



MINUTES
OXFORD ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL BUILDING 15 SOUTH COLLEGE AVE. OXFORD, OHIO 45056
FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026 AT 7:00 PM

Approval of Agenda

Members of the commission present include: Jim Vinch, Vice-Chair and City Council Representative; Peggy Branstrator; Ken Vincent; Becky Mathers; Barbara Smyth.

Members of the public include: Aidan Cornue, The Oxford Free Press; Michelle Baker, Coalition to Represent Oxford Wildlife (CROW).

Members of staff include: Reena Murphy, Sustainability Coordinator.

Motion to amend the agenda to add Coalition to Represent Oxford Wildlife (CROW) to New

Business: Ms. Branstrator

2nd: Mr. Vincent

Vote: Unanimous approval

Motion to approve the amended agenda: Ms. Smyth

2nd: Ms. Branstrator

Vote: Unanimous approval

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes from the March 4th Environmental Commission Meeting

Motion to approve: Mr. Vincent

2nd: Ms. Smyth

Vote: Unanimous approval

Old Business

New Business

Added item: Coalition to Represent Oxford Wildlife (CROW)

Ms. Baker spoke to the commission on behalf of CROW, a coalition that has formed to support sustainable design and environmentally friendly elements in the Miami University new arena design. Ms. Baker shared that bird strikes, light pollution, and the removal of historic trees are among the concerns of CROW. She stated that CROW would like a seat at the table when design decisions are being made. She noted that public feedback towards the arena has been negative and believes Miami can change public sentiment by integrating sustainability more intentionally.

1. 2027 Area to Research: "Develop a grant or rebate program for residents who want to install solar."

Staff provided an overview of the 2027 budget process. In January 2026, City Council provided staff with a list of areas to research to see if they are viable for inclusion in the 2027 city budget. Items on the research list are not guaranteed to be in the budget. In July, staff will present the research areas to Council with estimated costs and feasibility assessments.

Staff requested feedback from the commission regarding the 2027 area to research "Develop a grant or rebate program for residents who want to install solar". Staff shared Go Solar Columbus as a viable co-op and incentive program. The commission preferred the potential program focus on providing more support to a smaller number of homes, rather than less support to more homes. The commission felt that 5 homes was a reasonable goal for the program.

The commission also discussed the replicability of this type of program. Councilor Vinch emphasized that the vision of Council during the retreat was for the program to be repeatable, not a single year program.

Ms. Branstrator discussed ways to incentivize other smaller sustainable actions, such as replacing household gas tools (i.e. lawn mowers) with battery-powered equivalents. The commission also discussed other household energy improvements such as geothermal, heat pumps, and improving insulation.

Staff advised the commission to focus on incentivizing actions that are measured in Oxford's community-wide greenhouse gas inventory. So that emissions reductions would be captured in the biennial inventory.

Lastly, staff shared that they will develop an estimated cost for the program, incorporating the feedback from the commission. In June, staff will present all the 2027 areas to research for the Environmental Commission to prioritize.

2. Member Updates

- City Council
- Planning Commission
- OPTAB
- OCASC

Mr. Vinch shared that the City's water softening project is currently accepting bids. He also shared that he has received concerns from residents regarding data centers. Mr. Vincent shared that OPTAB has been extensively discussing parking with no firm updates to share yet. There

were no updates from Planning and OCASC.

3. Staff Updates

- Electric Aggregation Program Update

Staff provided an update on our electric aggregation program. Beginning in June, the new rate will be 10.25 cents/kwh. The Price to Compare for Duke in June is estimated to be 10.72 cents/kwh based on PUCO filings. So, the electric aggregation program is expected to continue to save residents money.

In 2024, the program saved the average household \$141 and the average small business \$546, totaling \$622,000+ in community-wide savings!

Staff also shared that Sharefest will happen May 14th - May 19th and is need of volunteers.

Lastly, staff shared that the application period for the Habitat for Humanity homes along Chestnut St. will be opening soon.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Vincent

2nd: Ms. Mathers

Vote: Unanimous approval

The commission adjourned at 8:28pm.