

**REGIONAL WORKING GROUP
LEAF BLOWER REGULATION REVIEW
MEETING NOTES
Monday, 6 June 2022
3:30 PM
Virtual Meeting**

ATTENDEES:

- Mike Braiman
- Beth Drucker
- Scott Grams
- Hall Healy
- Marc Hornstein
- Drew Irvin
- Joe Kenney
- Phil Kiraly
- Tessa Murray
- Chuck Myers
- Jeff Nehila
- Ghida Neukirch
- King Poor
- Brian Rener
- Heather Ross
- Fred Wacker
- Alison Winslow

Absent:

- Anthony Blumberg
- Sam Barghi
- Karen Glennemeier
- Justin Keenan
- Joe Scopelliti

Guest:

- Joshua Glucksman

Welcome and Meeting Purpose

Ghida Neukirch welcomed the group. She noted that the subcommittees have been meeting and updated from each group will be provided at this meeting. The Working Group Scope of work, member list, subcommittee notes and Working Group notes can be found at [City of Highland Park,IL \(cityhpil.com\)](http://City of Highland Park,IL (cityhpil.com))

Subcommittee Reports

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

The subcommittee concluded it's data research and is in the process of preparing the written report. The subcommittee will meet again to review all information and they anticipate being done by the end of July.

An inquiry was made if any communities had success with regulating gas powered leaf blowers. Drew noted that research has found the most effective initiatives have had a smooth transition in place.

Impact of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers – Phil Kiraly

The subcommittee has met twice since the large working group meeting. The work was divided into three areas:

- Review of penalties – this has focused on ordinances and how they are enforced.
- Best practices – hours/days/times and noise pollution. Based on availability of equipment and all specifications associated – both gasoline and battery powered.
- Scientific evaluation relating to leaf blower equipment.

All the research and work will be compiled and then shared with the larger Working Group. The work is anticipated to be complete in July.

A question was posed if the work will include equipment recommendations? The work will not include specific recommendations although information of various models will be provided based on traditional models, low-noise models (below 65 dba), and electric models available.

Alternative Equipment – Mike Braiman

This subcommittee is evaluating cost considerations and alternative equipment. Fred Wacker evaluated batter versus gas blowers in terms of air speed, volume, noise, run time, blower weight and charge time. The sub-committee is reconvening in late June and then will have a report to share with the Working Group.

Scott Grams noted that the Impact Subcommittee is evaluating equipment based on 2-3 battery standard use.

Beth Drucker noted that it is important to evaluate charging costs at night versus daytime as the charges vary greatly.

Mike Braiman also added that the subcommittee is also exploring buy-back programs.

Public education is also being conducted as part of this group effort.

Next Steps – Ghida Neukirch

Are groups discussing public education initiatives such as “No Mow May” or other public education? The impact of gas powered leaf blowers group discussed the expectations of the public. The Alternative Equipment Subcommittee will include public education considerations in their report.

Scott Grams will share information about zero-emission equipment (ZEE) and noted that 72% of all leaf blowers purchases were ZEE.

Are municipal regulations for leaf collection being assessed? Drew Irvin noted that the work was not part of their subcommittee scope of work. Phil Kiraly noted that the discussion arose as part of their subcommittee discussion. It was suggested that we limit the work effort to the scope only and not expand on this topic. The Working Group agreed.

After much discussion, the Working Group agreed that the sub-committees should provide written reports to Ghida Neukirch no later than Friday, August 12, 2022.

The written reports will be compiled and then shared with the Working Group for review.

The next meeting of this Working Group will be held on Monday, August 22, 2022 at 3 PM via Zoom.

It is anticipated that the Working Group will have two more meetings and then the information will be ready to share with each respective community.

Other Business

Beth Drucker suggested that all communities send her information about any graphic designs, flyers, door hangers so the information can be compiled and then shared with the Working Group. Tessa Murray, Alison and King Poor will follow-up.

Scott Grams insured if municipalities were offering tax credits. The Alternative Equipment

Scott Grams inquired if anyone has evaluated the price of a maintenance contract in residential or commercial setting if a full transition was made to electric. Fred Wacker noted that an evaluation was provided, but not specifically contracts.

Drew Irvin noted that Lake Bluff asked for alternate pricing on their public facility contract and the delta was minimal.

Hall Healy inquired if there were successful buy-back programs. Mike Braiman noted that Tessa Murray conducted research on this topic and noted that there are no successful programs in our region, but nationwide research was being conducted.

Mike Braiman indicated he is meeting with Senator Fine and will inquire about a possible Statewide grant program.

Hall Healy inquired if ComEd could be contacted as well. Mike Braiman offered to reach out to ComEd about a grant or participatory program.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager, Highland Park