

Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience

APPROVED SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

JULY 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, JULY 14, 2026, 6:01 pm
McCloskey Conference Room – City Hall

1. **Call to Order:** Chairperson Vasel called the meeting to order at 18:01

Roll Call:

Members

Commissioner	Presence	Notes
Tara Dunderdale (<i>Council</i>)	Present ▾	
Justin Vasel (<i>Council</i>)	Present ▾	
Rebecca Payne (<i>Council</i>)	Present ▾	
Christopher Miles (<i>Council</i>)	Present ▾	
Zachary Ammerman (<i>Council</i>)	Present ▾	
– (<i>IU Office of Sustainability</i>)	Vacant ▾	
Alex Jorck (<i>Mayor</i>)	Present ▾	Commissioner Jorck arrived at 18:04
Maria Aarstad (<i>Mayor</i>)	Present ▾	
– (<i>Mayor</i>)	Vacant ▾	
Diana Ogrodowski	Present ▾	
Ross Carlson (<i>Monroe County Commissioners</i>)	Present ▾	Commissioner Carlson arrived at 18:32
– (<i>Mayor</i>)	Vacant ▾	
– (<i>Mayor</i>)	Vacant ▾	
Dave Rollo (<i>Council Ex Officio</i>)	Not Present ▾	

City Staff Present: Jolie Perry, Shawn Miya

2. **Approval of Agenda**
 - a. Commissioner Ogrodowski moved to approve the agenda as circulated, Commissioner Dunderdale seconded.

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- i. **Motion approved 7-0-0 on voice vote**

3. Approval of Minutes

a. April 28, 2026 Special Session and June 9 Regular Meeting

- i. Commissioner Payne moved to approve both sets of minutes as circulated, Commissioner Ogradowski seconded.
 1. **Motion approved 7-0-0 on voice vote**

4. Public Comment

5. Commissioner Reports

a. Chair Report

- i. Chairperson Vassel noted that there were now four vacancies, as Commissioner Gilly has left his position at IU so is no longer a member of the Commission.
 1. Commissioner Miles asked how the IU Office of Sustainability member of the Commission is appointed. It was noted that it was typically a member of the staff of the IU Office of Sustainability.
- ii. Chairperson Vassel outlined the past process for grants and noted some changes in the procedures. There must be a community partner who leads and implements the project. \$7,000 total for 2026. \$1,000 of that money can be dedicated for supplies for the Commission, of which \$575 is remaining after the Commission's participation in the Earth Day event.
 1. Commissioner Miles asked if there was a sort of repository of ideas for funding and if not, if one could be created.
 2. Commissioner Ammerman asked if the funds were for the calendar year 2026. Applications must be received by the end of the year and a grant process initiated, but the funds may be dispersed next year.
- iii. Chairperson Vassel provided some updates on resolutions passed earlier in the year by the Commission.
- iv. Chairperson Vassel mentioned that IU's Economic Development Summit will be Aug. 3 in Alumni Hall.
- v. Chairperson Vassel briefly outlined the logistics of the potential joint session with the Environmental Commission on light pollution.
 1. Each Commission will need to notice their meeting separately.
 2. Essentially it will just be two meetings being held simultaneously at the same time and place.
 3. The only two real logistics issues are finding a date both Commissions are available and making sure that each commission records and keeps track of its own votes separately.
 4. We are currently eyeing Aug. 18 as the date, due to that being the main date that the Environmental Commission was available.
 - a. Staff member Jolie Perry indicated that the City Council chambers should be available on that date in the evening.

b. Council Ex Officio

- i. Councilmember Rollo was not present.
- ii. Commissioner Ammerman noted that there was an early draft of a city ordinance circulating that would strictly regulate ALPRs in Bloomington.
- iii. Commissioner Miles and Commissioner Payne discussed some legislation

happening nationwide on data centers.

6. Discussions Not the Subject of a Resolution

a. Kirkwood Update

- i. Commissioner Ammerman noted that the City Council had passed its ordinance on reinstating the car-free Kirkwood program in the summer and the mayor vetoed it. There was a 5-4 majority in favor on the council, a 6-3 vote would be needed to override the veto. Commissioner Ammerman encouraged members who feel so inclined to contact members of the council who voted “no” on the ordinance to encourage them to override.

b. Commissioner Priority Planning Meeting

- i. September may be an ideal time to target, due to the planned special session in August.
- ii. Discussion about the format and length of the meeting, likely kept to about two hours per session, maybe one or two sessions.
- iii. Bylaws rewrite may be a good topic of conversation for the strategy sessions.
- iv. Discussion about location, various places suggested.
- v. Some discussion was held about a potential change of location for the planning meeting (to change from the Commission’s usual meeting location).

