

06-21-23 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

PREPARED 05-18-23

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Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Adoption of the Agenda

IV. Approval of the minutes for the 05-17-23 meeting.

V. New Business

VI. Old Business

a) Mayor's Request for Sustainability Plan

VII. 2023 Priority Issues (discussion)

a) Urban forestry

b) Land use / pollinators

c) Energy efficiency and inventory

VIII. Citizen Comments (3 minute limit)

IX. Commissioner Comments

X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 08-16-23 at 6:00pm

XI. Adjournment

# ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 05-17-23 MEETING

## MINUTES (PREPARED 05-18-23)

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Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

*I. Call to Order Chairperson Kazmier called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.*

#### **II. Roll Call**

**Present:** *Commissioner Jane Flores  
Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood  
Commissioner Jacob Inosencio  
Commissioner Kelli Kazmier (Chair)  
Commissioner Conner Wood*

**Absent:** *Commissioner Will Forgrave (Sixth Ward Councilmember)  
Commissioner Kevin Lund*

**Staff:** *Troy R White, City of Jackson Engineering*

**Also Present:** *John Haynes, Dahlem Conservancy  
Kim Haynes, Dahlem Conservancy  
Andrew Johnson (appointed to Commission for a term to commence 06-01-23)  
Hannah Schauer, Dahlem Conservancy*

#### **III. Adoption of the Agenda**

*Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Heck Wood to approve the agenda as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **IV. Approval of 04-19-23 meeting minutes**

*Motion made by Commissioner Inosencio and seconded by Commissioner Wood to approve the minutes as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **V. New Business**

*None.*

## **VI. Old Business**

### **a) Mayor's Request for Development of a Sustainability Plan**

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that he, Commissioner Flores, the Mayor and Jessica Henry of the Mayor's office met to discuss and clarify the Mayor's request – is the Mayor looking to replace the current Environmental Action Plan (EAP), supplement it or revise and evolve it? It was determined that the EAP needs to be revised to more fully address current priorities.*

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that the next step will be a follow up meeting to determine the framework for the revision of the EAP. Once the framework is established, it will be brought for review and approval by the Environmental Commission. Once the framework is approved, work on revisions of the text will commence.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she had communicated with the City Manager. She learned that the City is preparing a grant application for an urban forestry initiative that would include a forestry consultant.*

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that setting one, three and five year goals in the EAP was part of the conversation with the Mayor.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she requested in her communication with the City Manager that vacant city-owned lots be identified for potential use for pollinator gardens. City staff will review and sort lots over the summer.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she also discussed sustainable procurement with the City Manager. She suggested that a sustainable procurement initiative could provide a framework for choices and decision that will have a long-term impact. The City Manager is currently gathering info.*

## **VII. 2023 Priority Issues**

### **a) Urban Forestry**

*No discussion.*

### **b) Land Use and Pollinators**

*Mr. Haynes related that there is a 34 acre pollinator meadow at the Dahlem property and that a grant has been secured to plant another 34 acres of the same.*

*Mr. Haynes related that Dahlem supports No Mow May, that No Mow May is a step towards the Bee City USA designation and it helps brand the city as environmentally friendly.*

*Mr. Haynes related that it will require action by city leadership to obtain the Bee City USA designation - a resolution of support from City Council, the establishment of a committee (the Environmental Committee potentially) and a designated department to implement and report on pollinator-conscious practices and plans.*

*Mr. Haynes related that the Bee City USA designation will require a reduction in pesticide use.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that the Dahlem Conservancy could partner with the City to fulfill the education requirement of the Bee City USA designation. Dahlem's Birds, Bee and Butterflies event is an opportunity to educate the public about pollinators. This year's event will be on August twelfth.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested a partnership that includes the library to do a story walk around pollinators.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested the gardens at the King Center as a venue for a story walk.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she discussed the Tree City USA designation with the City Manager. She reported that he is amenable to assigning staff to the effort.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that when rewriting the City's tree code, a directive for the Commission to pursue the Tree City USA and Bee City USA designations be included.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that the ordinance that established the Environmental Commission be revisited to update the directives to the Commission.*

*Kelli stated that the Commission is an advisory body of volunteers that has been productive lately but has not always been so productive. A divided board might struggle with more ambitious directives.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that a resolution by City Council would be an opportunity for Council to approve Commission recommendations. He stated that the goal is to create pollinator crop volume and that certain trees provide a disproportionately large amount of pollinator forage volume compared to wildflower acreage.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that goals set as part of the Bee City USA designation would be something to work towards and that it would be useful to consult with an expert in determining goals and actions to meet those goals.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that local USDA staff could be a resource.*

*Commissioner Inosencio stated that there is currently a process underway for the DPW to use vacant lots for nurseries to grow trees. If those trees can be flowering trees, that would be a good thing.*

*Mr. Johnson inquired about the visual for a pollinator garden on a vacant lot within a neighborhood. Mr. Haynes replied that it would look like a meadow. Mr. Johnson asked if the sidewalk and parkway would stay open. Mr. Haynes replied in the affirmative. Mr. Haynes stated that each garden could be maintained at the level that best suits the area – some may need to be kept tidy and mowed down on occasion and other allowed to grow taller.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that pollinator gardens are not a large investment so there can be experimentation and expansion over time.*

*c) Energy Efficiency and Inventory*

*None.*

### **VIII. Citizen Comments**

*Peter Bormuth of 142 W Pearl Street spoke regarding 1) support for the inclusion of flowering trees in planning, 2) support for more cooperation and cooperation between the City and County regarding the County's Sparks Park and Keely Park which are located within the City, 3) rule changes at the state level to allow property owners to kill animals, particularly beavers, on their property and the negative impact this will have on wetlands and 4) changes to the mining permitting process to move authority from local agencies to EGLE.*

### **IX. Commissioner Comments**

*Commissioner Wood stated that he will share land use reform proposals at the next meeting.*

### **X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 06-21-23 at 6:00pm**

### **XI. Adjournment**

*Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Inosencio to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 6:46 pm.*