

The Prairie Village Environmental Committee met at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 28 in the Prairie Village City Hall Multipurpose Room. The recording secretary was Magda Born.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Greg Shelton (chair), Terrence Gallagher (co-chair), Ashley Freburg (staff liaison) Amy Brooks, Dave Huyett, Johanna Comes, Magda Born, Melinda Lewis, Nathan Kovac, Penny Mahon, Piper Reimer, Rick Wohlfarth, Travis Wymore, Warren Smith.

Approval of the agenda: Nathan moved to approve the agenda and Warren seconded the motion. All in favor.

Approval of January 2024 meeting minutes: Nathan moved to approve the January 2024 meeting minutes and Johanna seconded the motion. All in favor.

Presentations

New members Piper Reimer, Melinda Lewis, Amy Brooks, and Travis Wymore were welcomed to the Environmental Committee.

Old Business

2025 Budget Package Review & Discussion

The Committee needs to start thinking about what initiatives we want to pursue in 2025. Budget requests, including decision packages, are due on or before April 4.

Rick asked about grants for EV chargers from PlugInKC. Piper stated that the city already has several charges in place and plans are underway for more. Rick suggested applying for a grant for one or two additional chargers.

Johanna asked about the budget for Monarch Pledge.

If anyone else has suggestions for budget requests, they can email Greg by March 11.

Recycle Right Program

Brandon Hearn reached out to engage with us again on Johnson County's Recycle Right Program. Before he can return to begin his recycling checks, an announcement to the community will need to be placed in the Village Voice. Brandon will likely need help on this project. Greg will copy us on his next email to Brandon if anyone is interested in helping.

Parks update

Terrence provided an update regarding rain gardens and butterfly gardens in Prairie Village parks. While the gardens have increased, the Public Works Department has encountered issues with native plants. They continue to work adding rain gauges, signage and QR codes. Johanna noted that butterfly bushes are non-native and invasive. Terrance will double check and report back. Piper asked to get communication from Public Works with more details about locations and signs. Terrance provided the following update via email:

Rain Gardens are at the following locations:

- *Harmon Park – 5*
- *Public Works - 1*
- *Taliaferro Park – 1*

Taliaferro Park's garden was rebuilt in 2023; now holds water better.

Our supplier had difficulty getting the native plant plugs we requested in 2023. Justin has switched to a different provider and is also going to experiment with "seed bombs" containing native species. The rain gardens were seeded with plants in 2023, just not as much as we wanted.

Rain Garden signage will be updated this spring; signs will have a QR code on them for more info (Harmon – 2 signs; PW and Taliaferro – 1 sign each).

Multiple landscape areas around PV are pollinator gardens and also contain butterfly bushes and other native plants.

- *Bennett Park near the park sign – to be rebuilt this spring*
- *Wassmer Park west of the parking lot*
- *The beds along the walls around the pool outside of the fence have been cleaned out and will be replanted with native plants*
- *The banks along the section of Brush Creek north of Tomahawk will be/has been seeded with native grasses*
- *The Delmar/Fontana channel south of 83rd Street has been planted with native grasses and wildflowers*

New Business

Tomahawk Elementary STEM Night

We were contacted by someone from the Tomahawk Elementary PTA, who enjoyed the Committee's display at VillageFest – particularly the bee display. The PTA invited the Environmental Committee to participate in their STEAM night on March 21. They are interested in an activity for children. Johanna suggested a presentation for children about monarchs. Piper will follow up.

Overland Park's Spring Recycling Extravaganza

Dave reported that Overland Park's Recycling Extravaganza is April 20, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Black & Veatch. He has spoken to Gayle Bergman about Prairie Village's participation. They are interested in volunteers in many capacities. She will email details.

Johanna made a motion to use our promotional budget in an amount not to exceed \$100 to encourage people to volunteer for the event. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ashley will post to social media and promote the event.

2024 Mayor's Monarch Pledge Update

March 31 is the deadline for the 2024 Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Johanna presented our pledge. Greg suggested that Bridging the Gap may help with this project.

VillageFest Event

The committee discussed participation in VillageFest 2024. Last year was great, with a lot of traffic to the Environmental Committee Pavilion. We need a team of people to start planning this year. There are a lot of craft supplies left from last year. Nathan made a motion to participate in Village Fest again and Rick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Terrence suggested forming a VillageFest subcommittee. Greg and Piper will not be able to attend that year. A point-person is needed to manage the Committee's participation. Greg will put a packet together for new members, and we will revisit this issue.

Earth Day event options

Penny had expressed interest in the Committee participating in a new Earth Day Event. However, it overlapped with the recycling extravaganza, and she didn't think it would work to participate this year. Greg said Prairie Village hosts an Arbor Day event and that it would be hard to find volunteers for all these events.

Announcements:

The next Environmental Committee Meeting will be March 27, 2024. Recording secretary will be Dave Huyett.

The deadline for the May/June Village Voice is April 5, 2024.

The guest speaker lineup is as follows: March - Jamie Green, Plug-In KC. April – Johnson County Commissioner Becky Fast, landfill capacity and waste diversion initiatives. Gayle Bergman with Overland Park may be willing to present on Overland Park environmental initiatives.

Adjourn: Johanna made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Penny seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:08.