

09-20-23 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

PREPARED 08-18-23

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Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10th 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 08-16-23 meeting

V. New Business

VI. Old Business

a) Environmental Action Plan (EAP) Expansion to address Mayor's Sustainability Plan Request

i. Link to City of Kalamazoo's Community Sustainability Plan:

<http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/sustainability/>

ii. Review of Commissioner Input provided on attached form

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, 10-18-23 at 6:00pm

XI. Adjournment

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 08-16-23 MEETING

MINUTES (PREPARED 08-17-23)

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Date: Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

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

I. Call to Order Chairperson Kazmier called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

II. Roll Call

Present: *Commissioner Will Forgrave (Sixth Ward Councilmember)
Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood
Commissioner Jacob Inosencio
Commissioner Andrew Johnson
Commissioner Kelli Kazmier (Chair)
Commissioner Conner Wood*

Absent: *Commissioner Jane Flores*

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

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 the minutes for the 05-17-23 and 06-21-23 meetings

Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Forgrave to approve the minutes with clarification that Mr. Bormuth spoke against changes to the mining permitting process during Citizen Comments was approved five votes in the affirmative and Commissioner Forgrave abstaining.

V. New Business

Evaluation of Environmental Action Plan (EAP)

Commissioner Kazmier explained that Graham Diedrich, an Environmental Studies graduate student at Michigan State University, provided an evaluation of the City's EAP that was prepared as part of Mr. Graham's academic work. The evaluation shows the strengths and weaknesses of the EAP as well as how the EAP can be improved. Commissioner Kazmier stated that the review is timely and will be helpful in modifying the EAP in response to the Mayor's initiative which will be discussed later.

Commissioner Heck Wood related that the evaluation tracks well with where the Commission is at this time – the current EAP was developed with loose goals to make a start but now needs to be modified to include metrics.

Commissioner Johnson inquired if Mr. Diedrich is willing to give more input to the Commission.

Commissioner Kazmier responded that she will reach out to Mr. Diedrich and invite more input.

Commissioner Inosencio inquired about the content of the evaluation document.

Commissioner Kazmier explained that Mr. Diedrich had approached Commissioner Kazmier and Mr. White regarding the EAP in its current form, provided a framework for potential improvements and made a comparison of Jackson’s EAP versus other Michigan communities. She related that the evaluation shows that there is a blindspot in the EAP regarding air quality.

Commissioner Inosencio expressed appreciation that a scored comparison with peer communities is included in the evaluation and that the evaluation will be a tool to help move forward.

VI. Old Business

a) Mayor’s Request for Development of a Sustainability Plan

Commissioner Inosencio reviewed previous discussions with the Mayor and amongst the committee consisting of himself, Commissioner Flores and Commissioner Johnson.

Commissioner Inosencio related that they have developed five primary areas of focus: 1) Waste Management, 2) Water Resources, 3) Urban Forestry, 4) Energy Management and 5) Environmental Health.

Commissioner Inosencio then related that the following themes are applicable to each of the five focus areas listed above: 1) Green Development, 2) Carbon Neutrality, 3) Sustainability and 4) Environmental Equity.

Commissioner Inosencio said that the committee has discussed updating the EAP to include action items with one and five year goals.

Commissioner Kazmier suggested that it will be more productive for the Commission to discuss and edit a draft document rather than attempt to develop one as a group. She encouraged the committee to develop a draft document for review by the Commission as a whole.

Commissioner Kazmier inquired if Mr. Diedrich’s evaluation report provides a format for the organization of the revised EAP. Commissioner Inosencio replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Forgrave suggested that other community plans be considered as most communities will have similar goals but will differ in how they work towards them. Commissioner Inosencio inquired if Mr. Diedrich might be able to provide the plans for the communities included in Mr. Diedrich’s evaluation. Commissioner Kazmier will inquire.

Commissioner Forgrave provided the following link to the City of Kalamazoo's Community Sustainability Plan: <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/sustainability/>

Commissioner Inosencio suggested that action be taken on the low hanging fruit so as to make the most demonstrable progress.

Commissioner Kazmier inquired if the Mayor has indicated a preference for the format of the revised EAP. Commissioner Inosencio replied in the negative.

