

**REGIONAL WORKING GROUP  
LEAF BLOWER REGULATION REVIEW  
MEETING NOTES  
Monday, 4 April 2022  
3:30 PM  
Virtual Meeting**

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**ATTENDEES:**

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Mike Braiman      | 10. Joe Kenney     |
| 2. Sam Barghi        | 11. Tessa Murray   |
| 3. Karen Glennemeier | 12. Chuck Myers    |
| 4. Scott Grams       | 13. Ghida Neukirch |
| 5. Hall Healy        | 14. Jeff Nehila    |
| 6. Marc Hornstein    | 15. King Poor      |
| 7. Drew Irvin        | 16. Heather Ross   |
| 8. Phil Kiraly       | 17. Joe Scopelliti |
| 9. Justin Keenan     | 18. Alison Winslow |

Absent:

- Anthony Blumberg
- Brian Rener
- Fred Wacker
- Beth Drucker

Guests:

- Dan Mabe, American Green Zone Alliance
- Josh Glucksman, student observer/Glencoe resident

**Welcome and Introductions**

Ghida Neukirch welcomed the group and introduced guest Dan Mabe, Founder, CEO and President of American Green Zone Alliance ([www.agza.net](http://www.agza.net)). The American Green Zone Alliance (AGZA) is committed to improving quality of life for communities, working conditions for operators, and best practices for the landscape maintenance industry. The organization is based out of California, but works throughout the nation with various industries and organizations.

Dan was invited to provide a 15-minute presentation about work their organization conducts relative to our scope.

The Working Group Scope of work, member list and all meeting notes can be found at [City of Highland Park,IL \(cityhpil.com\)](http://City of Highland Park,IL (cityhpil.com))

**Guest Dan Mabe, CEO/President, American Green Zone Alliance Presentation**

Web site for reference: [AGZA American Green Zone Alliance – The Leader In Zero-Emission Landscape Maintenance Strategies](#)

#### AGZA Programs:

- Green Zone Certification
- Service Professional Certification
- Other Initiatives such as AFTC Certification, exchanges, workshops and symposiums

#### Top Ten Impacts of Gas Operations:

- Emissions
- Health risks
- Noise, vibration, gas and oil
- Toxic waste
- Solid waste
- Inefficient
- Maintenance
- Expense

#### Gas Leaf Blower Replacement - what does it actually take?

- Look at the equipment; don't demonize the workers.
- Top rated electric models, 450 to 650 CFM versus 500-1000 CFM or higher CFM for gas blowers.
- 120 to 150 mph out of the nozzle versus 150 to 200\_ MPH for gas blowers.
- How many batteries per blower for a typical workday? Backpack batteries 1200 to 1600 watt hours, 3-5; onboard batteries 300-600 watt hours, 4-25.
  - This depends on watt-hour rating of the batter, the season, working conditions, operator habits and behavior etc.
- \$1500 to \$1700
- Average gas leaf blower replacement can be as much as \$4500 to \$8000. If electric is expected to replace gas with no operation modifications.

#### The City of South Pasadena the nation's first AGZA Green Zone City.

- Garfield Park, the nation's first AGZA Green Zone Municipal Park.
- RFP South Pasadena – all of contractor's personnel assigned to work shall undergo certification

Developed Environmental Landscape Footprint (ELF) – measures noise, granular cost/benefit analysis. They measure and verify. AGZA uses the exact equipment that is being used on the property. If they lack that information, they default to the cleanest burning equipment. Very conservative with ELF.

#### Commercial implementations:

- Key components include education, testing, approach, verification and resources.
- The Langton Group technicians using only battery handheld equipment for their Green Zone properties.
- AOS and Langton Group are one of only a few companies that have AGZA Green Zone properties.
- Auto mowers (automatic mower) can be used on select sites such as HOA properties. Low emissions; no noise.

Need to think of this as a paradigm shift. Standard is hyper manicured landscaping. Change the paradigm to a more ecological approach for landscape maintenance. Allow some leaves on the grass - - mulch.

Another concept - Homeowners purchasing dedicated equipment for their gardeners to use. Also consider battery co-ops whereby neighbors come together to buy equipment and allow the gardener to use equipment for the neighborhood.

Close to compiling a national program for battery retrieval and second life for manufacturing. Mindful that they do not want to create a new problem, while solving another. Important that the batteries are not just recycled. Second life will be key to making lithium operations a more circular and sustainable proposition.

Following the presentation, committee members asked questions of Mr. Mabe.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Existing regulations of other area municipalities and municipal best practices – Drew Irvin**

- Database developed of existing regulations in our area. The work is approximately 90% complete and then the information will be shared with the group.
- The best practice list is 50+ municipalities; will add Pasadena to the list based on the information presented before.
- Will compile top 10 list of initiatives to undertake

Inquiry if any communities have narrowed down on the spring clean-up season? Yes, although the shift has been gas powered to electric, not necessarily based on the season.

#### **Impact of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers – Phil Kiraly**

- Planning to meet again on 4/20. The team has been divided into smaller work groups; there will be some overlap with the other subcommittees.

Inquiry if we should bring the American Lung Association as a stakeholder to this Working Group. It was suggested that we use them as a resource only rather than formally part of this group.

It was suggested that we start with OSHA. Phil confirmed that this subcommittee would contact OSHA for their input and feedback.

#### **Alternative Equipment – Mike Braiman/Ghida Neukirch**

- Planning to meet again on 4/20. The first meeting the subcommittee focused on the importance of public education. The group will also assess cost and noise considerations. Various individuals are conducting research on technology options and exploring other communities across the country.

### **Next Steps – Phil Kiraly**

Any recommendations that this Group has not undertaken or planning thus far? It was suggested that the Group assess how communities are currently conducting leaf collection. For example, what does it mean for municipalities that conduct or contract for leaf pick-up at the curb?

It was suggested that a menu of options could be presented to each respective municipality. For example, if noise is the issue, then only parameters for noise would be sufficient. If noise/emissions is a concern, then another layer of parameters could be established for those areas.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, June 6, 2022 at 3:30 PM.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ghida S. Neukirch  
City Manager, Highland Park