

**VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
2024-2-27**

ATTENDANCE

Erica Nikolic, President
Eloise Hardin, Ward 2*
Paggie Matlock, Ward 3*
Mary Davis, Ward 4*

ABSENT

Dave Tapp, Fire Department	Carlean Perez – Recreation Director
Ross Cirincione, Prosecutor	Brian Thompson, Finance Director
James Climer, Law Director	Daniel Marinucci, Chief Bldg. Official
Gary V Gottschalk, Mayor	Matt Jones, Village Engineer
Mark Garratt, Police Department	Brian Dirocco, Fire Department
Tom Haba, Service Director	Johnnie Warren, President Pro Tem
Taunya Scruggs, Ward 1	Candace Williams, Ward 5

* Arrived after roll call

Meeting opened at 5:31pm by Nikolic
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call taken

Nikolic: This is our very first environmental committee meeting. I'd like to say before we get started on the agenda. The goal, the mission of the committee is twofold. One, we'd love to make Oakwood a greener community. Secondly, we are looking to have enhanced environmental protections. We're going to be looking at businesses and new projects. Everything that's coming into the community. To ensure that the health and well-being of our residents are protected. So, with that said, let's move on to agenda item number four, *Federal Medal* Tour. The *Federal Medal* tour was attended by Councilwoman Davis and Councilman Warren. We sat and we talked with the department heads and the CEO. They gave us an amazing tour of the facility. We talked about their environmental protections. What they're doing to protect and make sure that their air quality is up to speed. This is something that we'd love to continue doing with other businesses. Councilwoman Davis mentioned that there were businesses in her ward that she would like to also tour with the *I. Schuman* incident, and *Agmet*. This is something that we want to continue doing just to ensure that we're staying in touch with the company heads. That they understand that we're interested and we're going to be proactive about protecting our residents. And ensuring that everything is in line and that we understand what they're doing as a company. That tour was a success, I was very impressed with their facilities. My family has lived next to this company for years. It was really amazing just to get inside and see the actual workings of the corporation. So, that was an amazing experience for all. Agenda item number five, I would love to introduce now our solar power initiative. What you have in front of you here, solar united neighbors. I'm in touch with representatives at the County to discuss ways of increasing our use of solar power in the Village. One way is a co-op where all residents will join together anyone

who is interested in purchasing solar panels for their homes. We would have a co -op to make it cheaper. I'm in discussions with the ward four Councilperson Daniel Henderson. To see if we could do a joint co -op with them so we have even more residents to reduce the price. We're going to have either at our next environmental committee meeting or at one of the ward meetings or separate meeting. An info session by the County to give residents more information about what it means to be a part of the co -op and also the municipality. We would love to explore ways and councilwoman Matlock this is an excellent way to combine with utilities. Because we were just discussing a car port for example as a way to reduce the utilities in the Village. Exploring grants where we could get solar panels for the Village. Which could in turn help with utilities. That's something we can cross reference across our committees. But going forward the solar panels for the municipality combined with residents. I'm hoping this would help significantly reduce the costs of the solar panels. And just begin to have more people thinking about if this is an option for them. How it can better serve their residents. Councilwoman Matlock do you have any questions about solar power? **Matlock:** No, I think we had already discussed this before. There's only going to be a couple of wards. Because basically, we have to check the structure of the homes. A lot of these homes were built before 1950, 1960, so some of them may not be able to withhold solar panels on top of their homes. The only wards that probably would and had showed interest were Ward 2 and Ward 1. At that time, which was just last year. The cost was tremendous, and they had not yet been any type of programs out that kind of reduces the cost for the residents. So, if there is something that they... because they are very expensive. The program is expensive, you had a couple of people who did talked about it who wanted it. They came into the Council meeting, and they asked about it. The Building Inspector had talked about it, and then we did research on it at NLC. Because a lot of this would be at NLC. So, with the cost and then at that time there were no grants. Here you can I guess, get affordable. I'm looking at the financing options that they can get for that. But a lot of them were talking about will Oakwood pay for it. Oakwood can't afford to pay for solar panels, not big enough. So, that's just an option that they have, so it's okay. **Nikolic:** My thought is one way to just begin. I spoke with the Building Director about zoning and any ordinances. He said that solar panels are allowed. He mentioned that there are several residents that have them. So, I would really love to get some feedback from those residents that currently have them. So, we can kind of start a case study of best practices. What's worked for them and what hasn't and go from there. Of course, since we have NLC coming up. That's something else that we can explore, maybe there's even more programs. But again, getting this back on track with combining with another municipality. In hopes that we can get the cost down even further. If there are grants to support solar panels for the municipality. That's another thing that we can explore to help get costs down for our utilities. We're just introducing this today, I wanted to and of course if you know currently of anyone who has solar panels on their homes. We can start to contact them and let them know what we're trying to do and what we're trying to start. **Hardin:** Madam Chair, I apologize... **Nikolic:** Well, you're right on time. We're just finishing up the discussion of solar panels. I know you mentioned that you had several residents in your ward that were interested in solar panels. I was explaining to Councilwoman Matlock that there is now a co -op. And in March they'd like to come and do an info session for the residents. To explain the process for the co -op. And with that, partnering with another municipality, Bedford Heights. Hopefully we can get enough residents, including the municipality, to purchase. The more you purchase, the lower the price. So, this is something, we are beginning to look at this pamphlet here, Solar United Neighbors. It has more information about financing options. I know Councilwoman Matlock said