Mr. White then inquired about the goal of the revised EAP. Commissioners Inosencio and Kazmier explained that the goal is to revise the EAP so that it has teeth and includes numbers – that it include specific targets and metrics to determine progress.

Commissioner Kazmier then asked about how to proceed. Mr. White suggested that the model used to write the original EAP worked before – that a commissioner provides a draft document for consideration and comment by the commission as a whole. Commissioner Kazmier related that the commissioners who wrote the original EAP are different from the current commissioners so another model may be reasonable.

Commissioner Wood suggested that the committee of Commissioners Flores, Inosencio and Johnson gather and review data that can be used to draft text. Commissioner Inosencio suggested that will likely take a period of about six months.

Commissioner Kazmier suggested that the task of drafting text could be broken up amongst several commissioners working on several sections concurrently.

Commissioner Heck Wood suggested that Mr. Diedrich's evaluation report provides direction to write a plan that includes metrics and how to determine what those metrics are.

Commissioner Inosencio suggested a process of 1) gather info, 2) determine priorities and 3) draft text for an action plan.

Commissioner Kazmier stated that she will generate a form/template so that input provided by the commissioners will be in a common format. Mr. White will distribute the form to the commissioners who will then complete the forms and return them to Mr. White for inclusion in the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Kazmier related that she will contact Mr. Diedrich to request backup info for his evaluation report and to invite him to attend a commission meeting.

VII. 2023 Priority Issues

a) Urban Forestry

Commissioner Inosencio reported that Engineering has applied for a USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act grant. Announcements are anticipated in October 2023.

Commissioner Inosencio also reported that he had met with Randy Lybarger, DPW Foreman, about using vacant lots for a nursery.

There was discussion of current practices and arborist consulting services.

b) Land Use and Pollinators

Commissioner Wood reported that this issue has not yet been discussed at the Planning Commission. He related that his preference for action is to 1) remove minimum parking requirements for C1 and C2 zoning districts, 2) discuss a long-term plan for green stormwater infrastructure/runoff reduction, 3) consider place-based zoning in next Master Plan and 4) consider zoning modifications to encourage density.

Commissioner Kazmier reported that she went to the Dahlem Center's Birds, Blooms and Butterflies Festival. This event may be an opportunity for outreach and relationship building.

Commissioner Inosencio related that he would like DPW staff to be involved and provide reports.

Commissioner Kazmier stated that she will contact the City Manager about getting lots for an inaugural planting yet this year.

Energy Efficiency and Inventory

Commissioner Inosencio reported that work by Veregy is ongoing.

VIII. Citizen Comments

Peter Bormuth of 142 W Pearl Street spoke regarding 1) a Montana court ruling regarding climate change legislation, 2) the inclusion in the EAP of the need to understand the source of energy and the final destination of waste, 3) a new white roofing product that is more energy efficient than traditional roofing products and 4) Commissioner Wood's suggestion to reduce parking requirements in the Zoning Code.

IX. Commissioner Comments

None.

X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 09-20-23 at 6:00pm

XI. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Heck Wood and seconded by Commissioner Inosencio to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:19 pm.

Jackson Environmental Action Plan Expansion

- I. Water
 - a. Improved water quantity and quality
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

- II. Air
 - a. Improved air quality
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

 - b. Reduced GHG and other gaseous emissions
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

- III. Energy
 - a. Increased utilization of clean energy
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

 - b. Reduced energy use through efficiency savings
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

- IV. Transportation
 - a. Improved access to sustainable transportation
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
 - b. Enhanced opportunities for human powered transportation
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- V. Weather
 - a. Improved resiliency toward extreme weather events
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- VI. Ecosystems
 - a. Expanded green space and urban forests
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
 - b. Improved genetic, species, and/or ecosystem diversity
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

VII. Solid Waste

- a. Decreased municipal waste as recycling, reuse, and/or other programs are expanded
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

VIII. Environmental Justice

- a. Increased community involvement in environmental decision-making
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation
- b. Establishment of an equitable distribution of environmental resources, benefits, and costs
 - i. Information base
 - ii. Vision, goals, and objectives
 - iii. Options and priorities
 - iv. Actions
 - v. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation