

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**September 7, 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. McKinnon, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present. The following attended the meeting:

**1. ROLL CALL**

**MEMBERS:**

Jeff McKinnon  
Yoshi Newman  
Thomas Trevathan  
Joshua Gardner  
Robert Shaw  
Karin Zipf  
Khristi Dixon

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Daryl Norris, City of Greenville  
Wanda Martin, City of Greenville  
Marion Blackburn, City Council Liaison

**GUEST:**

Jeff Monico, Sierra Club  
Abby Kimmel, NC Fellow  
Owen Bergquist, President ECO-Pirates

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. APPROVAL OF MAY 4, 2023 MINUTES**

Dr. McKinnon stated that:

- “Kristi ”is misspelled and needs to be changed to “Khristi” on the Agenda.
- “ except “needs to be changed to “accept” under Old Business C.

A motion was made by Dr. Newman to approve the May 4, 2023 minutes with these amendments. The motion was seconded by Dr. Shaw and passed unanimously.

**3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dr. McKinnon announced that he was invited and did attend, a meeting with the Sierra Club leadership team. Dr. McKinnon mentioned that the Sierra Club does a fantastic job. And that the Sierra Club has several positions opening up right now. On Monday 9-11-2023, the Sierra Club will have a program about recent environmental initiatives by the GUC. The program begins in person at 7p.m. at 131 Oakmont Dr. Greenville, it will also be live streamed over Zoom.

A motion was made by Dr. McKinnon to move Introduction of NC Fellow to the first item and

replace the Tree Working Group with Mr. Trevathan EV charging project to the second item in Old Business. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gardner and passed unanimously.

Mr. Norris announced at the upcoming Monday night Council Meeting (9-11-2023) we will get a presentation from the Division of Emergency Management about our cities community rating system score. We have improved from a class seven to a class five resulting in an increase floodplain insurance discounts by 25% for all insurance policies all across the city. They will also be presenting us with a plaque, recognizing us for doing those efforts.

Mr. Norris announced that last Friday, that the city has been selected for a brick grant again this year for 9.2 million dollars. This is to make culvert improvements on east Firetower road and about a mile of floodplain benching on Fork Swamp canal. In the last two years that's three storm water grants that we have received for about 17 million dollars.

Ms. Blackburn announced there will be a proposal on Thursday (9-14-2023), night's council meeting agenda. This proposal is to prohibit balloon release within the city limits.

A motion was made by Dr. McKinnon to add prohibit balloon release resolution as tonight's final agenda item. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zipf and passed unanimously.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Dr. Newman introduced Owen Bergquist, President ECO-Pirates.

Mr. Bergquist announced what ECO-Pirates does for the community and The Science Festival on October 7, 2023.

#### **5. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Dr. Shaw introduced Abby Kimmel as the new Lead for NC Fellow. Ms. Kimmel spoke of her credentials and how her new position with the Lead for NC Fellow is a partnership with the city and county. Mr. Norris announced that Ms. Wall mentioned that Ms. Kimmel would be working with the county on an EV Charging Station project. Ms. Kimmel's focus with the city would be more on our municipal operations and the sustainability that we are and can achieve with some goals for sustainability of our municipal operations.

Dr. McKinnon gave an update of the six priorities of the EAC:

1. Establish a position of Sustainability Coordinator
2. Encourage the community about environmental storytelling through posting on Facebook and collaboration with the Sierra Club, in part of our outreach efforts.
3. Collaborate with the GUC to promote residential solar and electricity production. Trying to get them to stop charging people for metering and to buy electricity at the same rate they sale it at. Encourage GUC to move away from selling natural Gas.
4. Research the recommended environmental technology policies that would benefit citizens of Greenville Lighting standards, recycling and chemical use.
5. Research funding opportunities for additional EV Charging Stations and recommend any to council.
6. Review current tree protection policies and make any recommendations to council.

Dr. Shaw spoke of how the EAC hopes that the city council will hire a Sustainability Manager and after Ms. Kimmel's time here hopefully the EAC can show value in this position.

**B.** Dr. McKinnon gave a brief review on how the process works for the EAC to be attending the GUC board meeting. Dr. McKinnon also mentioned a conversation with Mr. Cannon about what the EAC is looking to know about solar rates.

- Charges to the consultant.
- Stakeholders be involved in drafting that charge.
- Stakeholders be involved in deciding what the next steps are.

Dr. Newman spoke on attending the last GUC board meeting and at their next meeting some of what they will be talking about is rate modeling and solar Farming.

Dr. McKinnon mentioned that there will be a joint meeting with GUC and city council on September 14, 2023 between 5pm-6pm and suggested an EAC member to attend and speak during the public comment period as a citizen. Dr. Shaw, Dr. Newman, Ms. Dixon and Mr. Monico volunteered to attend and speak as a citizen.

Dr. McKinnon suggested for future discussion on GUC:

- Meet with the Chair of the GUC Board.
- Having individual meeting with board members.
- Having a person with Environmental expertise on the GUC Board.

**C.** Mr. Trevathan gave an update on putting six super EV charging stations at the umbrella market downtown Greenville. Mr. Trevathan spoke with Mr. Mulligan in Public Works about EV Charging stations. The question that came up was "Where can we get the money?" The quote that was given from Tesla was twenty-five thousand dollars for each charging station. Mr. Trevathan stated that December 2022 Pitt County had 273 EV vehicles. Wake County has ten thousand EV vehicles. Mr. Norris stated that part of the Infrastructure Bill from the federal government, there is money possibly coming from various different programs marked for EV Charging Stations.

**D.** Dr. McKinnon reviewed the updated Clean Energy Resolution. A motion was made by Dr. McKinnon to approve the Clean Energy Resolution as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Trevathan. Mr. Norris suggested revisiting the resolution to focus on City of Greenville actions rather than GUC actions. Dr. Shaw suggested to have this resolution reworked and take GUC out and have it totally about City of Greenville. And to revisit it in the next meeting to vote on it. A motion was made by Dr. McKinnon to table the existing motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gardner and passed unanimously.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. McKinnon reviewed the recommended ordinance on mass release of helium balloons to be presented to City Council. A motion was made to recommend that the City Council take reasonable steps to prohibit the mass release of helium balloons within the city limits of Greenville. The motion was seconded by Mr. Trevathan and passed unanimously.

**7. OTHER– FYI**

None

**8. PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Tree Working Group
- B. Clean Energy Resolution
- C. Update on EV Charging Stations

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

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