

1 **AD HOC GREEN TIER LEGACY COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

2 **Thursday, FEBRUARY 19 2026**

3 **(Approved as amended)**

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5 **1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

6 The February 19, 2026 meeting of the Green Tier Legacy Community Committee was called to order
7 by Chairperson Louise Howson at 1:03 P.M.

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9 **Present:** Louise Howson, Mary Smythe, Lisa O'Hearn, Paula Anschutz, and Jill Wiebe.

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11 **Staff:** Benjamin Andrews Village Administrator, Sarah Bertges Administrative Assistant

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13 **Others:** Jeff Lutsey (Climate Change Coalition)

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15 **2. Approval of the Agenda**

16 *Motion to approve the agenda by O'Hearn, second by Smythe. Motion carried – all ayes.*

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18 **3. Approval of the Minutes November 13, 2025**

19 *Motion to approve the minutes by Howson, second by O'Hearn. Motion carried – all ayes.*

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21 **4. Comments, Correspondence, and Concerns from the Public**

22 Andrews reported that nothing was provided prior to the meeting in writing, and no members of the
23 public were present. No comments were received.

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25 **5. Discussion/Action Items**

26 **a. Review of the 2023 Annual GTLC Report**

27 Andrews presented the 2023 Annual Green Tier Legacy Community Report for committee review,
28 explaining that this review serves as a baseline for the current year's report preparation. O'Hearn
29 questioned whether the 2024 report was ever submitted. Andrews confirmed that due to staffing
30 transitions, the 2024 report was not submitted to the DNR in 2025.

31 The committee discussed the status of the most recent documentation. Andrews indicated that the
32 version included in the packet (beginning on page 9) appeared to be the most recent available from
33 project files, though some updates may have been made that weren't captured in the final
34 submission. O'Hearn noted that she had sent corrections to former staff member Heidi regarding the
35 report and would search for those notes.

36 Smythe observed multiple references to "2024" within the document (such as on page 27, line item
37 WQCSA 18), suggesting the report may contain some updates beyond the 2023 baseline. O'Hearn
38 confirmed finding references indicating planned activities for 2024 that would need updating to
39 reflect whether they were completed.

40 Andrews clarified that this agenda item was informational only, as the 2023 report had already been
41 submitted. The committee proceeded to the next item without taking formal action.

42 Action Items:

- 43 • O'Hearn and Anschutz to send any notes from previous review sessions to Bertges in the
44 Administration office
45 • Andrews to incorporate any provided notes into the updated report

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47 **b. Discussion on Annual GTLC Report due March 31, 2026**

48 Andrews explained that the annual report for 2025 activities is due March 31, 2026. He reported
49 that Sister Bay staff do have access to submit the report and that he has scheduled a meeting with
50 the DNR to confirm best practices for submission and ensure a smooth process.

The committee discussed the most efficient approach to completing the report. Smythe recommended that the first step should be administrative, with various village departments updating their respective sections based on activities they completed. She noted that department staff possess the detailed knowledge necessary for accurate reporting that committee volunteers do not have. Anschutz agreed, referencing past experience where the committee attempted to complete the form but couldn't answer many items that required administrative knowledge. O'Hearn noted the importance of having department heads like Parks Director Erik Linczmaier provide information about significant projects such as the new parks building and lighting improvements. Andrews acknowledged the workload considerations and committed to delegating sections appropriately among staff while coordinating with Howson.

The committee discussed using a shared OneDrive document where staff would first populate their sections, then committee members could add comments rather than direct edits. Andrews offered to set up the shared document, assign sections to appropriate staff members, and coordinate the review process.

Smythe suggested the possibility of requesting an extension from the DNR given the transition period, though Andrews indicated that while one missed year might be understandable, two years would be less appropriate. He expressed confidence that a quality report could be completed by the deadline through coordinated staff and committee effort.

Lutsey (Climate Change Coalition) offered perspective from other municipalities, explaining that communities handle the report in various ways. Ephraim uses a partnership between their administrator and the most active committee member to complete an initial draft before committee review. Bailey's Harbor had a dedicated volunteer take the lead with administrative support. He noted that Door County's Wayne (parks and facilities manager) completes the form liberally using "NA" where appropriate, emphasizing that it's acceptable to submit the best possible product by the deadline rather than striving for perfection.

