

Athens City Environment and Sustainability Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 5th, 2022, 6:00 PM
Athens City Building
8 East Washington Street, 1st Floor
Athens, OH 45701

1. Call to order Chair Aimee Delach called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Members present include Aimee Delach, Sam Crawl, Megan Almeida, Sarah Conley-Bellew, Jasmine Facun, Katelyn Rousch, Megan Westervelt, and Elaine Goetz. Quorum was established. Members absent included Ed Newman and Paul Logue. Guests included Beth Clodfelter and Christine Hughes.

2. Disposition of Minutes—Goetz motioned to approve minutes for September as submitted. Westervelt seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion was approved.

3. Next Meeting Date—November 2nd, 2022.

4. Old Business

A. Green House Gas (GHG) Inventory—Now officially available via a press release at this link: <https://ci.athens.oh.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=3031>.

B. River Corridor—Crawl suggested that the committee complete additional research to come up with a specific recommendation for the best mowing season. Conley-Bellew noted that the mowing that recently occurred interferes with the Monarch hatching season.

C. Arts West Pollinator Garden—Crawl is investigating the garden at the Athens County Convention & Visitor Bureau to determine what level of committee commitment would be needed to maintain a garden at Arts West.

5. New Business

A. Safe Streets for All Plan—this project would add 1.75 miles of share use path and would further the city sustainability goal of establishing 3 miles of dedicated or separated bike lanes in Athens. Delach wrote and submitted a letter of support for this project independently. After Delach read the letter aloud, Crawl motioned to give the letter commission approval for follow-up purposes and Conley-Bellew seconded. All members voted in favor.

B. Damaged Trees near West Side Cemetery—Hughes noted that either AEP or a cable/internet provider had been chopping limbs from trees in what seemed like excessive ways. Crawl recommended she reach out to Chris Fahl with the Shade Tree Commission (meeting Oct. 15th), as their expertise will be more suited to finding a solution to the problem.

C. Membership—Beth Clodfelter, a former Athens City Council member, is interested in filling one of the vacant positions on the commission. Crawl noted that while the commission itself does not have appointment power, these vacancies should be advertised on the City's website before nominating a recommended candidate. Rousch noted that the student representative position will open in June when she graduates and suggested advertising the role starting this winter to allow for the incoming representatives (or several candidates) to sit in on meetings.

6. Announcements and Updates

A. October 29th from 9 am to 1pm, the Shade Tree Commission will be planting trees at bus stops with a rain date of November 6th.

B. The World Economic Forum recently put out an article about the Bailey's Trail System available here: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/10/how-to-boost-local-economic-health-and-conservation-outcomes-through-outdoor-recreation/>.

C. Zero Waste Partnership Cleanup in the Wayne National Forest, see GivePulse for opportunities to help, including an upcoming women's clean-up event.

D. Athens Public Transit now has an electric shuttle! This shuttle will have a Passion Works cover wrap and will run on green certified power. On November 9th, there will be a fair free day with an unveiling of the shuttle at Armory Park.

E. On alternating Wednesdays, the Sustainability Film Series will be running at the Athena Cinema. Commission member Megan Westervelt co-produced a short film "Disappearing Voices" that will be featured October 19th.

F. H2Ohio is planting 14 thousand trees near Chauncey. Keep an eye out for volunteer opportunities.

G. Farm to Ohio Mini Summits seek to improve institutional education about local foods, and are a partnership between Rural Action, CFI, and Ohio University. The next event is on October 27th at the Chesterhill Produce Auction.

H. At the next meeting, the commission will discuss the Inflation Reduction Act and the opportunities grant funding from it may bring to improve home efficiencies, renewables, etc.

7. Adjournment—Westervelt motioned to adjourn the meeting. Delach seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Katelyn Rousch.