure to support a data center.

Ms. Heidorn responded that the Village does not currently have an AI policy, and that creating a policy would be outside the purview of the Commission. Commissioner Moldofsky explained that an AI policy should be adopted to inform staff about the high water and energy use associated with AI and limit its use. Ms. Heidorn said that she would discuss this suggestion with staff. She noted that she does not believe there is much use of AI occurring at Village facilities. The Commissioners discussed AI use and agreed that the Village could make the public aware of its environmental impacts.

Commissioner Tag said that her job is to quantify energy savings, so she would be happy to assist staff in assessing its equipment and facilities with respect to energy efficiency.

7. **Next Meeting:** Monday, October 6, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

8. **Audience Comments:** None

9. **Adjournment:** Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Tag moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Liston and approved by a unanimous voice vote at 6:52 p.m.

Minutes By: Zoe Heidorn