Action Items:

- Andrews to create OneDrive shared document with comment capability
- Andrews to assign report sections to appropriate village staff for completion
- Andrews to meet with DNR to confirm submission process and best practices
- Andrews and Howson to coordinate staff efforts on report completion
- Committee to review and comment on staff-completed sections
- Committee to schedule follow-up meeting prior to March 31, 2026 deadline

c. Discussion on Budget Allocations for 2026

Andrews presented budget information showing that the 2025 allocation was \$5,000 across multiple categories, but was reduced to \$2,500 for 2026 as part of efforts to decrease the mill rate. The budget is divided into: mileage (\$250), services and general support (\$1,000), website (\$250), advertising and notices (\$750), education (\$150), and general supplies (\$100).

Andrews reported that the only expenditure in 2025 was \$495 in the advertising and notices category for tree purchases through the Climate Coalition, described as "free giveaway/education."

Anschutz confirmed this was for nine flats of trees distributed to residents.

The committee discussed the previously approved but unfulfilled allocation of \$3,000 for reusable tote bags in 2025. O'Hearn noted that significant work had been completed on the bag project but it was never executed. Anschutz expressed concern about the committee's lack of tangible accomplishments in recent years due to staff transitions and inconsistent meetings, emphasizing the importance of completing actionable projects.

Howson clarified that the Green Tier budget should be viewed flexibly, with the ability to use reserve funds for projects that meet committee objectives even if they exceed specific line-item allocations.

Andrews offered to develop a strategic plan document showing proposed actions with timelines to provide a concrete framework for committee activities.

Action Items:

- Future agenda item: Discussion on reusable tote bags project with a target date of November 2026.
- Andrews to develop strategic plan framework showing proposed actions and timelines

d. Big Plant; The Climate Coalition

Lutsey presented information about the annual Big Plant tree distribution program, which operates during the April 15 to May 15 window, coordinating with Earth Day. He explained that the Climate Change Coalition sources 10,000 trees at bulk nonprofit rates and distributes them through partner municipalities, friends groups, and business associations. Sister Bay has participated in previous years, with the coalition handling procurement and delivery to his residence in Bailey's Harbor for pickup.

The committee discussed past distribution experiences. Anschutz reported that in recent years, due to lack of organized events, she simply distributed trees at the Sister Bay Bowl during the Fun Run and at the community volunteer day, successfully distributing all trees but missing educational opportunities. Previous years included distributions at the Sister Bay Land Institute, Piggly Wiggly, and Al's. Smythe noted that the Piggly Wiggly distribution was particularly successful, with strong public engagement and residents voluntarily contributing \$250-\$270 to the Climate Coalition despite trees being offered for free.

Andrews raised equity concerns about the previous year's distribution, noting that approximately half the trees went to one individual. The committee agreed this occurred because no organized public event was planned. Smythe and Anschutz emphasized that at Piggly Wiggly, they limited initial distribution to three trees per person, with additional trees available after 1:00 PM if supplies remained.

The committee discussed ordering ten trays (180 trees) at \$60 per tray for a total of \$600. Lutsey confirmed four varieties are available: balsam fir, red pine, white pine, and white spruce, all two-year-old seedlings in individual pots. He agreed to provide approximately 25% of each species. For the distribution date, the committee considered several factors. Lutsey confirmed trees are available after April 15, with any date through May being suitable as the trees can survive for months in their pots with proper watering. The committee initially considered May 9 (the Saturday before Mother's Day), but Anschutz noted she would need to leave by 11:00 AM. After discussion, the committee selected May 9 as the primary date with May 16 as backup, pending confirmation of Piggly Wiggly's availability.

Distribution hours were set for 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, with sufficient volunteer coverage needed. Jay at Piggly Wiggly has been supportive in previous years, providing tables and space.

Regarding promotional materials, O'Hearn recalled creating small tags years ago with planting instructions on the back and the committee logo on the front. She offered to locate and update these tags for the current event. The committee discussed including a QR code linking to video planting instructions on the Climate Coalition website. Lutsey agreed to provide logo files and any existing instructional materials, noting they minimize paper usage by directing people to their website. Anschutz suggested creating a simple whiteboard display showing the three basic steps: plant to proper depth, cover and mulch, and water regularly.

Howson offered to work with Innovative printing to potentially obtain donated cardstock for 180 tags, with hole punching and string for attachment. O'Hearn agreed to design the updated tags and forward them to Bertges for committee review and printing coordination.

Smythe suggested including a collection container for voluntary donations to the Climate Coalition, as was successfully done at Piggly Wiggly previously. Anschutz confirmed she still has paper bags available from previous years if needed for tree transport.

