

Washtenaw County Environmental Council

**Tuesday, June 28, 2022
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Remote Meeting via Zoom**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Olsson at 5:04 PM.

2. Attendance

Councilmembers:

Kris Olsson	Present	Ann Arbor Township
Gay MacGregor	Absent	-
Anne Brown	Present	Green Oaks, Livingston
Michelle Deatruck	Present	Superior Township
Hallie Fox	Absent	-
Virginia He	Absent	-
Jason Morgan	Present	City of Ann Arbor
Tim Redmond	Present	Scio Township
Joet Reoma	Present	City of Ann Arbor
Sue Shink	Present	Northfield Township
Theresa Tupacz	Present	Pittsfield Township
Lisa Wozniak	Present	Ypsilanti City

Tim Redmond Joined at 5:09 PM, and Michelle Deatruck at 5:27 PM. Lisa Wozniak left at 5:30 PM, and Anne Brown left at 5:36 PM.

Staff Present: Jason Fee, April Avigne, Andrew DeLeeuw

Others Present: Chip Smith, Hank Love, Caroline Charles Krell

3. Approval of the Agenda

Approval of the Agenda was moved by Shink and seconded by Wozniak. Approved unanimously by roll call vote.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. May 24, 2022

**Approval of the May 24, 2022 minutes was moved by Wozniak and seconded by Morgan.
Approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

5. Citizen Participation:

None.

6. Council Responses to Citizen Participation

None.

7. Special Presentations

None.

8. Regular Business

a. Climate Action Plan –

Project Team Update

Andrew DeLeeuw introduced project team members Chip Smith and Hank Love, indicating that they were stepping in for Matt Naud. Andrew assured that this change would not impact project timeline or quality.

Project Update and Feedback Process

Hank Love began the discussion with news that DTE provided a substantial amount of information that they have been waiting 7 months for. The information was the electricity and gas consumption by customer class for 2019, 2020, and 2021. He mentioned that they are still waiting on information from Chelsea's electric utility, and other smaller sources, but are overall satisfied that with what DTE provided. Moving forward Hank began discussing how electric and natural gas emissions are going to be increasing in the next year. Electricity consumption is a large contributor to emissions more than natural gas, therefore it's not necessarily a bad thing because it can be converted to renewables. He described that County operations represent a very small percentage of the overall emissions, and we should be prioritizing any sort of strategies that can reach towards countywide emissions reduction.

Councilmember Wozniak weighed in and wants to have a conversation about how Washtenaw County can push the legislature to change some of these antiquated laws that deter more expansion of renewables in residential homes and businesses.

Councilmember Tupacz had a question regarding the transportation emissions and wanted to know if it regarded inbound commuters as well. Hank explained that the two biggest factors were cross boundary inbound and cross boundary outbound, which is people leaving or entering the county. There was also on road vehicles in boundary, which are people just traveling within the county, and lastly transit, in boundary, which is the lowest portion of emissions in our transit system.

Councilmember Reoma had a question regarding the total solar capacity, which Hank explained that solar is measured in two ways, capacity, and watts. Hank began to talk about how in Washtenaw County we only have 9,015 which means about 9 megawatts of capacity, which are those solar panels on people's rooftops. Which is relatively good in comparison to other counties.

Chip chimed in and discussed negative factors of having solar panels, one big one being the price. He mentioned that if someone bought solar panels for \$40,000, it's not going to start paying for itself for 25 years and that's going to be a hard thing for people to jump into. Hank also mentioned it's important to know who can't afford it and put the prioritize their needs.

Chair Olsson asked if this information he provided also relates to University of Michigan and City of Ann Arbor because they have their own climate action plan, and Hank verified that this information does relate to both.

Councilmember Redmond asked what ratio used by the energy commission, in changing the rate that they pay for home generation from solar panels. Hank said they reduce the cost because they're paying the same price to buy energy from you that they sell it to you without having any investment in the infrastructure.

Councilmember Deatirck had concerns regarding if all of this is truly "clean energy" or if it's just energy they're generating any way and people are just paying more.

Councilmember Reoma asked if there is some type of collective in solar installation where Hank responded and told him about the solar co-op models that exist. These solar co-op models can work for electrification and heat pump purchases or insulation air sealing, which helps reduce overall consumption.

Hank discussed the next step of when the greenhouse gas inventory is completed and discussed once the full inventory is complete, the next step would be to think about the actions and what their potential impact is on. Councilmember Tupacz also mentioned how the county will facilitate this with the community and mentioned this will require headcount and staffing to support this. Chip assured that these

recommendations will be part of the climate plan, and he also said that what they're trying to do is provide an analysis of potential impact of the decisions.

Chair Olsson then moved to discuss the feedback they've gotten so far from organizations and discuss how it informs the creation of the plan. Andrew DeLeeuw began the discussion talking about how plans for climate change plan for next year will be an ongoing process. He mentioned that the documentation and the plan shape that they've gotten thus far has been guided by what feedback they have received from these public meetings. Andrew also highlighted that as much as the feedback is beneficial, it can also be messy at times and its important to incorporate the feedback. Andrew gave news that they're planning on publishing a draft version of the plan later this fall and are hoping to get more feedback once they do that.

9. New Business

None.

10. Communications and Reports

A. Councilmembers

None

B. Staff

None

C. Committees

None

11. Tasks:

None.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was moved by Shink and seconded by Tupacz. Approved unanimously by roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:35PM.

Approved by the Environmental Council on August 23, 2022

Minutes prepared by Andrew DeLeeuw,
Staff to the Environmental Council