

**VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
2024-4-09**

ATTENDANCE

Erica Nikolic, President*
Eloise Hardin, Ward 2
Paggie Matlock, Ward 3(*)

ABSENT

Brian Thompson, Finance Director	Carlean Perez – Recreation Director
Ross Cirincione, Prosecutor	Gary V Gottschalk, Mayor
James Climer, Law Director	Tom Haba, Service Director
Dave Tapp, Fire Department	Mark Garratt, Police Department
Johnnie Warren, President Pro-Tem	Matt Jones, Village Engineer
Mary Davis, Ward 4	Daniel Marinucci, Chief Bldg. Official
Candace Williams, Ward 5	Taunya Scruggs, Ward 1

*Arrived after roll call

*Chairman of Environmental Committee

Meeting opened at 5:30pm by Nikolic

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call taken

Nikolic: Agenda item number for Earth Day planning. I'd like to start with a brief report of what we have started in the works. The idea is to get more ideas and to get as much input from anyone who's interested. Or anyone who wants to make this an annual day of education for our community about all the things concerning climate action and environmental protection. So, this is just a first in terms of what we'd like to see happen annually. As an ongoing day to educate our residents and the community about Earth Day and our climate action plan that we'd love to work on. So, first we have in the works two events that I've mentioned at the last two meetings and with our last presentation about our Climate Action Plan. The first would be on April 27th, and this is a day we still have to get confirmation. I've reached out to Dee, the Mayor's secretary to get more information on how to secure the parking lot. Across from the Levin Furniture, where they typically have the concerts. So, I reached out to Dee about more information of how we could get permission to use that space for the 27th. We have Northeast Ohio Electric Vehicle who would like to come and display a different array of electric vehicles. Just to give residents an opportunity to see what they look like, ask questions. About batteries charging, all these different types of questions that people who have no idea about electric vehicles can ask. So, they've committed to come and just be out there and answer any questions of people who want to learn more about electric vehicles. **Hardin:** How much space do you think you need in the parking lot? **Nikolic:** Well, not much, I'm thinking just pretty much the same back section. Because Levin doesn't have that many customers at once. So, I needed to kind of get an idea. **Hardin:** That's owned by Hawthorne Valley. So, she'll probably contact them and just let them know that we would be parking in the area. I think that's about all that has to happen. **Nikolic:** Okay, so pretty much they would come and allowed any residents to ask questions. Because as some of our stakeholders had mentioned and as you've mentioned before. The discussion of

