



DU PAGE COUNTY

Environmental Committee

Final Summary

421 N. COUNTY FARM ROAD
WHEATON, IL 60187
www.dupagecounty.gov

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

8:30 AM

Room 3500A

1. CALL TO ORDER

8:30 A.M. meeting was called to order by Chair Sheila Rutledge at 8:30 A.M.

2. ROLL CALL

MOVER:	Cynthia Cronin Cahill
SECONDER:	Paula Garcia
PRESENT	Cronin Cahill, Evans, Honig, LaPlante, Rutledge, and Garcia
REMOTE	Haider

MOTION TO ALLOW REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Member Cronin Cahill moved and Member Garcia seconded a motion to allow Member Haider to participate remotely.

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Cynthia Cronin Cahill
SECONDER:	Paula Garcia
AYES:	Cronin Cahill, Evans, Honig, LaPlante, Rutledge, and Garcia
REMOTE:	Haider

3. CHAIRWOMAN'S REMARKS - CHAIR RUTLEDGE

Chair Rutledge mentions that she is organizing a crew for an upcoming prairie path clean up and anyone is welcome to participate.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kay McKeen, founder and Executive Director of SCARCE (School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education) stated this month is packed with recycling events-eight in total. Upcoming events include a flag ceremony at Forest Glen School in Glen Ellyn on Earth Day, April 22 and the 19th year of the Sustainable Design Challenge on April 15, which already has 26 teams signed up. A scheduling conflict with SAT testing means some schools won't participate this year, so organizers are considering shifting the date to March in future years. Arbor Day is celebrating its 153rd anniversary and upcoming events include a cleanup along the prairie path and the Great Western Trail on April 26th. She concluded by encouraging the board to participate in these activities, emphasizing how simple actions can make a big difference in caring for the planet.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**5.A. [25-0913](#)**

Environmental Committee Minutes - Regular Meeting - Tuesday, March 4, 2025

RESULT:	APPROVED
MOVER:	Cynthia Cronin Cahill
SECONDER:	Lucy Evans

6. PRESENTATIONS**6.A. [25-0914](#)**

Clean Energy Workforce Analysis

Lisa Schvach, Executive Director at WorkNet DuPage, shared how she and Workforce Board Manager Jamie Brown were approached by Joy Hinz to allocate a portion of the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant funds to explore the clean energy job sector in DuPage County. Their goal was to assess the county's positioning for future opportunities and identify areas with limited potential.

One of the grant's allowable activities was conducting a workforce skills gap analysis, which led them to partner with Lightcast. Over two months (October-December 2024), Lightcast analyzed labor market trends to evaluate DuPage County's workforce strengths and determine the presence of clean energy jobs. Using the Jobs EQ technology platform, they aggregated data from workforce, labor market, and economic development reports to identify trends in job demand.

Schvach noted the challenge in defining "green jobs" since they do not fall under a specific industry sector. To address this, they collaborated with another organization to develop a tagging system, categorizing roles as either "core green jobs" or "green-enabled jobs." The report found that green-enabled jobs currently make up the majority of DuPage County's clean energy workforce. Schvach emphasized that this tagging system was essential for accurately identifying job trends and understanding the region's clean employment landscape.

Lisa Schvach highlighted key findings from the report, noting an increase in workforce training but emphasizing that the overall number of job openings in DuPage County's clean energy sector remains relatively small and furthermore identifies green building and construction as the sector with the most job postings year over year. However, even at its peak, this sector had only 1,400 job openings, making it a small fraction of the county's total labor market.

She cautioned that while the report shows a 200% increase in green jobs, this percentage can be misleading since it starts from a relatively low base compared to the county's overall job market. The report identified the three largest sectors for green or clean jobs in DuPage County: construction, manufacturing, and building maintenance, with automotive being the smallest.

Schvach noted that the findings align with the types of career guidance and training WorkNet DuPage provides to job seekers. With construction-both green and traditional-showing strong growth and manufacturing in high demand, WorkNet DuPage has been expanding training programs in HVAC, programmable logic controllers, and other building science-related fields to meet the evolving workforce needs.

The automotive industry data in WorkNet DuPage's analysis revealed some surprising insights. **Jamie Brown, Workforce Board Manager at WorkNet DuPage**, shared their curiosity about the experience and training required for someone pursuing a career as an Electric Vehicle (EV) Technician.

After reaching out to local mechanics and car dealerships, Brown found that employers overwhelmingly expect a minimum of five years of experience-with some managers requiring at least 10 years-to qualify for an EV technician role. This means that short-term training programs, such as six-week or two-month courses, are not sufficient to enter the EV field. Instead, becoming an EV technician requires extensive mechanical experience, making it a challenging career path for newcomers.

Lisa Schvach noted that this reality can be frustrating for job seekers, who often discover late in their training that the pathway to green jobs is far more complex than they initially thought. The key takeaway from this report, she emphasized, is finding ways to help individuals take those crucial first steps on the career ladder-so they can eventually reach these high-demand, premium positions in the green workforce.

Chair Rutledge invites Member Evans to share any questions, prompting Evans to ask Lisa and Jamie for more details on the report or any presentation slides summarizing the findings.

Lisa reiterates that the top green industries in DuPage County are construction, manufacturing, building maintenance, and automotive, with automotive ranking the lowest among them. She highlights that DuPage County excels in green-enabled jobs at the office and management level, such as project management for environmental companies.

She explains that WorkNet DuPage is closely examining these entry points, identifying potential employer connections, and training programs necessary for job placement. A key challenge is helping individuals secure middle-skills jobs-positions that offer livable wages without requiring extensive training. The report not only validates existing observations but also provides a clearer economic outlook for DuPage County.

As a result, Lisa shares that WorkNet DuPage has connected with a new training provider seeking state approval to offer training programs for both individuals and company employees. She also highlights incumbent worker training grants as a significant tool, providing reimbursement for training costs to help businesses improve their workforce.

Member LaPlante shares her thoughts on the presentation and suggests ways DuPage

County could bridge the gaps in green job opportunities. She asks Lisa and Jamie how the board can help incentivize and encourage more individuals to enter the green sector.

Lisa responds by highlighting a misalignment between job supply and demand-many individuals are pursuing careers that do not necessarily align with the most in-demand roles. She emphasizes the need for a campaign to raise awareness, helping people recognize that green jobs are a viable and growing career sector.

Vice Chair Haider then asks whether mechanics must gain experience solely through on-the-job training to become EV technicians or if formal training programs are available. She also inquires about the duration of such training.

Lisa explains that while some formal training exists, much of the necessary expertise comes from on-the-job experience, typically requiring five to ten years to advance in the field.

There are automotive training programs incorporating EV technology, which is a positive step in familiarizing new mechanics with the field. However, feedback from dealerships and repair shops suggests that while these programs are beneficial, newer technicians are not being allowed to work directly on EVs. Instead, EV repairs are reserved for senior mechanics, limiting immediate opportunities for those just entering the industry.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.A. [25-0923](#)

DuPage County 2024 Waste & Recycling Annual Report

Due to time constraints, Chair Rutledge encourages the board to reach out to Joy Hinz with questions about the DuPage County 2024 Waste and Recycling Annual Report.

7.B. 2025 Document Shredding Events Update

Due to time constraints, Chair Rutledge encourages the board to reach out to Joy Hinz with questions about the 2025 Document Shredding Events Update.

8. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

9. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was discussed.

10. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 A.M.