7. Resolutions for First Reading

a. Resolution 2026-06: Minimizing Light Pollution and Attaining Dark Sky Certification for Bloomington

- i. Commissioner Ammerman outlined the main points of the resolution, which recommends a suite of changes to the Unified Development Ordinance in order to bring Bloomington to a place where it could apply for Dark Sky Community Status.
 1. Main changes:
 - a. Color temperature standards would be strengthened
 - i. Commissioner Ammerman showed a chart showing skyrocketing complaints about bright or glaring streetlights immediately after transitioning to brighter LED lights.
 - b. Within 10 years, street lights would need to be brought into compliance (Dark Sky International requirement - Commissioner Ammerman noted this would be one of the hurdles to get over).
 - i. Commissioner Ammerman shared that Dark Sky International has shown some leniency to cities meeting this timeline requirement if they show good faith effort to meeting the goal.
 - c. Restricts exterior uplighting
 - d. A strict public warrant for exterior public lighting, and very strict warrant for exterior public lighting near environmentally sensitive areas.
 - e. Extending the light curfew to categories that currently have none, and moving all of them from 11 pm to 10 pm.
 - f. Putting in place stronger rules for illuminated signs
 - g. Strengthening rules on light trespass.

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- ii. Commissioner Ammerman noted that Dark Sky Community Status is a goal that would be nice for the city to aim toward, but the ultimate goal would be to reduce light pollution. Even if Bloomington does not achieve Dark Sky Community Status, a reduction in light pollution would still be very meaningful.
- iii. Commissioner Ammerman noted that he had spoken to a few council members, and they had expressed interest in this as an idea.
- iv. Commissioner Ammerman noted that while he was the main author, he had help from Commissioners Vasel and Jorck and three members of the Environmental Commission, and that the resolution had gone through several drafts and meetings of that small group.
- v. Commissioner Ogradowski asked about how IU would factor into this.
 - 1. Commissioner Ammerman noted that that would probably be one of the biggest question marks, as the city obviously can't force IU to do anything, so they would need to be convinced in order to get the city Dark Sky Community status.
 - 2. Commissioner Miles noted that there may be an opportunity for IU to follow once this is shown to be successful by the city
- vi. Commissioner Ammerman noted that this resolution focuses primarily on multi-family, commercial, and institutional. Single-family homes would be subject to light trespass rules and the overall per-acre cap on lumens.
- vii. Commissioner Aarstad noted that she had some hesitation on parts of the resolution for passing it at second reading
 - 1. She found parts of the resolution went further than what is required by Dark Sky, and worried about that making the resolution unlikely to be adopted.
 - 2. She had a question on illuminated signs. Commissioner Ammerman clarified that that requirement was primarily for large billboards.
 - 3. She thought the first introductory poetic "whereas" clause may not be helpful.
- viii. Commissioner Jorck noted that Dark Sky International is in the process of changing its certification status, and that we had roughly a year to get certified under the current standards, and that it was unlikely we would be able to get certified under the new rules.
 - 1. Commissioner Ammerman further noted that Dark Sky International had indicated that as long as we were making a good faith effort to meet these requirements within the next 6 months to a year, he had been told that we would be able to apply and get certified under the current rules.
- ix. Commissioner Jorck noted that he thought the main area that would be contentious is the idea that lighting = safety, despite data generally not backing that up, and that would be an area we would have to think strategically on.
- x. Commissioner Jorck found the potential energy savings to be a good strategic point as well.
- xi. In response to a comment by Chairperson Vasel, Commissioner Ammerman shared that there was found to be a significant increase in the duration of the pollen count due to artificial lighting.
- xii. Commissioner Ammerman shared that Dark Sky International indicated that the Commission itself could lead the application process, potentially saving staff time.
- xiii. Commissioner Ammerman shared that Dark Sky staff had given them information showing that the Jackson Hole, Wyoming, airport that had become

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Dark Sky compliant showed energy costs associated with lighting decreasing 30% in one year.

- xiv. **Commissioner Jorck moved to approve Resolution 2026-06 and advance to a second reading, Commissioner Ogrodowski seconded, motion passed 9-0-0 on roll call vote**

8. **Resolutions for Second Reading**

9. **Staff Liaison Report**

- a. The city has published its 2024 greenhouse gas report, a press release will come out soon. Commissioner Ammerman is acknowledged in the report for advocating for switching to Environmental Insights Explorer data for transportation emissions.
- b. The city will be launching a new solar grant for homeowners, providing a 5 KW system to income-qualified homeowners, less than 80% AMI, covering 100% of the cost, with no out-of-pocket cost for the homeowners.
- c. Neighborhood Sustainability Grants are also available.

10. **Member Announcements**

11. **New Business**

Commissioner Ogrodowski moved to adjourn, Commissioner Dunderdale seconded. Motion passed 9-0-0 on voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 19:20. Our next meeting is Aug. 11.