putting chargers for electric vehicles at the hotel in order to increase higher traffic. It's an economic development thing where you have the chargers at the hotels and potentially in the neighborhoods as well. If this is something that people want to look into. But it's just a way to start the conversation of electric vehicles. Where people may not know about them or what it would require. So that's one group or individual stakeholder that's agreed to come that day. There's another guy, he's called Hood Honey, and he does bee demonstrations, and he talks about... **Hardin:** Live bees? **Nikolic:** Live bees, and I'm still talking to him because I was trying to envision how this could work. But in terms of he does a lot of demonstrations for children. He describes bees and their connection to the environment and why we need them as pollinators. So, he really is an awesome value add to the discussion because it goes to nature. And kids getting involved with being more educated about nature and how to protect the environment in that regard. He brings; he has a suitcase with a beehive in it. **Hardin:** Live bees? **Nikolic:** They're alive yes, so he has the hazmat costume, protective gear where kids can get in them. And he can do whatever it is that he does when he has kids involved. I've never seen it; I've never been to his farm. But he's taking his show on the road. And it's I think it's very interesting for kids to see. Just a male in that space, farming, agriculture, and protecting our environment. So, it's just another role model as well. Because then we could have maybe this as a part of the summer camp. Because agriculture is a big factor in environmental protection. So, and maybe at some point we can work a trip to his farm for the kids to learn more about their environment. **Hardin:** Where is his farm? **Nikolic:** It might be on Kinsman, but there's he lives in Macedonia, so I don't know if he has a, you know, something in Macedonia. But that's just in the future works. He's definitely an excellent resource for us to help teach the kids about agriculture. Teach the kids about growing your own and understanding better how to protect the environment. **Hardin:** Do you know where that farm is on Alexander? **Nikolic:** Oh, you mean Richmond? **Hardin:** No, when you go past the Oakwood factory that burned. Just keep straight on into Walton Hills...you go past the factory, you cross Northfield...**Nikolic:** Like towards Independence? **Hardin:** You got it, and it's quite a little ways down. **Nikolic:** Oh, on the left where you can pick strawberries? **Hardin:** Yes. **Nikolic:** Oh, ok, that's way out, that might be Independence. **Hardin:** It might be, I thought it was Walton Hills, but it might be. for years that's where my family would go. My mom that's her favorite spot. They have a wagon, and you can go out in the fields. so, when you say agriculture, that's right around the corner. So, you could maybe want to take them out and maybe let them ride it and stuff, just a thought,. **Nikolic:** No, I think that's a good idea. When they started talking about land bank properties. My first question to Climber well, you know, are there any properties that we own that could be big enough for community garden space? But he responded, Of course, a lot of land-based properties that he was referring to are adjacent to homes and they're not that big. So, I was thinking something more along the lines of, if you know that one plot of land. It's actually on the MLS, it goes from its right next to it goes from Booker to Lamson, is it? That long strip of like land, it goes on from Booker, by the church, and it goes all the way back out to Tryon Rd. Now, that's privately owned, but you know in the sense of if we talk to them. And they're not using it or something like that. Do you know what I mean? Because that space I mean, could be a community garden. Or, you know, it could be maybe another smaller park for the kids. You know, where there might be a little splash pad. But that's another thought but... Even if it was privately owned, maybe we could, you know, get a grant. To purchase the land from a private owner for something like a community garden. And there may be grants because we were at the soil and water event. There was a man who was director of agriculture. So, I sent him an email right after that asking him about grants. And there is also a

Councilperson in Cincinnati that runs a farm. He told me about grants as well, so there is funding available. He talked about corporate sponsors. You know, that's a whole nother thing. But that is something that I've always been interested in doing. And we could potentially find some funding. Or if there is some land that we own, I don't know where else. If we just if we just put that on our agenda to just start looking at plots of land where we can start. That's already owned by the Village. So, we wouldn't even have to start with purchasing. If there is. I like that community garden. **Nikolic:** So, Earth Day, what I'd like to do now is just throw out the net to you, Mrs. Hardin. And so, judging from surrounding communities that have had an of an annual Earth Day for many years. For example, Hudson, they have like tons of vendors, food trucks, and it's like a huge deal. But since this is our first one, I was just thinking, what are some other things we could do? Like it could just be the cars, you know, that's just one way to sort of kick it off. And then in the future, we could, you know, plan for, you know, make it a more money-making thing. Where we're getting vendors to pay us \$150 for the booth rental. And, you know, setting the whole thing up. **Hardin:** But can we back it all the way up? Earth Day means what? **Nikolic:** So, Earth Day is, from my understanding, it's the day that we, just like any day out of the year. We choose to recognize the earth and a lot of the activities around it is how we can protect it and preserve it. So, environmental protection ways that we could protect the environment, sustainability, just ways of education. It's a day of education, it's just that one day that out of the year that people have decided we're going to use. Because Arbor Day is this following Friday. So very similar. People are planting trees, and we know the benefit of planting trees. There's shade, there's, you know, all the benefits of planting trees. So, in terms of Earth Day, we just want to make sure that in terms of where are we going and what do we want to educate our residents on. Recycling, what are the key things that we need to be educating our residents on in terms of saving our environment. Becoming more sustainable, things of that nature? **Hardin:** Okay, so what I'm asking you as a committee. Which one of those elements of Earth Day, do we want to attack for this Earth Day? Do we want to deal with sustainability? Do we want to deal with the electric cars and focus on energy sources? That's going to be our focus this year, energy sources. That's what I'm trying to narrow it down so we're not all over the map. And then that doesn't make any sense. I mean, to me, so we can focus and then just hone in... My point, what is our objective? **Nikolic:** Yeah, I like the idea of focusing. We can, because a lot of the people who have approached me and have talked to me. Have been in the energy space. In terms of the chargers, in terms of the vehicles, in terms of, you know, if we do the buildings, getting the solar power. So, a lot of what we have, the discussions of, a lot of the stakeholders have been in terms of energy. And how to start switching over infrastructure, consumer mindset. So, you know, I would be fine with that. Because we could have a booth to educating them of when we're going to have the solar panel community co-op meeting. I'm still waiting for Tristin, who is a Councilman in Lakewood. But he also runs it with Mike Foley, who is with the County. So, I'm waiting for a date, but, you know, we can have a move to let people know this is when will do it. I mean, if we have the package, we can have someone from there educate you on the solar panels for your homes and vehicles. So yeah, and I was just open to any other thoughts of what we could include. **Hardin:** So, this year our focus is on energy sources? **Nikolic:** But we could just say clean energy. And it can be under that umbrella like the theme, right. **Hardin:** Okay. **Nikolic:** And what I've heard is, with the solar panels, they typically plant wildflowers around. And then the bees actually somehow... I don't know exactly how it works. But apparently the bees, and the pollination, and the sun, and the power, it all goes together somehow. So, I say all that to say that hood honey would still be a good fit for that. Because somehow the pollinators contribute to clean energy.

