



MINUTES
OXFORD ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Municipal Building 15 South College Ave. Oxford, Ohio 45056 First Floor Conference Room

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023 AT 7:00 PM

Approval of Agenda

Motion:	Ms. Raghu
2 nd :	Mr. Elliott
Vote:	Unanimous

Approval of Minutes

Motion:	Ms. Raghu
2 nd :	Ms. Branstrator
Vote:	Unanimous

1. Approval of Minutes from the March 1, 2023 Meeting
2. 2023-04-05 Environmental Commission Minutes

Old Business

None

New Business

1.
 1. IES Professional Service Project: Investigation into Apartment Complex Recycling
 2. Managed Natural Lawn Area Legislation

3. Citizen's Climate Pledge

4. Climate Action Steering Committee

5. City Council, Planning Commission, and Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board Activities

Other Business

Pilot Pollinator Gardens/Naturalized Areas at Oxford Community Park

Recycling Options for Oxford Public Events: Tentative Schedules

Urban Forestry Updates

Monthly Monitoring of Landfill Passive Gas Vent Emissions

Residential Food Scrap Drop-Off Program Summaries

Agenda Items for May 3, 2023 meeting

A) IES Professional Service Project: Investigation into Apartment Complex Recycling

Mr. Ralinovsky provided a status update on the Miami University's (MU's) Institute for the Environment and Sustainability professional service project (PSP) entitled "Recycling Program Recommendations for Commercial Housing Properties in the City of Oxford." The PSP student team has completed their counts of availability of tenant recycling at commercial apartment complexes (classified as on-site, shared with adjacent complexes, or none/utilization of publicly available recycling drop-off locations). They are presently preparing an evaluation of the survey responses regarding tenant recycling from property managers, and preparing for the final presentation of the PSP. The final presentation is scheduled for Monday, April 17, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. at MU's King Library, Room 134. The PSP's final report is to be completed by Friday, May 12, 2023.

B) Managed Natural Lawn Area Legislation

At the March 2023 Commission meeting, Ms. Jessica Greene presented City staff's potential options to address a formal enactment of a managed natural lawn area (MNLA) program. The Commission opted for repealing some existing code sections, and amending existing code sections to specifically address MNLA. The intent was to have the pertinent MNLA guidance in a single location in the code. In addition to revising code sections, the MNLA program would also include a formal public education component. Ms. Greene presented the revised ordinances for the Commission's consideration. The Commission thought the inclusion of a specific definition of a managed natural lawn was particularly useful, along with the requirement of a maintained perimeter, and text specifically excluding turf grass lawns from being considered as a managed natural lawn.

The following Motion concerning MNLA's was proposed by Ms. Raghu; Mr. Elliott was the second:

Motion:

The Environmental Commission endorses the repeal of Code Sections 935.19 through 935.22 and 935.55, and amendment of Code Section 1305.02 (and other Code Sections as needed) to address citizens' expressed desire for legislation concerning MNLA's.

The Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Greene informed that Commission that Oxford would shortly advertise for the creation of an educational program that would help provide public education regarding the creation and maintenance of MNLA's.

C) United Nation's Climate Neutral Initiative

Ms. Branstrator had previously requested that the Commission consider the United Nation's Climate Neutral Now Program (the Program). Specifically, Ms. Branstrator was interested in the Program's component that allows individuals to voluntarily participate in personal efforts to assist in the development of a more sustainable world. Following additional research, Ms. Branstrator did not believe the Program (or any of the current UN climate-related programs) would be appropriate for the commission to recommend. Ms. Branstrator had subsequently utilized other climate and/or carbon pledges that she believed would be a better approach for individuals to consider. Ms. Branstrator presented a revised Individual Climate Pledge that she believed balanced the complexity of the topic with the need to simplify the Pledge so it does not discourage the public from participating. Ms. Branstrator indicated that recognition of individual/family efforts would be an important factor is participation, whether this be recognition by City Council, posting of City-provided yard signs, etc. Ms. Branstrator also stated that the City of Silverton offered small grants to encourage individuals' utilization of solar panels for electrical generation, and suggested that Oxford consider a similar program to encourage individual efforts to reduce carbon footprints of an individual/family. It was suggested that perhaps the Climate Action Steering Committee be brought into the discussion of creating an Individual Climate Pledge program.

Ms. Murphy announced that Oxford's proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) would have a public input session on the evening of Thursday, April 6th at the Oxford Senior Center. Ms. Murphy provided a general overview of the public input session's organization, outlined the general timetable of the session, and assignments, as several of the Commissioners and Staff present at the Environmental Commission meeting were scheduled to participate in the CAP public input session.

Staff provided updates regarding the pilot pollinator garden and naturalized/prairie grass plots at the Oxford Community Park (OCP). Mr. Steve Ohl, the OCP Supervisor, had informed Staff that there has not been any appreciable number of weeds sprouting in the mulch-covered plots thus far this year. Councilor Prytherch had collected some seed stock and growing media from Mr. Ohl to determine germination rates. Results indicate there was a very good germination percentage. Also, Councilor Prytherch has sent an email to the volunteers and Mr. Ohl to start the coordination and scheduling of the plantings of the pilot plots. Ms. Branstrator stated that the year-old plants were tentatively scheduled for delivery between May 10th and May 12th. Ms. Branstrator did not know if the potted plants will have been acclimatized, as they have been raised in a greenhouse.

Staff presented a list of upcoming public events (through October 2023) where food trucks were

anticipated. Commissioners are to start working on coordinating volunteers (presently, predominately from local Boy and Girl Scouts troops) to help provide public guidance for recycling and food scrap collection efforts. There are currently seven public events scheduled through mid-October 2023. Given the recent (and historic) volume of food scraps at the residential drop-off program, Staff estimates that two of the six food scrap totes could be provided at these events without impacting available volume capacity for the residential food scraps drop-off.

The annual local Tree City USA awards ceremony will be held in Fairfield, Ohio on Thursday, April 20, 2023. This will be Oxford's 27th consecutive year as a Tree City USA community. The Memorial Tree Program's recognition ceremony is scheduled for Friday noon, April 28, 2023 at the OCP. This past year, three trees (Swamp White Oak, Japanese Silk Lilac Tree, and Donald Wyman Crabapple) were planted in the OCP as part of the Memorial Tree Program. Also on Friday, April 28th, the Arbor Day celebratory tree planting of a Burr Oak by the OCP Gazebo is scheduled.

Staff updated the Commission on the monthly emission monitoring event of the landfill's 23 passive gas vents. March's monitoring was the 30th monthly event. The estimated total carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) was approximately 32 metric tons (MT), which was the fourth lowest monthly total. The average monthly CO₂e is currently approximately 147 MT. Over the two years plus of observations, the monthly total estimated CO₂e for the entire landfill continues to be highly variable.

Adjournment

Motion:	Ms. Raghu
2 nd :	Mr. Elliott
Vote:	Unanimous

Commissioners concluded discussions at 8:05 p.m. The next monthly Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on May 3, 2023, in the Municipal Building's first floor conference room.