you started researching it last year. We could continue the research this year at NLC and see what else is new. But I just wanted to introduce this and let you all know that the info session is coming. And that we could definitely get information out to our residents about the info session. But what I was explaining, we would also like to hear from people who currently have them. So, we can hear best practices, what's worked. I spoke with the Building Department. The Building Department stated that we have several residents with solar panels. So, we'll get that information and I'll reach out to them. We all can reach out to them and maybe have them come to the next committee meeting. As many as can, as they want to or are able. We can get best practices, what worked for them, what they would do differently, what was a headache for them in that regard. That way we could start with some more information from people. In terms of Sundays, maybe they'd say, this was not necessary. We don't get enough sun for it even to be of benefit. So just getting some more information from the residents who've actually had it. So, that's where we are with that. Take a look at that and the next meeting, we'll get more in depth with that. Hopefully after NLC, we can have more to report. **Hardin:** You said March, so we're, we can set our own dates, or are there set dates? **Nikolic:** Well, right now with the County said that they would be available to do one in March. They haven't gotten back to me. I talked to Bedford Heights, they wanted to do a joint one. Well, the County thought it would be good to do a joint one. But, you know, I'm not sure if that will work for us getting residents to Bedford Heights. Where we'll go, and we're still in talks about how best to do it. If they're going to do two sessions, or if we'll do one. Or if, the Bedford Heights residents will come here. But I just said, you know, maybe it's best to just do two. That way, we'll give the opportunity for more people to come. If they miss this one, they can always go to that one. So right now, I'm just waiting to hear how they want to set it up. **Hardin:** But because numbers decreases the pricing along with Bedford. First, I'd like to have a meeting myself and know what is involved first. Because I really think we need to involve Bedford. Because we then have a larger scope of opportunity which will drive it down even more. When you said Bedford Heights that's great. But Bedford itself would really as well. **Matlock:** You can also go with Walton Hills. Because all of them are in the four six scope. **Nikolic:** Okay, so definitely, I'm in contact. I know from that meeting we were just at the organizational association meeting. I met several Council persons from those districts. We could definitely reach out and see if they're interested in participating. Agenda item number six introduced the recycling initiative. The main goal with this initiative is, on my street what I initially noticed. Is that there aren't any other families that have the actual recycling can on their street. So, they're just putting everything into garbage they're not recycling. **Hardin:** Time out, you said they don't have a can? Everybody was given one can and if you wanted more you could buy more. **Nikolic:** With the yellow can, yeah no one is using them on my street. **Hardin:** Hold on were they given the cans? That's the objective... **Nikolic:** Well, that's what I'm trying to figure out here. So, that's what I'm saying, the idea is to figure out why they don't have them. **Hardin:** They do have them; I guarantee you they have them. **Nikolic:** Okay, well if they have them. Why aren't they using them? An incentive to increase recycling in the Village. On my street they only put out garbage. My family is the only one that puts out recycling. What I'd love to talk about is how we can incentivize those who aren't recycling to recycle. Just getting in the habit of recycling. We can have info sessions. I don't know maybe one thought that came to my mind. When you go into Sam's Club, they may offer you like a \$25 gift card to switch utility companies. I'm not sure what that is. Maybe partnering with Sam's to say you know if you're if you start using your recycling. We're trying to get people involved in this initiative. **Matlock:** Why don't you do it with Waste Management? **Nikolic:** Right, with Waste Management it would

