

Washtenaw County Environmental Council

Tuesday, June 24, 2025. 5:00PM - 6:30PM

Virtual Meeting

Link to join:

<https://washtenawcounty.zoom.us/j/84042769611?pwd=V6X5wGGk5hvgKKFqbAlZg4aZxXjK0s.1>

JUNE FINAL MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order
 - A. 5:03 PM
- II. Attendance
 - A. Michelle Deatrick, Anne Brown, Gay MacGregor, Liz Ratzloff, Alex Bryan, Benjamin VanGessel, Annie Somerville, Yousef Rabhi
- III. Land Acknowledgement
- IV. Approval of the Agenda
 - A. Motion to amend agenda to move Chair's report to after guest speakers
 - 1. Moved: Liz Ratzloff
 - 2. Second: Ben VanGessel
 - 3. Approved by: Unanimous Acclamation
- V. Approval of the Minutes of the May 27, 2025 Meeting
 - A. Moved: Alex Bryan
 - B. Second: Liz Ratzloff
 - C. Approved by: Unanimous Acclamation
- VI. Public Comment/Citizen Participation: (up to 4 minutes per speaker)
 - A. Council Responses to Citizen Participation
 - 1. No public comment made
 - B. Acknowledgement of written Citizen Participation
 - 1. No public comment made
- VII. Staff Reports
 - A. Acknowledgement of written Staff Reports and Communications
 - B. Beth Gibbons, Director, County Resiliency Office: *Washtenaw County Resiliency Office Report*
 - 1. Staffing Status

2. Resiliency Office Updates and Events

3. Other Updates

C. Other Staff Reports

1. Jason Fee, Director of Facilities Management

a) present, no report at this time, available for questions

VIII. Guest Speakers TBD / Waiting on Confirmation

A. Presentation on Royal Oak and Oakland County Climate Action Plans and Actions by Woody Gontina, Chair, Royal Oak Environmental Advisory Board; Amanda Herzog, Royal Oak City Commissioner; and Julie Lyons Bricker, Sustainability Manager, Oakland County

1. Council Discussion:

a) MD: Question about successes in engaging community

b) MD: Question to hear more about how the Environmental Council can better support the BOC

c) AS: Question about conversations surrounding impacts of federal activity

d) BVG: Question about community engagement that has been more successful v more of a reach

e) Director Beth Gibbons: Comment Washtenaw Co has USDN membership. Question about County Master Plan.

f) MD: Expressing gratitude they were able to join us and share their experience

B. Presentation on Huron Valley Area Labor Federation's Just Transition organizing and JT Committee by HVALF Just Transition Committee Co-Chair and WCEC Council Member Liz Ratzloff

1. Council Discussion:

a) MD: Comment supporting work. Inviting any others to share about their work from their organizations as well.

IX. Chair's Report

A. Council Survey Results

1. Hearing from other Washtenaw Co municipalities or neighboring Counties about climate/environment work being doing and additional specific speaker topics and organizations were requested

2. Council Discussion

- a) YR: Comment to include ecosystem wide considerations/topics such as carbon sink inventory, animals, in addition to trees
- b) BVG: Comment to tie in Parks & Rec, new director and master plan
- c) YR: Confirmed and agreed with BVG, good to give everyone awareness about what county properties have
- d) MD: Comment that this is ongoing conversation
- e) AP: Comment on data center update, may cut down trees
- f) MD: Does Ypsi Twp have Heritage Tree Ordinance
- g) BVG: Comment to include The Ride in land use conversations
- h) YR: Comment about timing

B. Council Committee Appointments

- 1. Option to increase quorum
- 2. Community, Planning, Policy Recommendations
 - a) There are still spots to join committees if anyone is interested
 - b) First meetings happen within next month

X. Old Business

A. Proposed Data Centers in Washtenaw County

- 1. Wrote letter last week, will follow up on that to be ready for next meeting
- 2. Council Discussion
 - a) AB: Comment giving community update, attended meeting and quiet a few people are attending to oppose the project
 - b) AP: Comment updating about Ypsilanti Twp. There is no control and involvement, they find things out as the news happens. DTE will be building substation
 - c) MD: Comment supporting right to know about impact to County's climate action plan

B. Other

XI. New Business

A. Discussion: Upcoming Meetings

- 1. August 26 Meeting: Discussion of Council Member Availability
- 2. September 23 Meeting: Discussion
 - a) Proposal to hold in person and/or hold a Community Listening Session

XII. Communications and Reports

A. Councilmembers

XIII. Adjourn

A. 6:27 PM

B. Motion: Yousef

C. Second: Alex

D. Approved by: Unanimous Acclamation

Next Meetings

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

August 26, 2025