

Environmental Commission Meeting

Meeting Minutes for Thursday, July 16, 2026 at 6:00pm

This meeting was held in the Hooker Room (Suite 245, City Hall, 401 N. Morton St).

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:03pm.

Commission members present in person: Carrie Albright, Heidi Brown, Matt Caldie, Adam Martinez, Mitchell Owens, Karl Gaisser, Justin Meschter

Commission members present over Zoom: None

Commission members absent: Adam Fudickar

City staff and elected officials present: Jackie Scanlan (P&T), Enedina Kassamian (Legal)

Member(s) of the public present: Justin Vasel, Zach Ammermann, Eric Ost

Roll Call

In-Person: Carrie Albright, Heidi Brown, Matt Caldie, Adam Martinez, Mitchell Owens, Karl Gaisser, Justin Meschter

Approval of Agenda and Approval of Memoranda/Minutes

- Caldie made a motion for the approval of the agenda. Martinez seconded. Motion passes by roll call - 7:0.
- Caldie made a motion to approve the June 11, 2026 meeting minutes. Owens seconded. Motion passes by roll call - 7:0.

Public Comments

- Eric Ost: Questions about N Dunn project
- Vasel: Observing.
- Ammermann: To discuss Resolution on Dark Skies with BCOSR

Reports

- Commissioner Reports
 - Bee City Committee Update: Gayk was a EC representative, but is no longer on the EC. Ideal to have one more EC member. They meet on the second Tuesday of the 2nd month of each quarter at 9am. Caldie is a maybe, and they will all consider it.
 - Walk-In Items
 - Gaisser:
 - Tree Commission Update: Smith said there is a focus on pruning.
 - Caldie:
 - BCOSR advanced the Dark Skies Resolution to a 2nd reading.

- Caldie, Fudickar, and Brown did the Green Infrastructure Tour with CBU
- Staff Reports
 - Planning and Transportation Department Reports
 - None
 - Legal Department Reports
 - None

Back to Public Comment

- Stockton: Engineering Department intern working on an inventory of street lights. The Resolution mentions utilities, but not DPW.

New Business

Caldie motioned to move D from the Agenda (*Light Pollution and Dark Sky Resolution Draft) to first in New Business. Gaisser seconds. (Roll call, 7-0)

- *Light Pollution and Dark Sky Resolution Draft (Gaisser)
 - Gaisser presents the Resolution
 - Discussion ensued
 - The Resolution is proposing to add something in the contract with Duke for particular standards
 - Want to meaningfully reduce light pollution
 - Joshua, a member of the public, is present to comment on the proposal.
 - Some EC members have been cooperating with BCOSR members to draft a resolution regarding light pollution.
 - Mitchell asked about the units involved. Footcandles vs lumens vs lux
 - Joshua stressed the difficulty in getting cooperation from Duke.
 - Heidi mentioned the light vs safety argument which could receive pushback.
 - Joshua also brought up the difference between roadway safety and crime and stated that the effect of lighting on crime rates is unclear at best.
 - Justin asked about color temperature. Zach clarified the resolution's recommended color temperature.
 - Zach highlighted the "public warrant" for lighting which means the party installing a light needs to prove that a light is necessary in that location.
 - The primary goal is to reduce light pollution, not to achieve Dark Sky status.

- Carrie asked for more information about the inventory of streetlights.
- Joshua recommended talking with the members of staff who work with street lighting.
- Zach clarified that either or both commissions can handle the Dark Sky application, it does not need to be city staff.

Caldie moved to forward the resolution to a 2nd hearing. Gaisser seconded. Motion passes by roll call - 7-0.

- Idea and Action Request (Albright)
 - Albright gave an overview
 - Gaisser: Would like to expand effort of outreach and create promotional materials
 - Owens: Also want to target outreach
 - Caldie: Importance of native plants & preservation of mature trees; priority map/habitat connectivity
 - Owens: Could partner with existing groups and events
 - Albright: Plastic Reduction Alliance hear Valparaiso; Environmental implications of AI
 - Meschter: Water; Stormwater Runoff
- Commission Vacancy Discussion (Albright)
 - Discussion ensued
- *Social Media
 - Bee City Partner post

Owens moved to share the post on Facebook. (roll call, 7-0)

Old Business

- None

Commissioner Announcements

- Owens: Found coal in Terre Haute
- Gaisser: Left job to attend law school
- Caldie: Thanks to those who worked on the Resolution and thanks to Brown for snacks
- Albright: Girls Rock Bloomington is 7/25/26 @ 7pm at Buskirk-Chumley Theater

Upcoming Meeting

- August 20, 2026, 6:00pm, Hooker Conference Room at Bloomington City Hall, Zoom and CATS

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:38pm.