be a partnership with Waste Management. But the incentive would come from Sam's Club. The project would start with Waste Management with the objective of getting more people. **Hardin:** Can I make a suggestion before we launch and go way out there? **Nikolic:** Well, yeah, this is... **Hardin:** It would be great to reissue the flyer explaining, what is a recyclable. Start with educating first... **Nikolic:** Right. **Hardin:** And based on you saying you know for a fact. One particular area is not practicing it to the degree that you would like to see. Then, just make very certain that each household receives that. As a resident, did you not get one? **Nikolic:** We have one. **Hardin:** That educates you and tells you what they are? **Nikolic:** I recall getting something, I do recall. But I'm a staunch environmentalist so I recycle anyway. But I'm assuming people received it. **Hardin:** People that are not, are probably not paying attention. So, I would suggest that we start with an educational piece first. **Nikolic:** Okay. **Hardin:** Reissuing what we've already sent out. Add in something a little different. We can come up with something innovative to incentivize. For instance, instead of a secret Santa, do a secret count. The street that has the most cans out on a given day or something like that. I'm just trying to think of what you're trying to do. **Nikolic:** Right, but that's any type of way to incentivize. Just a gift card from Sam's was one thing that came to mind. But that's why I'm polling you two now to see if there's any ideas. But I love this idea of starting with the flyer. Finding out if all cans have been distributed to the household. **Matlock:** Making sure they know what days of the month the recycle day is. **Nikolic:** Right, because I know I have the pamphlet, the leaflet, with the new schedule. **Hardin:** You might want to since you know that there's a particular street. Which, I personally don't have a problem. But if we know that there's a particular street in the area. We can even put out the designated signs on our flyer. Maybe that day put a sign on the end of the street showing it's your recycle day. **Nikolic:** You mean like a yard sign? **Hardin:** Yeah, on the corner of the street. Yeah, so as you enter that, tomorrow is your recycle day. Put out your yellow cans or something. But just a reminder to a given street that seems not to be practicing it maybe. **Nikolic:** So yes, I don't know if you all remember. I know someone came here from Waste Management. I asked Tommy for a contact at Waste Management because I wasn't sure if I had the information from the one that came here to present. I don't think I was on Council, so I don't know who that was. But I asked Tommy to give me a contact. So, I'll start there and once we have that information we can move forward. But I'll report back with that at the next committee meeting. **Joseph:** I just wanted to say, typically with Solid Waste District when we do like our recycling days. Material is sent out, so far that I've seen, every year regarding recycling. What goes into the recycling cans, everything like that. That is one of the important parts of being a part of that contract with them. To get that education out for recycling and stuff. So, I have started looking into grants for recycling, I had already started doing that. I'm waiting on a response for the shred day grant. Which I should get back at the beginning of March, a response on that. Once I get that response, I will then begin sending out recycling stuff for the residents. With that information what to recycle. **Hardin:** It came from that organization? **Joseph:** Yes, it has their local marked on it because all the information is coming directly from them. **Hardin:** Well, okay, maybe this time, since this is something you're focused on. You might want to attach a special letter from Council or from your committee that we're really focusing on this. **Nikolic:** And include the incentives, so we can do it together as a way to let them know here's the education. Here are some of the possible incentives. When were you saying you would get that? **Joseph:** Beginning of March. **Nikolic:** Okay, but the actual piece does it come out, or is it already out? **Joseph:** No, the pieces aren't out but I can get educational pieces. Because I am provided with those that I can put on the website, send them through constant contact, or I can get them through the mail. I can even just