The committee discussed promotion strategies. Anschutz reported she provides updates to the Sister Bay Area Association monthly and they would promote the event through their social media channels. Smythe suggested posting on Instagram, though Anschutz clarified the existing Instagram account belongs to SBAA rather than the village. Howson suggested creating a poster for

distribution, and Smythe noted the possibility of including information on village sewer bill notices, which has been done successfully in the past.

Lutsey also described an additional tree sales program where individual residents can order one to three trays (18 trees each) for larger-scale planting projects. He noted Egg Harbor has been most successful with this program by sending notices through both physical and digital mail. Howson agreed to explore including this information in upcoming sewer notices, pending coordination with staff on timing.

Regarding community plantings (separate from tree distribution), Lutsey explained the Climate Coalition organizes free public plantings on specific properties, typically involving 200-500 trees planted by volunteers including school groups over 3-hour periods. He offered to coordinate such plantings on village property if appropriate locations exist.

Action Items:

- Howson to contact Jay at Piggly Wiggly to confirm May 9 availability (backup date May 16)
- Lutsey to provide Sister Bay with ten trays of trees (180 total), attempting to balance species evenly
- Lutsey to send logo files and planting instruction website link to O'Hearn
- O'Hearn to design and finalize tree tags with planting instructions and QR code, send to Bertges for review
- Howson to work with Innovative printing regarding donated cardstock for tags
- Bertges to coordinate tag printing (180 tags needed)
- Committee volunteers to staff distribution table at Piggly Wiggly on selected date, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Anschutz to provide paper bags from previous years if needed
- Anschutz to include collection bottle for Climate Coalition donations
- O'Hearn and Howson to create promotional poster for distribution
- Anschutz to request SBAA promote event through social media
- Howson to coordinate with staff regarding including tree order information in sewer bill notices
- Lutsey to invoice the village for \$600 tree purchase

6. Matters to be Placed on Future Agenda, Referred to a Committee, Official or Employee

The committee identified the following items for future agendas:

- Follow-up on 2025 annual GTLC scorecard completion and approval
- Reusable tote bags project discussion and implementation with a target date of November 2026.
- Further discussion and planning for Big Plant tree distribution event
- Food scrap pickup program (presentation by Lutsey and/or Jess from Climate Coalition)
- Climate Change Coalition's Climate Forward Business Program (presentation by Lutsey and potentially new employee Kelly)
- Participation in Egg Harbor's Earth Day celebration
- Playground surfacing updates and improvements
- Conversion to compostable cups at Sister Bay events

Wiebe suggested exploring Sister Bay's participation in Egg Harbor's established Earth Day celebration rather than organizing a separate village event, potentially sponsoring a table or activity. She has reached out to Egg Harbor to explore possibilities.

Smythe requested returning playground surfacing to the agenda, noting current surfacing requires ongoing replacement. She also suggested exploring conversion to compostable cups at village-sponsored sporting events and large gatherings.

Anschutz committed to raising the food scrap pickup program at the Sister Bay Area Association meeting and reconnecting with Climate Coalition staff member Kelly regarding the Climate Forward Business Program for dining establishments. Lutsey explained this free consultation program helps businesses solve sustainability challenges such as adopting reusable containers or compostable products.

Howson noted that regarding the food scrap pickup survey, verbal commitments from restaurants have been received but completed surveys are still needed. She agreed to review the restaurant list and personally follow up with dining establishments to encourage survey completion. O'Hearn reported she is meeting next Tuesday with representatives to discuss establishing compost pickup at the Sister Bay Historical Society Farm open air market, similar to programs in Bailey's Harbor and other locations.

7. Schedule Next Meeting

The committee discussed meeting frequency in light of the March 31, 2026 deadline for the annual GTLC report. The committee agreed to schedule two meetings:

Work Session: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 1:00 PM, to review and work on the draft annual report after staff have completed initial sections. This will be a collaborative working session to address questions and provide input on the shared document.

Regular Meeting: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 1:00 PM, for final review and approval of the annual report prior to March 31 submission deadline, and to address other ongoing committee business.

Andrews will coordinate the shared document process and communicate with committee members regarding timeline for staff completion of report sections prior to the March 4 work session.

O'Hearn noted she will be out of the country March 12 through the end of March.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Smythe, second by Anschutz to adjourn the February 19, 2026 meeting of the Green Tier Legacy Community Committee at 2:30 P.M. Motion carried – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant