

Athens City Environment and Sustainability Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday November 2nd, 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 6:06 PM. Members present include Aimee Delach, Sam Crawl, Megan Almeida, Jasmine Facun, Katelyn Rousch, Megan Westervelt, and Elaine Goetz. Quorum was established. Members absent included Sarah Conley-Bellew, Ed Newman, and Paul Logue.

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—December 7th, 2022.

4. Old Business

A. Green House Gas (GHG) Inventory—Goetz proposed looking into the methodology used by the inventory so it can be replicated each year.

B. New Member—Crowl announced Clodfelter's interest in becoming a commission member to City Council and discussed the need for standardized process through the government channel. Delach motioned to recommend Beth Clodfelter to join the Environment and Sustainability Commission, and Goetz seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

C. River Corridor Mowing—Ohio University Director of Facilities Management Steve Mack is open to committee recommendations on the best times of year for mowing. Rousch recommended reaching out to other municipalities that have systems (like the Metroparks of Ohio) to determine whether they have any guidelines or reasoning for when they mow. Almeida suggested part of the field could be a good place for community gardens, or for leaving patches of field to see what grows (native or invasive). Crowl noted that the university has agreed to similar projects, including sidewalk on Union is being moved into part of this field due to a road-widening project. He expressed concern for how this project may impact several sycamores on the side of the road.

D. Union Street Tree Trimming—Crowl investigated the tree trimming on Union and discovered that the branches of the trees were making contact with traffic, which constitutes an emergency tree trimming. The Shade Tree Commission usually has to be consulted before pruning or removal, but was not for this instance.

5. New Business

A. Sustainability Award Program—Crowl proposed the idea of recognizing people who have done significant work in enhancing the sustainability of our community. The committee was in favor of this idea. Rousch suggested that in addition to this, it would be neat to have a competition or event with teams composed of multiple generations to inspire creativity and support for sustainable projects in the community. Goetz mentioned that existing groups/competitions might be good leverage for launching this kind of project.

B. Inflation Reduction Act—According to Delach, the act has many funding opportunities that could help fund projects to further SDGs locally.

C. Shade Tree Commission Tree Planting—The project to plant trees on Conservancy land was only partially funded. Westervelt was looking for ways the commission may be able to sponsor more trees. Crowl suggested that Susan Calhoun may have young trees that could be used and recommended reaching out to her.

D. Standardize By-Laws for Commissions—Crowl announced that City Council is working to re-establish and standardize commission by-laws, and there may be parts the commission must complete.

6. Announcements and Updates

A. 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.

B. Tree Planting—The Arbor Day Committee is planting 6 trees on November 12th from 10–2 pm.

C. Mayor Round Table—On Thursday November 3rd at 1 pm, the mayor is having a conversation about climate change virtually.

7. Adjournment—Goetz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:04. Almeida seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Katelyn Rousch.