do a newsletter myself specifically on that and get it out to them as well. But I do have access to information that we can get out. Or even if you guys wanted to include it in your newsletter. That can be utilized as well. **Matlock:** We put it in every newsletter anyway about recycle. It goes in every newsletter with the date our garbage pickup is on, taking the cans from the front of the yard, recycle day, and what to recycle. **Hardin:** I find it interesting that the seating at in Paris. They're using recycled material to create the seating in the venue, so it's important. **Nikolic:** Absolutely, so moving on, agenda item number seven. Update on the environmental testing on Wright and Free. So currently, we'll have the legislation today for us to review in our packets in the work session. Right now, it won't move forward. We're waiting for me, because the testing is in my backyard. It will happen in my backyard. I've sent a request for an opinion to the Ethics Commission. To see if I am able to vote on the legislation in any way. Given the fact that it is in my backyard and any legislation that could affect the property value, either increase it or decrease it. I have to have an opinion from the state to say whether or not this is something that I can vote on. **Hardin:** I have some pretty strong comments, but I'm going to save it for the Council meeting. Or are we going to discuss that in the work session? Is that on the work session? **Nikolic:** The legislation for the testing is on the work session. **Hardin:** So, I'll save my comments for then. **Nikolic:** That's fine, so, that was just an update on that. There was a hold on that anyway. Because, the weather, you know, the consultant said that the ground had to be a certain consistency in order for them to dig. So, Spring is probably when they would be able to start anyway. The opinion would take about 40 days. So, we're looking towards maybe the end of March when we'd have the opinion. But the legislation is there so we can at least begin discussing it. Moving on to agenda item number eight. The last thing, I had the pleasure of meeting a gentleman who runs this drive electric Dayton. This is an initiative that I would love to bring to the Village. I spoke with Chief Garrett right before about possibly piloting electric Police cars. Other ways to bring green, make Oakwood more green. This is an entity they can do events. Where we can perhaps during around Earth Day bring electric vehicles. Let more people see these vehicles. He also mentioned that if you've ever been to Macedonia and you've seen the two Tesla charging stations. He said that they could get grants for us to have two of them here at our Hawthorne Valley. He said it's a good way to bring people into the community. Because if they're passing through and they need to charge their cars they will stop here. This company has a lot of different ideas about how we can utilize electric vehicles. Even the Building Department, switching over cars to be electric. Getting those plug-in stations, doing events to educate people on the importance of electric vehicles. I'm asking him to come to our next meeting. Either by zoom, to do a full presentation on the importance electric vehicles. And how we can best outfit Oakwood. so I just wanted to introduce this and I think it was really interesting. Chief Garrett said he would be interested in 2025. He said they always get new vehicles, potentially piloting testing and evaluating an electric car. He said although they couldn't transport criminals. They could still use it for patrol. **Matlock:** We were thinking about getting charging stations at the hotels. **Hardin:** There's a group that comes to us we're a member of. **Matlock:** That's what I was going to ask her... **Hardin:** I have it written down, Go Green Ohio. We're pictured with them back there. I would suggest that you maybe partner them. Make sure your kind of, so we don't duplicate efforts here. Because we're a member of that group and one of our residents is who brought them to us. I think you might know her, Ms. Bray. She's who brought them here. **Nikolic:** She's actually the...the black environmental leaders. This was a luncheon that they had at Fern Towers I was able to attend. They gave scholarships to young college students who were heavily involved. They gave them a thousand dollars to use however they chose. And really just

