

Washtenaw County Environmental Council

Tuesday, January 30, 2023

5:00PM - 6:30PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/join>

Join by Phone: 1-470-250-9358

Meeting ID: 891 2705 8352

Passcode: 591312

JANUARY COUNCIL APPROVED MINUTES

I. Call to Order

5:01 PM

II. Attendance

Present: Anne Brown, Andrew Comai, Michelle Deatrick, Gay MacGregor, Kris Olsson, Avni Rao, Elizabeth Ratzloff, Tim Redmond, Katie Scott, Annie Somerville, Benjamin VanGessel, Yousef Rabhi

Absent: Hudson Villeneuve

III. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Tim Redmond

Seconded by: Katie Scott

Approved by: Unanimous Voice Vote

IV. Approval of Past Minutes for the October 24, 2023 and November 28, 2022 Meetings.

Moved by: Kris Olsson

Seconded by: Gay MacGregor

Some scribal changes were noted that need to be made.

Approved by: Unanimous Voice Vote

V. Citizen Participation: (up to 4 minutes per speaker) - No citizen participation

a. Council Responses to Citizen Participation

b. Acknowledgement of written Citizen Participation - No written citizen participation

VI. Presentation: Michigan Climate Smart Farm Project

Megan DeLeeuw, Executive Director, Washtenaw County Conservation District

Questions:

- What can big farms in our area do to be more climate smart?
- What types of tracking/reporting is associated with the program and how will carbon sequestration benefits be verified? Do you have a sense of how this will intermix with other farming certifications?
- How many farms do you think this will fund around?
- Do you have a sense for the kind of forestry practices you would pay for? Also, for minimum acreage of forest or farm?
- What can Resilient Washtenaw do to promote more of this?
- Are there any Farm Bill updates in regard to this topic (promoting regenerative or climate smart or whatever agricultural practices?)

VII. Regular Business

- a. Washtenaw County Climate Action Plan & Sustainability/Resilience Office- *Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator*
 - i. Budget and Staffing Status & Next Steps
 1. BOC made meaningful commitments to Climate Action Plan by funding two full time staffers for Resiliency Office.
 2. The County is actively working on the hiring process, Chair Deatruck and Commissioner Rabhi will be on the interview panel.
 3. Hoping for the hiring of the Resiliency Officer to happen by the end of March.
 4. Second position, program manager would be hired by the Resiliency Officer
 - ii. Council Discussion
 1. Tim Redmond: Abby Morris is a current employee of the county who has been working on a possible composting program for the county. Can this be included in the resilient Washtenaw plan?
- b. SEMCOG regional climate action planning – *Staff*
 - i. IRA included 4.8B for climate planning across the country. Grand Rapids and SE MI have received funding.
 - ii. SEMCOG has released its preliminary climate action plan for public comment last Monday. That is on the agenda of the SEMCOG executive committee meeting
 - iii. Links to plan and way to give direct comment:
 1. <https://southeast-michigan-healthy-climate-plan-semcog.hub.arcgis.com/>
 - iv. Council members discussion:
 1. Chair Deatruck: If WCEC can be of support to the Board of Commissioners in drafting comments, we are happy to be helpful.

- c. Council Members
 - i. Updates on appointments to the WCEC - *Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator*
 - 1. Returning Members
 - 2. Openings: Water Protection, Renewable Energy Provider
 - a. Available and posted on the website, link to apply:
<https://www.washtenaw.org/3667/Current-Openings>
- d. Facilities Updates - *Jason Fee, Director, Facilities Management*
 - i. Jason will create a flyer of what the County is currently doing for the Council to use while tabling
 - ii. Jason will share recap of what has been done, what is being done, and what is on the horizon

VIII. New Business

- a. Updates: Communications and Reports
 - i. Councilmembers
 - 1. Chair's Report
 - a. Bylaws Updates Proposal: An introduction
 - i. Suggestion that a seat for a labor member would be added. Article 6 Membership
 - b. Meeting Schedule and topics
 - i. February 27th meeting will include a presentation by the Dark Skies Initiative, which is rescheduled from the January meeting date that was canceled due to the weather. It will also include consideration of Bylaws changes.
 - ii. March 26th meeting will include elections for Chair, Vice Chair.
 - 2. Chair noted this Chair Deatrick noted this focus at WEMU on the County's weatherization program for residents:
<https://www.wemu.org/show/issues-of-the-environment/2024-01-24/issues-of-the-environment-washtenaw-countys-weatherization-program-receives-bigger-budget-and-is-ready-to-serve-more-residents>
 - a.
 - 3. Other Reports: None.
- b. Staff - None additional
- c. Committees and Committee Reports
 - i. Outreach Committee- *Chair Avni Rao*
 - 1. First Tabling event of the year is Ann Arbor Climate Teach-In happening on March 10: <https://www.a2climateteachin.com/>
 - 2. Chair Deatrick would like to compile all resources in one place for the WC Environmental Council
 - ii. Other Committees – no reports

IX. Adjourn

- a. Moved by: Yousef
- b. Seconded by: Tim
- c. Approved Unanimously

Next Meetings

Tuesday, February 27

Tuesday, March 26