And that could be his link as well. To help describe why we would need if you do have solar panels planting the wildflowers. I don't know specifically, but I think it's a good connection. So, yeah, I like the idea of making the theme clean energy. I'd love to have input from Tanya. I know if you could just give me a background as a new Councilperson. What responsibilities the Clerk have been in the past. And any ideas that you have or that you think would be helpful for us in planning this day. **Joseph:** Well, so far since I've been here, utilize shred day as a way to bring awareness to recycling. Planting in the rain garden to capture the rainwater. It leads the rainwater to the rain garden for the natural wildflowers to grow. And the ones that we planted. For me, for Earth Day since the Water and Soil Conservation's theme is backyard conservation. I was thinking more of the lines of clean up. Because when I sit here, people constantly speak about, you know, garbage or trash being in certain areas. And so, my idea was more like a community cleanup day. Getting the kids involved and stuff as well to target certain areas that we know are messy. I know it's not going to really solve the issue. But I mean, it can help keep people more mindful of the trash. And how much trash is actually being collected in those areas. Another thing was to do cleanup of the creeks or bodies of water that's around. Because it does eventually lead out into Tinker Creek and then further out. I was talking with I think Mrs. Matlock about potentially trying to figure out a way of getting some sort of netting across. To capture trash if it comes floating down the stream. And then we can go back and clean it up or something. But that was more of the lines where my thoughts were for Earth Day, just some clean up. I was going to suggest just doing some tree planting as well. Since that was something that we used to do, it seemed like we didn't. And that's just in the lines of what I was thinking in my head. Of what I was possibly going to work on. **Nikolic:** I would I say love the idea of Spring clean day or just a cleanup day. I know Mr. Jackson has expressed a lot of concern about that. And again, I've talked to Tommy, and he may bring it today. Sort of the litter list of the top streets in the Village that have been complained about in terms of litter. So, we keep a running list of the last time they were serviced. But in terms of like our youth as well. Getting them engaged with a Spring cleanup day. I don't know if we should reach out to the schools. Or if we should just put out fliers and just say, this is going to be a Saturday where we clean up all day. And it could be that same, the 27th, because if that's in the afternoon with the cars. Like we could start in the morning and do like a couple hours. Or we could do it on a separate day because the thought was to put out just a flyer with like all the events for the month. You know, the cleanup day, the electric vehicle day. And then on the I was getting to this; we're running up on time. But on April 28th, the tree planting day. **Hardin:** So, is that a tree planning day from the Soil and Water Conservation people? **Nikolic:** So, that day when Corey introduced me to Jackie that day. It was about the tree planting. Where did you guys plant them at the corner of Broadway? **Hardin:** Yes. **Nikolic:** Right, so when I asked Corey, where in the Village did he think we should plant them. there's this patch over in ward five that's on Booker, and it's owned by Rome. So, then when I asked the pastor if he would be interested in combining the church and educating that part of the community. He said he would be very much involved. So, I spoke with Jackie, Jackie worked with Tom and Corey to figure out if the trees would be good to plant there. They said, okay, so she found maybe three dogwood plants that we would plant there. And so, Rome would have their typical service, but we would be out there. She mentioned that sometimes there's a resolution. I talked to Mayor Gottschalk about it. Typically, the Mayor would read a resolution. Then they'd have a person from Soil and Water come out and do like an education piece for the community. So as of now, that would be the program. Since Rome owns the trees, I said, I don't know if they want to dedicate it to an elder or something, they own the land. So, we're providing

