



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 4, 2024 7 pm

Town Hall Meeting Room, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC REMARKS
3. CHANGES TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
5. NEW BUSINESS

Resolution in support of retiring commissioners Anna Colby and Amelia Saffron.

Potential Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory (Graham Diedrich)

Other

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
7. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 🌐 Staff <http://bit.ly/update-leroy>
- 🌐 Liaisons
- 🌐 Teams (Energy, Green, Food, Green Burial, Green Grants, etc.)
- 🌐 Haslett/Okemos High School
- 🌐 Other

8. PUBLIC REMARKS
9. ADJOURNMENT

Environmental Commission: August 2024 (Draft Summary)

Attending: Bill McConnell, Yu Man Lee, Tom Frazier, Peter Trezise, Andrea Paul, LeRoy Harvey, and Harrison Batten **Absent:** Graham Diedrich, and John Sarver

Changes to/Approval of Agenda: McConnell suggested welcoming Harrison Batten before starting our meeting due to his limited time availability at the meeting.

Welcome Harrison! Harrison Batten is a new Student Commissioner. He described his deep interest in environmental initiatives including involvement in a student group to help bring environmental issues in to the school curriculum. He has also helped with a teacher training. His grandfather, Dave Batten, is active as a volunteer with the Green Team and Gleaning initiative.

Approval of Minutes: Frazier and McConnell suggested changes.

New Business: Resolution of Appreciation were tabled for a month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Climate Sustainability Funding: Harvey provided an update on the Green Grants Program and the Climate Sustainability Fund. Environmental projects and proposals were invited from interested teams, committees, and individuals. (Staff adds: Tom Frazier helped prepare ideas from the Green Team). Several projects were recommended and are underway to address goals in our Climate Sustainability Plan. There is a description of these projects in the staff update (<http://bit.ly/update-leroy>).

Green Burial: McConnell asked if there was additional information about the Green Burial proposal. Harvey mentioned that a copy of the Feasibility Study Proposal was included in the EC Packet. Frazier asked if there has been additional contact with the Board of Trustees. Trezise had positive remarks about the proposal and the level of community involvement in the latest version. There was some discussion about who might provide oversight and serve as a liaison between the Green Burial Team and the Environmental Commission and Frazier offered to serve in this role. McConnell suggested a cover page on the proposal, providing a bit of history and description of public involvement. Trezise suggested looking at bidding requirements and possibly modifying the proposal.

McConnell mentioned a few other areas for potential projects:

- Funding for native plant education and outreach to vendors. Trezise mentioned that the Board had received a letter from Elizabeth Seagull encouraging more species removal and native planting. She's worked with Emma in the past and is on our Wetland Education Team. (Staff adds: [Letter from Elizabeth Seagull](#))
- Updating the [2004 Greenspace Plan](#) – McConnell mentioned that this might include more wetland delineation. One area of consideration is codes related to septic and other utility-related concerns which might impact growth beyond [the Urban Service Boundary](#)
- Food Composting Options or a pilot with Eastside Compost or others. Support for composting was included in the initial round of suggestions.

Harvey mentioned some additional possibilities:

- Bicycle plan could be considered (Brian Shorkey has mentioned a potential need).
- Wetland Ordinance Revision to reconsider the two-tiered system that exempts properties platted before 1991.
- Trezise mentioned potential feasibility study to achieve Energy Star certification on the Municipal or another building.

Lee suggested that there might be additional exploration of water conservation opportunities. A review of utility billing practices/options could be considered. Water meter replacements are underway so water education could be timely. Trezise gave an example of a billing system that provides incentives for efficiency/conservation such as a discount if a customer uses below a certain quantity.

STAFF AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Staff Report: Harvey encouraged people to contact him if they'd like have ideas for Climate Sustainability Funding. He mentioned Director Opsommer's recent update to the Board of Trustees on the Green Grant Program. This can be found in the [Staff Update](#). He also invites article ideas for the Green Gazette. There is an opening for another Student Member of the Environmental Commission.

Planning Commission: McConnell mentions a recent review of zoning change by Faith Lutheran on Dobie Rd. In addition, Copper Creek Phase V is moving forward as is a Marijuana facility on Haslett Rd.

Land Preservation Advisory Board: Lee reports that LPAB has been doing tours of preserves. Emma has several seasonal workers that have been helping with land preservation/restoration. August 14th will be a special event at Davis Foster Preserve.

Green Team: Frazier reported on the September 21st Regional Electronics Recycling event from 9-1 at the Meridian Mall. The Green Team and volunteers is also collecting gently used coats, boots, and snowpants. We are also partnering with Consumers Energy on appliance rebates for small air conditioners, dehumidifiers, refrigerators, and more.

Energy Team: Harvey reports that there is an regional virtual [Solarize Workshop in September](#). A survey of attitudes toward [Community Solar has been distributed](#). The League of Conservation Voters has approached Meridian about doing a documentary on our solar progress. McConnell mentioned recent legislation that allows greater choice by residents who may have previously been restricted by their Home Owner Associations from installing renewable energy systems.

McConnell mentions that volunteers are welcome for the Spartan Move In. Contact him for a Sign Up link if you're interested.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49pm. Recording available at <https://meridianmi.new.swagit.com/videos/311796>