to support them because they had been working in different ways to support the environment. ,So that was that was good to see. **Hardin:** Well coordinate the Dayton organization with that organization. Because we've already been working. I think they've even done some studies already. **Nikolic:** Okay, can you talk a little bit about where you guys were with that? **Hardin:** Chris was our Council representative, so I'm not really certain aware where he left off. So, I would, even without contacting. As the Chair of this committee, if I were you. I would get the information, the Clerk has it, they left everything. Find out where he left off and let them know that we're still interested. And what should we do and that you've already spoken with the Police Chief, that sort of thing. But I think there might even have been a study done already. You need to check with them. **Nikolic:** Okay, is anyone in contact with Mr. Callender? Or probably just best to go straight to go green? **Hardin:** You can just go to Go Green, just give them a call. Because you might want to do things a little differently. **Nikolic:** Okay, well that's all I have. I thank you ladies for attending our first environmental committee meeting. I'd love to just say, for utilities. There's a lot of synergies here with the solar power and utilities. So, we can continue to have those discussions if there's anything that comes out of utilities that would be helpful for us here. We can kind of keep those synergies flowing so we can work together on building this out. **Hardin:** To make that work, I'd like to know who these people are. More about Dayton whatever... **Nikolic:** They're going to come present at our next meeting. He offered to come here today and do a zoom. But I said today we'll just I'll just introduce it. Then at our next meeting he can come and do a full -on presentation. **Hardin:** Got it. **Nikolic:** Maybe at that point Go Green could join us as well. **Hardin:** That's my point, yes ma 'am. **Nikolic:** And maybe it can all be in person. **Hardin:** That's fine, and by then you'll have the information for March. As to when this is going to happen, right? **Nikolic:** Right. **Hardin:** At that March meeting do you want to have already collected input from current residents that have the solar energy? Or do you want to wait until after that presentation? **Nikolic:** We could as we go, I would like to do it as soon as possible. Because the sooner we do it, I'm sure it's going to be a process to get people to give that information. So, for me I don't like to wait. Because what I did was, I got a list of the number of people who have electric vehicles in 44146. Oh, I'm sorry, we're talking about solar panels. But the Building Department I asked him if he could identify the residents with the solar panels or give me the addresses. So, I'm waiting for that from the Building Department. But if you know of anyone specifically that has the solar panels. We could just pull them, or you can just call them. And we can maybe come up with the list of questions. **Hardin:** The one that is installed and very nice is.... Hey, Ms. Karen, welcome. As a matter of fact, we're talking about solar panels and your neighbor. Is one of the first, she is the only one on your street that has them. **Howse:** Is it one behind me or? **Hardin:** Across the street in front of you, go past Sam's house, headed towards the stop sign. Not Forbes the other direction, it's real shiny, looks copper. **Howse:** Oh, with the copper, oh they have a solar? **Hardin:** I thought that solar was on that, maybe I'm wrong. It's just copper, maybe I got it wrong. **Howse:** The house on the corner of Somerville in your ward. They have a whole roof that is solar panel. **Hardin:** Right at the corner of Somerville and Forbes, yes. That one you can see so I know for sure they have it. **Nikolic:** So, are you in contact with those residents or? **Hardin:** I can, what is that you want from them? Do you have a survey you'd like for them to fill out? **Matlock:** We'll have to put one together. **Nikolic:** We can create a list of questions and at the next meeting. Or when we see each other at NLC, it doesn't have to be a formal thing. Just a few questions of best practices of what we would like to learn from them. Any other comments? With this, hearing none, may I get a motion to adjourn?

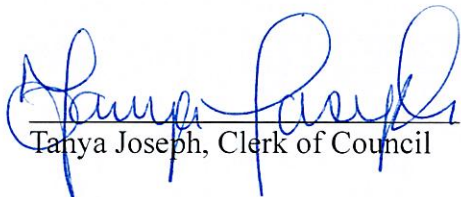
Motion to adjourn made by Hardin seconded by Matlock

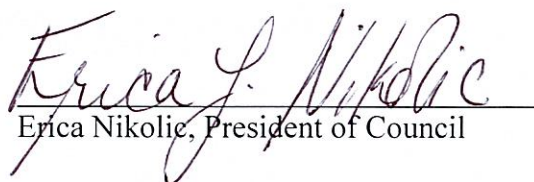
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Hardin, Matlock

MOTION PASSED

Adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Approved 5.28.24


Tanya Joseph, Clerk of Council


Erica Nikolic, President of Council