the trees, but as a way of commemorating. You know, they're not asking us to give them anything. But I just said, like it was just a thought. If they wanted to plant trees in remembrance of someone, or in honor of someone. I suggested that they haven't come back to me on whether they wanted to do that. But I just thought that might be an added touch. So, any thoughts on programing for that day? I was thinking to have maybe some games. This one game came to my mind, like the recycling race. Where you have a big pile of stuff and then you have the kids running decide if it's recycle or garbage. Just like a little some games or something for the kids. So that was the idea, and then that was one game that I thought would come up that would help educate the kids. So, Paggie, right now, do you have any input for Earth Day as ideas? We have one day on the 27th out of the parking lot at Levin. They'll be Northeast Ohio electric vehicle. They'll have like a lot of electric vehicles for people to come and ask questions. And there'll be another guy there. He's called Hood Honey, talking about how pollination with the bees and everything relates to clean energy. And so, she also suggested, you know, to make a theme of clean energy for that day. And have a boot, if possible, for telling people about the solar panel co-op that we were going to have. They haven't given me a date yet about the solar panel co-op. And so, yeah, what we're just thinking about any other ideas of vendors that could come, and it could be ongoing. **Matlock:** I was looking online above the EV's. There is an office in Cleveland that will tell you about grants. Money for EV's, if we're thinking about putting more like inside of our shopping plaza. Just information to find out how much it's going to cost. Or what is the kickback that they give you if you put a charging unit inside these areas. Well put it like this, for each unit that you put in, there's certain percentage of money that you would get back. **Nikolic:** It's an incentive. **Matlock:** It's an incentive for those EV's to go inside the parking lot at Sam's. But we just have to find out more information on where to place these. And I honestly do believe, and now, everything is going to the electrical. Electric vehicles, more families are probably going to get them. That means that you have to find charging stations. That is right now the biggest thing. There are no charging stations for them. But if you put them at the hotels, then that generates more business for the hotels. Maybe they'll help by cost... **Nikolic:** There are grants, so we have Drive Electric Dayton. So, at the next meeting that we have, we're going to have stakeholders come and talk about these things. But for now, we were looking at that date to see what else we could bring in. So, we're going to wrap up the meeting. But Councilwoman Matlock, those are great points. The stakeholders are going to be presenting at our next committee meeting. We'll talk about the grants and everything that is available to get those chargers in Oakwood. So, with that, there any other questions and discussions? Motion to adjourn made by Councilwoman Hardin and seconded by Councilwoman Matlock. Meeting adjourned.

Motion to adjourn made by Hardin seconded by Matlock

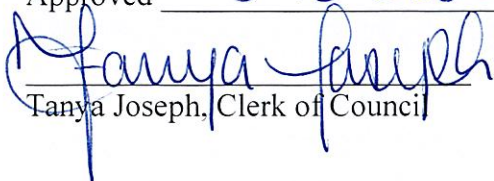
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Hardin, Matlock

MOTION PASSED

Adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Approved

5.13.2025


Tanya Joseph, Clerk of Council


Erica Nikolic, President of Council