

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF OXFORD
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

May 1, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Environmental Commission members present at the Wednesday, May 1, 2019 meeting were: Chair, Mr. Wright Gwyn; Vice-Chair, Ms. Madeline Maurer; City Council Representative, Ms. Chantel Raghu; Planning Commission Representative, Ms. Carla Blackmar; Mr. Vince Hand, Mr. Jon Ralinovsky, and Mr. Andor Kiss. A quorum was present. Also in attendance was Mr. Tim Hogenbach.

The minutes from the April 3, 2019 Environmental Commission meeting was unanimously approved as presented.

Discussion

- A) Summary of IES Greenhouse Gas Inventory Professional Service Project: Final Presentation

The final presentation of the Miami University (MU) Institute for the Environment and Sustainability (IES) team of graduate student's Professional Service Project (PSP) occurred earlier in the day. In attendance at the presentation were Mr. Gwyn, Vice-Mayor, Mr. Steve Dana; City Councilor, David Prytherch, and Ms. Prue Dana, along with City staff, and IES faculty and students. The PSP was initially intended to inventory the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the Oxford municipal operations to quantify Oxford's carbon footprint, with the Environmental Commission as the client. In the course of the PSP (entitled: "Understanding a Local Government Operations GHG Inventory"), the data collection and processing was found to be more complicated, tedious, and time consuming than initially anticipated. The goal of the PSP had been adjusted to continue the accumulation of GHG-related data, and provide an outline to the use of ClearPath Pro, which is a Global Protocol for Community-Scale Emissions compliant GHG inventory software tool. Access to ClearPath is through the Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), and is included with Oxford's 2019 membership in the ICLEI. One of the features of ClearPath allows for the adjustment of various aspects of an existing GHG inventory to indicate effects of operational changes on future GHG emissions. Another feature allows prediction of future GHG emissions if no changes are made to current operations. This PSP will present a final report outlining its experiences, experiences of other communities that they have spoken with regarding their use of ClearPath, evaluating continued use of the ClearPath software as a GHG inventory tool, and

presenting recommendations for the City of Oxford regarding GHG inventories. Recommendations will include conducting regular, periodic GHG inventories for both the municipal operations (approximately every 2 years) and community-wide GHG inventories (approximately every 3 years). With these frequently re-occurring GHG inventories, the PSP team will make suggestions regarding what information Oxford should start to regularly track, accumulate, and/or document to ease future data collection efforts. The GHG inventory for Oxford's municipal operations will continue as a practicum conducted by one of the current PSP team members over the upcoming summer and fall academic semester. It is anticipated that another PSP student team will undertake continuing the use of ClearPath during the 2019-2020 academic year, with its focus on the use of ClearPath's predictive modules, to assist in determining how Oxford might experience the largest drop in future GHG emissions by easily undertaken changes in its operations.

B) City Council and Planning Commission Activities

Ms. Raghu informed the Commission that City Council had established a Climate Action Task Force, composed of citizens and City staff. The Climate Action Task Force recently had its first meeting and is working to establish intended goals. Ms. Blackmar updated Commissioners on two pending site developments for businesses that the Planning Commission approved.

C) Draft Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance Status

Mr. Gwyn informed Commissioners that Community Development Director, Mr. Sam Perry, and he, have had conversations regarding the draft Tree Protection and Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Perry agreed that some type of replacement guideline was needed, rather than only his initial suggestions (at the April 3rd Commission meeting) of only requiring a tree survey and incorporating tree protection guidelines into standard drawings. Mr. Wright had previously provided summaries of these conversations to the Commissioners that included suggested solutions from both Mr. Perry and him. Commissioners had extended discussions regarding potential revisions to the draft Tree Protection and Preservation Ordinance. Ultimately, it was concluded that Mr. Gwyn would prepare a new draft of the ordinance, with the various revisions that the Commissioners had agreed upon. These include the protected tree sized increased to 10-inch DBH for all trees, and reference to evergreen and ornamental trees removed; exemptions from being considered protected trees for the dead, diseased, dangerous, and/or unsafe trees; tree surveys based upon aerial images would be for owner-occupant lands; and the surveyor needs only to provided credentials for Planning Commission and/or Development Department's approval/acceptance (previous draft specified that licensed surveyor, arborist, engineer, etc. were to prepare the survey). The replacement ratio for tree calipers was left at 50% (which was also the value Mr. Perry used in his suggested revisions). Commissioners are to review and comment upon the new draft during May, with the goal of having an accepted revision to be

voted on during the June 5, 2019 Commission meeting. Once the Environmental Commissioners have concluded with their comments on the revised draft ordinance, Mr. Gwyn is to provide a copy of the new draft ordinance to Mr. Perry for his comment. The Environmental Commission's review process might have to start anew, depending on Mr. Perry's comments to the revised draft ordinance.

Other Business

Mr. Kiss informed the Commission that the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency would be making a decision by this fall on their approach for providing funding for public electrical vehicle chargers (as part of the Volkswagen diesel emission settlement). The choice is apparently between making the funds available at either an individual municipality level or regional level. Also, there has been no development or progress on Tesla's installation of electrical vehicle chargers on MU's campus.

Staff updated the Commission regarding the food scraps pilot drop-off program. Presently, only four buckets of the 100 Oxford had available to the public were still available. Of the four Saturday drop-off events, each has seen a steady increase in the volume of food scraps received relative to the previous event. GoZERO Services is providing weekly collection information. In their three collections of the accumulated food scraps, a total of 907 pounds has been recovered.

Staff informed the Commission that the Memorial Tree Plaque Program's annual recognition ceremony would occur on Thursday, May 2nd at noon at the Oxford Community Park (OCP). The annual ceremonial Arbor Day tree planting ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 3rd at the OCP. Both events are open to the public.

Mr. Hand informed the Commission that he was term-limited following the May 1st meeting, and would be leaving the Environmental Commission. The Commissioners expressed their appreciation of Mr. Hand's eight-years of service on the Environmental Commission.

Adjournment

Commissioners concluded discussions at 9:10 p.m. The next Environmental Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled for 7:00 pm on Wednesday, June 5, 2019, in the Municipal Building's First Floor Conference Room.