

**REGIONAL WORKING GROUP
LEAF BLOWER REGULATION REVIEW
MEETING NOTES
31 January 2022
Virtual Meeting**

ATTENDEES:

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

Absent:

- Beth Drucker
- Scott Grams

Guest:

- Tom Klitzkie, Board of Directors, on behalf of Scott Grams

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ghida Neukirch welcomed attendees and introduced co-chairs Phil Kiraly and Mike Braiman. The Regional working Group consists of 22 members representing 11 different communities. Most attendees are elected, appointed and staff professionals representing city/village government. The balance of the working group consists of other units of government, landscape professionals and sustainability professionals.

A spreadsheet of all members was distributed under separate cover. Attendees were asked to review and provide feedback if any changes are warranted.

These meetings are not public meeting pursuant to the Open Meetings Act. However, notes from each meeting will be shared with the group. Attendees are welcome to share the notes with their respective organizations.

REVIEW SCOPE OF WORK

Phil Kiraly referenced the Scope of Work that was included in the draft work sheet distributed to group members.

Phil welcome modifications to the scope of work. It was stated that the group has been convened to evaluate the need and impact for gas powered leaf blower regulations to be considered by each representative municipality. The Working Group will not develop specific recommendations, rather they will prepare a report based on a factual information for each community to consider and evaluate.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Mike Braiman outlined the three sub-committees:

1. Existing regulations of other area municipalities and municipal best practices
2. Impact of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers
3. Alternative Equipment

A doodle poll will be issued to attendees to ascertain which group they are interested in serving.

Further information about each sub-committees was reviewed:

- Existing regulations of other area municipalities and best practices
 - Current restrictions and exemptions in the member municipalities
 - Enforcement procedures
 - Compliance
 - Communications with landscapers and property owners
 - Did any municipalities consider prohibitions and reject regulations?
 - Have any municipalities prohibited gas-powered leaf blowers year-round? If yes, what have been the impacts?
- Impact of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers
 - Hours of Operations
 - The number of days or time period per year for use
 - Noise/Nuisance
 - Environmental considerations
 - Feedback
 - Landscapers, small-medium-large scale companies
 - Residents
 - Experts in the technology of leaf blowers
 - Penalty/Violations
 - Which department shall be responsible for enforcement
 - Method of enforcement (proactive vs reactive)
 - Financial and operational penalties
- Alternative Equipment
 - Technical/specification review of current commercial technologies (gas, battery, electric) equipment
 - Cost(s) of various commercial equipment and necessary components (charging stations, etc).
 - Explore options to phase-in regulations to address any technology or cost burdens

- Exemptions due to technology or other reasons may include:
 - Resident use of equipment
 - Public Property
 - Golf courses
 - Other land in excess of X acreage
- Consider financial incentives and possible buy-back options

FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A question was raised about social equity. Social equity should be considered in all sub-committees. For example, reviewing possible regulations and their impact on a large business versus small business owner should be considered through a social equity lens.

It was suggested that the group agree on a core set of values and principles. In response, it was suggested that the subcommittees develop a scope of work, values and principals as the first step of their sub-committee work. This will serve as a good foundation for the work each subcommittee will undertake.

It was also recommended that a uniform code be adopted across all communities. Agreed. Ideally a uniform code would be adopted among all of our communities; although each corporate authority will have the ability to advance municipal regulations, as they deem appropriate for their jurisdiction.

TIMELINE & NEXT STEPS

It was recommended that the next meeting of the Working Group be on Monday, April 4, 2022 at 3:30 PM. An Outlook Invite and Zoom information will be emailed to the group.

A doodle poll will be issued to all members to ascertain their interest in the sub-committees. The sub-committees will begin working and then provide an update to the full working group on April 4th.

It is recommended that this group strive to complete the work by October 31, 2022.

Thereafter, the city/village manager will work with their respective corporate authorities to present the information.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager, Highland Park