



## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA:**

April 3, 2024

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

7:00 PM

Jon Ralinovsky, Chair; Chantel Raghu, Vice-Chair and City Council Representative; Jason Bracken, Planning Commission Representative and City Council Member; Justin Fain; Heather Barrett; Peggy Branstrator; Anna Abey

Reena Murphy

### **Approval of Agenda**

### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Minutes from the March 6th, 2024 meeting

### **Old Business**

1. Zero Waste Events

### **New Business**

1. Eclipse
2. Updates from Members:
  - City Council
  - Planning Commission
  - OPTAB
  - CASC
3. Staff Updates

### **Adjournment**



**MINUTES**  
**OXFORD ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**MUNICIPAL BUILDING 15 SOUTH COLLEGE AVE. OXFORD, OHIO 45056**  
**FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024 AT 7:00 PM**

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**Approval of Agenda**

Environmental Commission members present were: Jon Ralinovsky, Chair; Chantel Raghu, Vice-Chair and City Council Representative; Jason Bracken, Planning Commission Representative and City Council Member; Peggy Branstrator; Anna Abey. Members of the public present were James Vinch and Daniel Vanwormer. The staff liaison present was Reena Murphy.

Motion to approve the agenda: Ms. Branstrator  
2nd: Mr. Bracken  
Vote: Unanimous

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Approval of the February 7th, 2024 Minutes
- Motion: Ms. Branstrator  
2nd: Mr. Bracken  
Vote: Unanimous

**Old Business**

1. Zero Waste Events Policy

Mr. Ralinovski provided a sample policy for the commission to discuss. The commission discussed what type of events would be impacted by a zero-waste events policy. There was a consensus to begin with City lead events and then implement a policy for all events utilizing city property, particularly those with food vendors. The commission also discussed different fee structures for events and event vendors. For example, there would be a difference in fees for events/vendors that utilize compostable materials and those that do not.

The commission discussed how Oxford is preempted from banning polystyrene and questioned

if the city could require compostable materials to be used as a condition of a public permit.

## **New Business**

### **1.       Arbour Day Proclamation**

The commission agreed to vote on both proclamations at once.

### **2.       Earth Day Proclamation**

Motion to recommend both proclamations to Council for approval: Ms. Raghu

2nd: Ms. Branstrator

Vote: Unanimous

### **3.       Merging Environmental Commission and Climate Action Steering Committee**

Staff proposed merging the Environmental Commission and the Climate Action Steering Committee to streamline environmental engagement and address concerns regarding staff capacity. Staff recommended revisiting the established ordinances to ensure representation from other boards and commissions. If the boards merged, members of both boards would be preserved. Staff recommended forming a small subcommittee to evaluate the structure of the merged board and begin joint meetings among the boards in April. Mr. Ralinovski and Ms. Branstrator volunteered to serve on this small committee.

Ms. Branstrator shared that she supports having two boards, as the two boards provide additional oversight for the city's sustainability efforts. She also feels that merging would result in one large board with too many topics. She shared that the Climate Action Steering Committee could meet less often, maintaining the two boards and reducing staff capacity.

Mr. Bracken shared that he worries having one board would cause ideas to get lost, however, is understanding of staff capacity. He expressed interest in exploring a different meeting schedule for both boards (i.e. every other month) to reduce staff capacity.

Mr. Vinch suggested that Climate Action Steering Committee become a subcommittee of the Environmental Commission, so that there is still a specific group focused on climate, but there is one commission voice for engagement and project feedback.

### **4.       Member Updates:**

- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Oxford Parking and Transportation Board

- Climate Action Steering Committee

No updates from City Council and Planning Commission.

OPTAB is working on bike and pedestrian safety and shared that the BCTRA multimodal hub has begun construction.

CASC updates were covered during the merger discussion.

#### 5. Staff Updates:

- Quarterly Summary from the Environmental Division
- 2024 City Council Goals and 2025 Research Areas
- Tree City USA

The Environmental Division provided a quarterly summary of gas vent emissions, food scraps, and urban forestry. The solar flare at GV23 has reduced the landfill's methane emissions by 253.37 MT (481.81 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e) in 8 months of operation. The flare reduced the total CO<sub>2</sub>e monthly emissions for the landfill between 39%-92%, depending on the month. In 2023, the food scrap program diverted 17.71 tons. The program has collected 92.71 since it began in April 2019. For 2024, 2.17 tons have been collected, with an average weekly collection of 620 lbs/week. The City of Oxford was approved for re-certification for the Tree City USA program.

Staff shared the 2024 Council Goals and 2025 Research Areas with the commission to brainstorm for discussion next month.

Staff also shared that Oxford was awarded the OEPA Recycle Ohio Grant to implement recycling education and zero waste events.

## Adjournment