

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES**

### **CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS**

City Council Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Thursday, July 24, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Goodman called the Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

#### **2. OATH OF OFFICE**

Community Development Specialist Stacy Bodsberg administered the Oath of Office to three returning Environmental Advisory Commissioners Kevin Sethre, Sara Goodman, and Nick Ruiz.

#### **3. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Sara Goodman (Chair)  
Nick Ruiz (Vice-Chair)  
Marjorie Savage  
Tracie Killion  
Kevin Sethre  
Patti Mikulski  
Ted Trenzeluk  
Nichole Boehmke

Commissioners Absent: Jon Wallerick - *excused*

Staff Present: Stacy Bodsberg, Community Development Specialist  
Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist

#### **4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

##### **A. Election of 2025 Environmental Advisory Commission Chair and Vice-Chair.**

Commissioner Boehmke nominated Commissioner Sara Goodman to continue as Chair.

Motion by Savage, Second by Trenzeluk, to close nominations.

Motion by Ruiz, Second by Mikulski, to elect Sara Goodman to the position of Chair.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

Chair Goodman nominated Commissioner Nick Ruiz to continue as Vice-Chair.

Motion by Goodman, Second by Trenzeluk, to elect Nick Ruiz to the position of Vice-Chair.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

## **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. Minutes of the May 22, 2025, and June 26, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meetings.**

Motion by Savage, Second by Ruiz, to Approve Minutes for both meetings as submitted.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

## **6. REGULAR BUSINESS**

### **A. Review the 2025 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan and discuss the remainder of the 2025 Agenda Calendar.**

Community Development Specialist Bodsberg noted that the Sustainable IGH Awards program was put on hold for 2025 due to staffing changes.

Commissioner Savage asked for more specifics.

Chair Goodman clarified that former Environmental Specialist Ally Sutherland left the City around the time nominations would have opened.

Commissioner Boehmke asked for a note to be added to the relevant page of the City's website to clarify that the program will return in 2026.

Community Development Specialist Bodsberg stated that she would add a note. She also mentioned that work on the 2026 Work Plan would start in October.

Commissioner Boehmke expressed interest in a presentation on recycling education.

Community Development Specialist Bodsberg stated that she would ask some contacts in Dakota County about the topic.

Commissioner Trenzeluk asked if commissioners should share relevant information between meetings via email more informally going forward or continue the procedure of going through the staff liaison. He also asked about preferred protocol for adding items to the agenda. He expressed interest in presentations with updates on the City's work with SolSmart and Minnesota GreenStep Cities as well as on the Energy Action Plan.

Commissioner Ruiz expressed interest in tabling at the local farmer's market. Regarding the City's work with SolSmart, he mentioned that many federal alternative energy grants are being terminated, so it's possible that funding for that work may end soon.

Chair Goodman stated that she and Commissioner Ruiz were Recycling Ambassadors through Dakota County and could help with a presentation on that topic. She also expressed interest in tabling at the farmers' market to increase awareness of the Organics Recycling Program. She hoped to see the Sustainable IGH Awards continue next year.

Commissioner Killion mentioned issues with overflow from Stark Lake (which is privately owned by Southview Country Club) running into Groveland Park. She asked if she could present her research on impacts on the watershed at a future meeting. She commented that there is a lack of public water access to Inver Grove Heights lakes (e.g., for canoers and kayakers). She also expressed interest in a presentation from and/or meeting with utilities to discuss erosion reduction methods in utility projects. She also suggested using sensor-triggered lighting to address light pollution concerns and save money.

Commissioner Mikulski also expressed interest in tabling at the farmer's market for public education about recycling. She said these kinds of one-on-one conversations can be very impactful.

Commissioner Sethre expressed interest in presentations on watershed issues and/or from the City's Streets Maintenance Department. He agreed that increasing public access to local bodies of water would be beneficial but mentioned that getting easements could be a long-term challenge.

Commissioner Savage asked for more information about the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy program and outcomes.

Commissioner Ruiz expressed interest in a presentation from Republic Services on assessing savings due to organics recycling diverting waste from the landfill.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **8. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF COMMENTS**

### **A. New Environmental Specialist and Commissioner Introductions**

Community Development Director Ziemer, addressing the above comments and questions, clarified that commissioners can reach out to staff to discuss adding agenda items. He suggested adding a work session to brainstorm in a less formal context, given recent staff turnover and the approaching 2026 Work Plan process. He said that there were nominations received for the Sustainable IGH Awards and added that it would be possible to contact the nominators to let them know the program is on hiatus but will return in 2026.

He introduced Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist, and she discussed her past experience as Sustainability Coordinator for the City of St. Cloud. She said she looks forward to applying her experience with resource recovery and energy efficiency in a wastewater context to existing waste abatement programs in Inver Grove Heights and other environmental programs, as well as getting to know members of the Commission and the public.

Commissioner Sethre clarified that the type of utility project Commissioner Killion mentioned is called full-depth reclamation. He commended the meeting minutes and thanked Community Development Specialist Stacy Bodsberg for filling in as staff liaison during the hiring process for the Environmental Specialist position.

Commissioner Ruiz asked if a fescue mix could be put in instead of grass for landscaping in future road construction projects. He mentioned that fescue is lower-maintenance and more sustainable.

Commissioner Sethre said that the Groveland Park project was a Dakota County project, but he expressed interest in contacting the relevant party to ensure that sustainable options are being considered.

Commissioner Killion asked whether this type of project could come in front of the Environmental Advisory Commission.

Commissioner Boehmke inquired as to if this type of project comes before the Planning Commission, the EAC could give advice to that body.

Commissioner Killion said a resident had also suggested that tree removal planned as part of a development project was an issue that seemed to fall under the Environmental Advisory Commission's scope.

Community Development Director Ziemer stated that development and street projects typically followed requirements laid out in engineering documents and/or City Code. Depending on where in a watershed a project is, sometimes developers are required to add swales, rain gardens, and/or other ecologically beneficial projects. He suggested that the planning process for the 2050 Comprehensive Plan would be a good opportunity for the Commissioners to revisit these questions. He said he would meet with the City Engineer to bring up the questions and suggestions raised by the Commissioners.

## **9. ADJOURN**

Motion by Goodman, Second by Killion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary