



# City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
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## Action Minutes

### Energy Commission

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Tuesday, March 12, 2019

6:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St,  
Second floor, City Council Chambers

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#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Appleyard called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present:** 7 - Charles Hookham, Mike Shriberg, Wayne Appleyard, John Mirsky, Carlene Colvin-Garcia, Jack Eaton, and Jay Zocher

**Absent:** 6 - Brigit Macomber, Mark Clevey, Shoshannah Lenski, Noah Levin, Charlotte Jameson, and Jeff Hayner

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mirsky, seconded by Colvin-Garcia, that the Agenda be Approved with changes by Commissioner Zocher adding Smart Goals, Commissioner Shriberg adding Funding, and Commissioner Mirsky adding an Audit Update. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made that the be Approved. On a voice vote, the [Enter Title] declared the motion carried.

#### PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

#### ENERGY REPORT - NEWS FROM THE ENERGY OFFICE AND COMMISSIONERS

Staff MacDonald informed the commission of the upcoming Sustainability Forum on Thursday, March 21 covering Climate Change 201 with Dr. Jonathan

Overpeck, Dean of the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan, and Emily Drennen, Sustainability Analyst at the City of Ann Arbor.

Staff MacDonald informed the commission of the green rental conference the Office of Sustainability and Innovation attended, where multiple cities discussed time of marketing energy auditing. He informed the commission that information from that meeting will be shared in the Time of Marketing sub-committee.

Staff MacDonald informed the commission of clarifications to the definition of Sub-Committees and Working Groups, and suggested converting the 100% Clean and Renewable Sub-Committee to a Working Group. Commissioner Colvin-Garcia and Staff MacDonald discussed the EV Readiness Ordinance Sub-Committee.

Commissioner Hookham informed the commission that the Michigan Agency for Energy is hosting an Energy Storage Conference assessing the state of the energy storage market integration on March 25. Commissioner Hookham informed the commission that he attended the EUCI Utilities and Smart Cities Workshop to present on a paper on the lessons learned of microgrids. Commissioner Hookham informed the commission he toured Alabama Power's Smart Neighborhood which had a microgrid made up of solar panels, battery storage, and natural gas generation. Commissioner Hookham informed the commission of the Michigan Conservative Energy Forum and Delta Solar is hosting two tours on May 22.

### Dark Money Resolution

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that he approached the City Administrator and Attorney's office with the draft resolution. Commissioner Mirsky reported that he discussed areas of potential concern with the administrator, and has not heard negative feedback from the Attorney's office. Commissioner Mirsky opened the resolution to further discussion, and shared information regarding various articles relating to the topic.

The commission discussed the outcome the resolution seeks, which was suggested to require 501(c)(4) organizations to disclose source of lobbying money, getting rid of "dark money," rather than preventing 501(c)(4)s from lobbying. Commissioner Mirsky clarified that both DTE and Consumers have parent companies who have made donations who legally have the right to do so. He suggested that targeting the resolution against utilities may not address the broader issue, as these parent companies could still use 501(c)(4)s to hide lobbying activities. Commissioner Mirsky discussed that regarding the agreement between Consumers Energy and the MPSC, a Consumers Energy spokesperson was reported stating that Consumers Energy's political contributions were not funded from customer rates, but rather from their stakeholders. He informed the commission that the article presents a rebuttal. Commissioner Hookham discussed that the issue addressed by the resolution is broad, and limited to the energy industry. Chair Appleyard discussed legislation restructuring allowing a regulated utility to be owned by an uncontrolled corporation.

Commissioner Mirsky and Councilmember Eaton discussed language changes in the draft resolution, including replacing the “dark money” terminology with affirmative language.

The commission discussed the scope of the resolve clauses of the resolution, including what laws the resolution asks for support from State legislature. Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that he can try to add the topic to the City Council’s Policy Agenda committee as a broader request.

Commissioner Shriberg informed the commission that the Michigan Campaign Finance Network reported that Michigan received an “F” grade in an assessment of transparency and accountability from the nonprofit Center Public Integrity. Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that groups throughout Michigan are organizing to address the issue.

### Solar Access Resolution

Chair Appleyard informed the commission that the Solar Access Resolution was unanimously approved by City Council. Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that Council discussed balancing City interests, and that the resolution is not the final product.

Commissioner Hookham shared the next steps of the subcommittee with the commission, including structuring a timeline aiming to come to a conclusion by the end of the year. Commissioner Hookham informed the commission that he intends to assemble a team by April 1, complete a review of existing art by July 1, evaluate best practices by September 1, and draft any ordinance by October 1.

Staff MacDonald informed the commission that the Solar Access Ordinance Subcommittee will be replacing the 100% Clean and Renewable Municipal Operations Subcommittee, which will become a working group. He informed the commission that the subcommittee will work with the Planning Commission, Attorney’s Office, and other Energy Commissioners who would like to be involved. He informed the commission that immediate steps are scheduling and organizing an initial subcommittee meeting.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that the resolution was modified, and that there is currently no due date. He recommended that future resolutions should include an action for Council to take and an associated due date.

Commissioner Mirsky and Councilmember Eaton discussed whether solar installers should check surrounding zoning requirements before making a decision to install solar. Chair Appleyard discussed various design considerations to take into account regarding solar on buildings.

Chair Appleyard and Councilmember Eaton discussed the Planning Commission’s goal of transit-oriented planning, which will lead to denser corridors, and character preferences of the City. Councilmember Eaton discussed designing buildings through a resilience lens taking into account sustainability and safety for anticipated difficulties.

## Power Hours Update

Staff MacDonald informed the commission of three upcoming Power Hours on March 20th at the Ann Arbor Senior Center, April 11 at Slauson Middle School, and April 29 at Cobblestone Farm. Staff MacDonald informed the commission that these Power Hours have the goal of pushing for solar installations before the May deadline for qualifying for net metering. He informed the commission that the events will cover energy efficiency upgrades with a focus on solar, with presentations by DTE, Michigan Saves, and the Energy Commission and tabling with local energy efficiency contractors and solar installers.

Commissioner Hookham and Staff MacDonald discussed tabling with a laptop to provide solar assessments for residents and printing required applications. Chair Appleyard informed the commission that local residents with solar installations will share their stories at the events.

Commissioner Mirsky suggested revisiting the Vision Statement prepared by the Office of Sustainability and Innovation following the Power Hours. Chair Appleyard informed the commission that the presentation from the Energy Commission will include information on the top five energy efficient upgrades. The commission discussed including information on heat pumps, given the prediction that natural gas prices will rise.

## Smart Goals

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that the purpose of this work is to deliver positive outcomes for residents to improve their quality of life, which can be measured. He informed the commission that the Sustainability Framework has 16 goals, and is tracked with a dashboard and indicators. Commissioner Mirsky proposed that the commission schedule to regularly review progress against these established goals and update indicators and metrics as needed. Commissioner Mirsky suggested that the commission review outcomes at least once per year in commission meetings. He informed the commission that the Environmental Commission plans to divide goals into quarterly reviews, and suggest reviewing all goals at once.

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that the Office of Sustainability and Innovation is planning to overhaul the dashboard. Staff MacDonald informed the commission that the Sustainability Framework is based off of all internal plans, which does not directly align with the dashboard.

Commissioner Hookham and Staff MacDonald discussed the capital improvement process pertaining to sustainability, and how improvements are prioritized on their sustainability rank could be more specific. Councilmember Eaton suggested including a priority that was directly focused on energy to incentivize all departments to reduce the carbon footprint of any improvements.

## Funding

Commissioner Colvin-Garcia discussed informing what actions need to be funded based on dashboard information.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that the City financed polling residents to determine how things are funded. He informed the commission of the importance of identifying a project goal, timeline, appropriate amount of money and source of funding for proposed work.

Chair Appleyard discussed that the roughly \$800,000 in millage rebate funds allocated to climate action by Council in 2017 would not be adequate. He recommended a separate entity of funding specifically for climate action, rather than requiring individual departments to lead energy funding.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission of community support to spend on climate action. He recommended identifying a goal and determining what progress will look like towards that goal.

Commissioner Mirsky discussed pursuing a win-win solution for stakeholders. He informed the commission that the Office of Sustainability and Innovation is a relatively new department with a new department head, and that detailed metrics take time to develop.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that City Council funded the Office of Sustainability and Innovation to create a work plan to develop metrics and evaluate success.

Commissioner Mirsky discussed that budgets are an estimate of the funds needed to complete a project, and not a set amount of money that needs to be spent. He informed the commission that large line items require City Council approval, which ensures that the majority of spending is aligned with determined goals. He discussed having a budget to show residents, and making it clear that unwise spending would not be approved. Councilmember Eaton, Chair Appleyard, and Commissioner Mirsky discussed the roughly \$800,000 in in millage rebate funds allocated to climate action by Council in 2017, and that it does not represent an upper limit of spending required to meet climate goals.

Commissioner Mirsky discussed that not every department will have the expertise and knowledge to develop the level of detail in the work plan immediately, and may require a transition period.

Commissioner Shriberg discussed the nature of public-facing climate and energy issues, and the source and timing of funding if millage rebate funds are not used. He informed the commission that residential emissions represent a significant portion of greenhouse gas emissions.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that the millage rebate allocation ties a set amount of funds to specific spending for eight years. He discussed whether that set amount will be enough for those eight years, and suggested estimating what projects to meet set goals will actually cost.

Commissioner Zocher discussed how transitioning municipal operations, though it represents a small portion of greenhouse gas emissions, to clean and

renewable energy sets an example for the rest of the community. Councilmember Eaton discussed how that transition is expensive. He informed the commission that a plan has staffing requirements, timelines, and incremental spending.

Chair Appleyard and Commissioner Shriberg discussed the state of solid waste in the City of Ann Arbor as the result of de-centralizing funding, and the impact of the lack of expertise on the topic across departments.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that City Council funded four full-time employees to create a work plan. He discussed that he did not receive a work plan, and that funding was spent on a department staff to attend a conference one month prior to leaving the department. He informed the commission that each department should be building in energy efficiency upgrades into their budget, and that even more funding is likely needed.

Commissioner Mirsky discussed a public-facing pilot at the University of Michigan of carbon sequestering concrete and monitoring durability, and applications of similar problems to municipal projects and operations.

Councilmember Eaton discussed that City Council balances competing interests for funding across infrastructure, water quality, and road quality.

Commissioner Mirsky and Councilmember Eaton discussed the level of funding allocated to mental health services, the associated work plan, and equivalency in standards across departments.

Chair Appleyard discussed agreement that more spending on climate action is required. Councilmember Eaton suggested incentivizing across departments to decrease emissions.

## **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **100% Clean Municipal Operations**

Staff MacDonald informed the commission that he met and provided updates on ongoing projects. He discussed organizing volunteer labor to install solar panels and organizing energy efficiency improvements at Fire Station 6. Chair Appleyard, Commissioner Mirsky, and Staff MacDonald discussed coordinating a site evaluation.

### **Lighting Ordinance**

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission of continued progress on the ordinance and plans to meet with the Planning Commission and present to the Design Review Board and the Historic District Commission. He informed the commission of the goal of receiving feedback within two weeks to continue to move closer to a finalized resolution to share with the Attorney's Office and

City Council.

### Energy Audit Disclosure Ordinance

Commissioner Shriberg discussed his experience having an energy auditor determine the Home Energy Score of his house, including the value of information provided with the Score. He informed the commission that information from the Home Energy Score would have influenced negotiations in purchasing the house. Commissioner Mirsky discussed that even those involved in energy topics can learn more about the performance of their house. Staff MacDonald suggested focusing on concrete energy savings per improvement. Commissioner Shriberg suggested comparing scores with other similar or local properties. He discussed sharing his experience as a case study.

Chair Appleyard informed the commission of rental equipment available at the library for assessing home energy efficiency, including thermal imaging cameras.

Councilmember Eaton discussed the lack of energy efficiency requirements in the state building code.

Staff MacDonald informed the commission that the subcommittee is working with the City of Portland and their resources, and that the committee is preparing questions for the Cities of Portland, Austin, and Minneapolis. He discussed challenges with building expertise locally.

### EV Readiness Ordinance

Staff MacDonald informed the commission that the subcommittee had a phone call with the Cities of Atlanta, Columbus, and Denver, during which compiled questions were answered. He informed the commissions that the subcommittee will move forward with the received feedback.

### Outreach to Schools

Commissioner Colvin-Garcia informed the commission that the Ann Arbor Public School District is joining a group of seven fleets applying for Volkswagen grants for electric buses, and receiving five buses in the first quarter of 2020. She informed the commission that the grant requires student and community member education, which will occur through a rolling lab. She informed the commission that the University of Michigan is also interested in applying for funding for public transit, and is working with Detroit Edison regarding vehicle-to-grid battery storage.

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that an Environmental Commissioner is coordinating the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Transit Authority, and Ann Arbor Public Schools for electric vehicles. He informed the commission that Dean Overpeck of the University of Michigan applied for a

position on the Environmental Commission.

Commissioner Shriberg and John Mirsky discussed Town Hall events held by the University of Michigan Environmental Commission, which has set April 3 for a public stakeholders meeting. Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that preliminary marks were shared, with the groups splitting up to discuss specific topics providing feedback to the commission. He informed the commission that the commission is forming an external subcommittee.

#### **Report from Environmental Commission**

Commissioner Mirsky informed the commission that the Environmental Commission had a working session to discuss working goals. He informed the commission that the Environmental Commission agreed to work on solid waste, natural features, and drinking water quality, with three working groups to address the topics. He informed the commission that the Environmental Commission is determining how the working groups will interface with other departments.

Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that City Council intends to address Ann Arbor's lack of regulation for the removal of trees.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

No public input.

#### **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Appleyard adjourned the meetign at 8:22 PM.

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City Clerk's Office  
301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

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or  
[www.a2gov.org/energy](http://www.a2gov.org/energy) to learn more about the City's Energy Programs

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