



City of Bloomington

Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to advise the City of Bloomington on how its actions and policies may preserve and enhance the quality of Bloomington's environment, including the life-supporting processes that natural ecological systems provide to humans and other organisms.

# ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

November 16, 2023, 6:00 PM  
Hooker Meeting Room # 245  
Hybrid meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/89903897790?pwd=hGYeySbMFirLMjWtbSudYXEURJntpJ.1>

Meeting ID: 899 0389 7790

Passcode: COBPT

or on Community Access Television Service (CATS): <https://catstv.net/government.php>.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:

6:03pm.

2. Introductions and Roll Call:

	<u>In person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Megan Bankowski	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Don Eggert	X		
Shannon Gayk		X	
Mike Litwin	X		
Megan Murphy	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst			X
Karena Tankersley		X	
Conner Wright	X		
Alauna Keeley	X		
Linda Thompson	X		

3. Approval of October, 2023 minutes:\*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Abstain</u>		
Carrie Albright		X
Megan Bankowski	X	

Matt Caldie	X	
Don Eggert	X	
Shannon Gayk		X
Mike Litwin	X	
Megan Murphy	X	
Mitchell Owens	X	
David Parkhurst	X	
Karena Tankersley		X
Conner Wright	X	

The EC voted to approve the October Meeting Minutes.

4. Public comment: Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total  
None.

5. Old business:

A. Update from working group regarding combining the Environmental Commission and the Commission on Sustainability\*

Matt updated the EC on the working group’s activities. The group met to discuss scenarios of a merger and what updates to the city municipal code would look like specifically relating to the purposes and responsibilities of the commission. Additionally, this working group met with the chair and vice-chair of BCOS to understand what they would like to do regarding the Novak Report. BCOS does not want to merge. Both the EC and BCOS agree that each commission is distinct and needs to remain separate. They also covered areas where both commissions could work collaboratively. Matt introduced a memo that he put together after the working group’s meetings. He asked if the EC felt comfortable submitting the memo to the special committee that implements findings from the Novak Report. The memo states that the EC is opposed to merging with BCOS; and that the EC may provide suggestions pending further administrative updates.

Megan M. moved to vote to approve the working group’s memorandum to be submitted to the special committee.

Approval of EC Memorandum:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Megan Bankowski	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Don Eggert	X		
Shannon Gayk		X	
Mike Litwin	X		
Megan Murphy	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Karena Tankersley		X	
Conner Wright	X		

The EC unanimously approved the memorandum.

B. Update from water working group.

Mitchell updated the EC on the recent meeting held by the working group. The group discussed the need to create concrete products. They also discussed various topics related to stormwater management, water quality, and data collection. Mitchell highlighted that the working group is interested in publicizing the success stories related to water in Bloomington. The EC found this to be a great idea. Mitchell also

mentioned that he wants to reach out to Bloomington Utilities as an opportunity to collaborate. Don asked if Lead Service Lines in Bloomington were a topic for the working group; however, the working group is looking mostly to stormwater rather than drinking water at this time. Don also told the EC how Copenhagen, Denmark is now a sponge city for stormwater control.

6. New business:

A. Vote on a new secretary\*

EC now has a vacancy for the position of Secretary/Treasurer. Carrie asked if any commissioners were interested in filling this role. Karena offered interest and pitched herself for the role.

The EC moved to vote on approving Karena T as the new Secretary/Treasurer.

Approval of new Secretary/Treasurer:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Megan Bankowski	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Don Eggert	X		
Shannon Gayk		X	
Mike Litwin	X		
Megan Murphy	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Karena Tankersley			X
Conner Wright	X		

The EC voted to approve Karena T. as the new Secretary/Treasurer.

B. Changes regarding new mayor

Linda updated the EC on the current changes happening in the city government. The Director of Planning and Transportation will not be returning after the end of the year, 2023. The mayor-elect will start upon the new year, 2024. Many department heads will also not be retained. Linda is unsure of the changes to be expected, except that her duties may be impacted. Megan M. asked if there is anything the EC can do to improve the impact of the commission for the new administration. Additionally, Carrie asked if the mayor-elect would speak at a future EC meeting.

7. Reports from: Tree Commission (TC), Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC), Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM), Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS), Monroe County-Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS), Metropolitan Planning Organization, Citizens Advisory Council (MCMPOCAC), & Monroe County Environmental Commission (MCEC).

TC: Didn't meet, no updates.

ERAC: Didn't meet, no updates.

FOLM: Dave reported that Friends of Lake Monroe are interested in using the newest Apple feature, LiDAR, to learn more about the land surrounding the lake. The group will meet next Wednesday at the lake to use this feature on Dave's iPad.

BCOS: Don updated the EC on the commission's work with the HAND Grant Program and funding. Don is unsure if EC qualifies. Don also provided updates on BCOS's discussion of the Novak report and verified much of what Matt mentioned previously, BCOS is opposed to merging. BCOS finds that they focus on sustainability related to equity and social justice issues, while the EC focuses on environmental issues and provides technical expertise and advice.

MPOCAC: No updates.

MCEC: No updates. Matt recently found out that Andrew Gunther got appointed to the commission and told the EC he would reach out.

#### 8. Commissioner announcements:

Linda had several announcements. The next scheduled EC meeting is December 21<sup>st</sup>. This might be a difficult time of the year for everyone to be able to show up. Moving the meeting to December 14<sup>th</sup> might be a better option, if a room can be reserved. The EC took an informal vote on who might be able to attend the 14<sup>th</sup> or the 21<sup>st</sup>. Tentatively, the EC hopes to meet on the 14<sup>th</sup>. EC's January meeting will be the annual Bucket List meeting, Carrie will send out more information as the date closes in. Linda reminded Carrie that an end-of-year report will need to be written by the chair. Shannon announced an exciting opportunity happening with Bloomington and its twin city, Palo Alto, TX. The two cities will be hosting a town hall meeting on climate change on December 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year. Information to register can be found [here](#). There will be discussions on various topics, including Project 46, and breakout sessions for attendees. Both cities are focusing on their unhoused populations and the rural/urban divide and the intersecting relationship with climate, ecology, etc. Shannon will be attending a focusing meeting this Saturday to solidify the agenda and any topics that should be covered. The EC agreed that this was something important to be a part of, as well as an opportunity to publicize the town hall through EC social media.

#### 9. Adjournment:

6:59pm.

\* Item to be voted on

Next EC meeting: December 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m., Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS

-The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some individuals. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at [hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov) and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

-As a quorum of the Commission or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.

-The Bloomington Environmental Commission (EC) wishes to acknowledge and honor the indigenous communities native to this region, and recognize that the City of Bloomington, Indiana was built on indigenous homelands and resources.