



MINUTES

**City of Ypsilanti
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING
One South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197**

**Monday, January 13, 2020
7:00 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Keith Michalowski	Absent	Nancy Heine	Present
Emily Drennen	Present	Julia Bayha	Present
Bryan Foley	Absent	Katy Greenwald	Present
Christian Cannon	Absent	Beth Gibbons	Present
Takunia Collins	Present		

Also Present: Council Liaison Steve Wilcoxon
Staff Liaison Ronald Akers, Public Services Director
Commission Recording Secretary, Nancy Hare-Dickerson

III. PUBLIC COMMENT- none

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL

Bayha (Second: Drennen) moved to approve the Agenda as submitted.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

V. INTRODUCTIONS – Council Liaison Wilcoxon introduced his granddaughter, baby Nova, who delighted all with her presence.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

1. Seed Bomb Demonstration by Commissioner Collins

Commissioner Takunia Collins presented a demonstration on how to make basic seed bombs with different types of flower seeds, including those for pollinators such as hummingbirds, bees, caterpillars and butterflies.

[Commissioner queries answered during and after the demonstration]

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of December 9, 2019 minutes

Greenwald (Second: Bayha) moved to approve the December 9, 2019 Minutes as amended.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

2. Approval of October 14, 2019 minutes
Drennen (Second: Bayha) moved to approve the October 14, 2019 Minutes as submitted.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

VIII. WORK SESSION

1. Recycling Education Discussion

Commissioner Heine: Initiated discussion as to ways to better educate residents about acceptable and non-acceptable recycling materials; e.g., with flyers, workshops. Packet materials were discussed, of which Staff Liaison Akers will further review to check for any language clarifications that may be needed.

Commissioner Collins indicated that he will work on creating a YouTube video that addresses recycling considerations. Staff Liaison Akers asked that coordination be done with the City DPS before the video is published.

[Further discussion ensued as to improving resident access to passes for recycling drop off; drop off event information; store elimination of plastic bag use; stores offering alternative bags for purchase]

IX. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS

1. A2 Zero Carbon Neutrality Initiative Update

Council Liaison Wilcoxon: Indicated that Council passed the Resolution to join in the Initiative and he shared highlights of the Washtenaw350 meeting that he recently attended.

Commissioner Drennen provided an Initiative update and shared information on plans to possibly do an educational A2 Zero event with EMU as to carbon neutrality and what it means. She also shared information as to a town hall to be held on February 22nd at Pioneer High School, as well as upcoming sustainability forums.

Commissioner Gibbons spoke to the benefits of the Commission taking and also sending out a survey, such as that discussed in the meeting packet.

[Discussion followed; Commission Drennen will obtain further information]

2. Energy Star Resolution – Resolution 2020-001: Energy Star Portfolio Manager

Commissioner Heine: Read proposed Resolution 2020-001 into the record:

“RESOLVED BY THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION:

WHEREAS, EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is a no-cost, interactive energy management tool that allows users to securely track and assess energy, water consumption, and greenhouse gas production across a building portfolio; and

WHEREAS, 40 percent of U.S. commercial building space is already benchmarked in Portfolio Manager — making it the industry-leading benchmarking tool; and

WHEREAS, using EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager would allow the City of Ypsilanti to identify under-performing buildings, verify efficiency improvements, and apply for ENERGY STAR certification for superior energy performance; and

WHEREAS, our participation in the Michigan Green Communities' Challenge requires the City to begin tracking building energy use;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sustainability Commission urges City Council to direct staff to begin using EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to benchmark building water and energy use."

[Commissioner comment and discussion followed]

Greenwald (Second: Bayha) moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-001 – Energy Star Portfolio Manager.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

3. Support for Native Plants Resolution - Resolution 2020-002 – Support for Native Plants

Commissioner Heine: Read proposed Resolution 2020-002 into the record:

"RESOLVED BY THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION:

WHEREAS, native plants are localized, well adapted to the local soils and climate, tend to be more insect and disease resistant, and require less watering and fertilizing than non-native plants; and

WHEREAS, wildlife such as birds are more attracted to the Native Plants with which they coevolved, and use such plants for food, cover, and rearing their young; and

WHEREAS, native plants, having evolved in the climate, are extremely hardy and, therefore, have lower maintenance and replacement costs; and

WHEREAS, native plants protect water quality by reducing stormwater runoff and erosion; and

WHEREAS, healthy ecosystems have been shown to provide therapeutic benefits to our mental well-being and physical health; and

WHEREAS, Native Plant usage helps restore the ecological balance we have lost through development and can help maintain, or even increase, property values; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Ypsilanti shall make every reasonable effort to use native plants on properties owned by the City, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council will instruct the Planning Commission to update the City Zoning Ordinances to reflect support of native plants, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council will instruct the Administrative Hearings Bureau to disregard native plant blight violations until the Zoning Ordinance is updated, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sustainability Commission will make every effort to educate and empower residents with the goal of transitioning private properties to include native plants."

Drennen (Second: Collins) moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-002 – Support for Native Plants.

[Discussion ensued regarding language that may need to be amended and possibly adding language related to pollinator plants]

[Discussion was had as to the best way to proceed as a result of above query and comments]

Drennen withdrew motion.

4. Recycling Grant Opportunity

Commissioner Heine: Shared information regarding a recycling grant opportunity that the Commission may be interested in, which will be placed on the February agenda for further discussion.

X. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioners and Liaison, who wished, shared updates of meetings, events and activities they have been involved with and/or are working on related to sustainability.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Andrea Wotan, Ann Arbor resident, passed out a handout and spoke regarding the need to reduce animal consumption and the global benefits of a plant-based diet. She urged the Commission to consider policies that would help residents reduce their consumption of meat, dairy, eggs and fish by fifty percent or more.

XII. PROPOSED BUSINESS

Commissioner Heine notated several items for addition to the February agenda.

XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday, February 10, 2020

XIV. ADJOURNMENT: 8:59 p.m.

Greenwald (Second: Gibbons) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

Full Minutes Prepared by: Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Recording Secretary