

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES
January 5, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Members of the Environmental Advisory Commission met on the above date at 5:30 p.m. in the Public Works Department conference room, Dr. Shaw, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present. The following attended the meeting:

1. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Robert Shaw
Ann Maxwell
Thomas Trevathan
Jeff McKinnon
Joshua Gardner
Yoshi Newman

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lisa Kirby, City of Greenville
Wanda Martin, City of Greenville
Marion Blackburn, City Council Liaison

GUEST:

Chad Carwein, ECU
Jeff Monico, Sierra Club

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 1, 2022 MINUTES

Mrs. Maxwell mentioned spelling errors and that she would email Ms. Martin the corrections. Dr. Newman also mentioned a spelling error.

A motion was made by Dr. McKinnon to approve the December 1, 2022 minutes with these amendments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Trevathan and passed unanimously.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. McKinnon mentioned that he drafted the next social media post and will circulate it in the next few days about the “Bio-Diversity Summit” that took place in Montreal. It will highlight some of the bigger issues and a little bit about what we can do.

Mrs. Blackburn announced that the previous post got reposted as a picture with text on December 21, 2022.

Dr. Shaw introduced Jeff Monico from the Sierra Club.

Joshua Gardner announced that he did get to speak with a councilman about the Sustainability Manager position and didn't get a lot of questions but the councilman seemed quite in favor of the proposal.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Dr. Shaw spoke on getting support for a Sustainability Manager from other groups and getting support from developers in Greenville. Dr. Shaw mentioned he had spoken to three developers already, and was unsuccessful on getting their support.

Dr. Shaw mention on his recent visit to Asheboro, NC he spoke with Bridget Herring, sustainability manager of Asheboro since 2014. Mrs. Herring spoke of a saving account that they put the savings from projects into. (Green Energy Savings Account) Mrs. Herring did mention that the funds in this account did not pay for the Sustainability Office. Mrs. Herring stated that you have to spend a lot of money to save money. (Example converting cars to EV's) Mrs. Herring gave examples of how the Sustainability office coordinates with other departments. (Solar panels, Vehicles and environmentally friendly landscaping at the new Fire Dept. being built.) Dr. Shaw mentioned the real value of the sustainability managers is they are part of the South Eastern Sustainability Directors network. There are 21 communities in North Carolina alone that have sustainability managers or are part of this network. A lot of these towns are smaller than Greenville. (Example Rocky Mount)

B. Dr. Shaw gave a rehearsal presentation of the Annual Presentation to Council that included the EAC goals. This presentation will be presented to the council on February 6, 2023.

A few changes were made to the 2023 Goals:

1. Establish the position of a Sustainability Manager to:
 - a. Coordinate city, community, and GUC operations to reduce GHG emissions and save money on energy expenditures
 - b. Fulfill a goal of Horizon's 2026 Plan of formulating a Green Energy Plan for the city.
2. Continue to encourage community environmental stewardship through social media posts and collaboration with other environmental organizations.
3. Collaborate with GUC to promote residential solar electricity production and electricity rather than natural gas for heating/cooking.
4. Research and recommend environmental technologies and policies that would benefit the citizens of Greenville such as, lighting standards, recycling and chemical use.
5. Research funding opportunities for additional EV charging stations and make recommendations to Council.
6. Review current tree protection policies and make recommendations to Council.

A motion was made by Dr. Shaw to approve the 2023 EAC Goals. The motion was seconded by Dr. Newman and passed unanimously. Dr. Shaw will communicate with Mr. Norris about some edits to the annual presentation to council.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Dr. Shaw spoke on stepping down as chairman of the EAC and staying as an active member of the EAC. Dr. Shaw stated that he would still do the annual presentation to council in February.

Chairman:

Dr. Shaw nominated Dr. McKinnon for chairman of the EAC.

A motion was made by Dr. Shaw to elect Dr. McKinnon for chairman of the EAC. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Maxwell and passed unanimously.

Mrs. Maxwell mentioned that the EAC needs to also vote on a vice-chair. Since Mrs. Maxwell is the current vice-chair and her term as an EAC member is up in April.

Vice-Chair:

Dr. Newman nominated Mr. Gardner for vice-chair of the EAC.

Mr. Gardner nominated Dr. Newman for vice-chair of the EAC.

A motion was made by Mr. Gardner to elect Dr. Newman for vice-chairman of the EAC. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Maxwell and passed unanimously.

Dr. Shaw mentioned that the EAC will have two open positions in April. The chair and vice-chair positions will start at the February EAC meeting.

8. OTHER– FYI

None.

9. PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS

A. Finalize EAC Annual Presentation to Council.

B. Follow up on meetings with city staff regarding Sustainability Officer.

C. Review of Tree Protection Policies.

D. Report on meeting with GUC.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Trevathan to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Dr. Newman and passed unanimously.