



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Wednesday, August 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM

City Hall, 10th Floor Conference Room

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. 06-17-26 Meeting Minutes

5. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Progress updates on Street Trees (Plan, Planting Contract, and Tree City USA designation), Consumers Energy Renewable Energy Program, Municipal Waste Study, and the potential addition of statutory ex-officio members.
- B. Research on LEED for Cities and Communities
- C. Discussion on Urban Agriculture and Pollinator Gardens
- D. Discussion on Data Centers

6. NEW BUSINESS

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

(3-Minute Limit)

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

9. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, 09-16-26 AT 6:00 PM

10. ADJOURNMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 06-17-26
MEETING MINUTES (PREPARED 06-26-26)
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Date: Wednesday, 06-17-26

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10th floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

I. Call to Order *Chairperson Kazmier called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.*

II. Roll Call

Present: *Commissioner Kelli Kazmier (Chair)*
Commissioner Andrew Johnson
Commissioner Derek Dobies
Commissioner Samantha Kloos

Absent: *Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood*

Staff: *Jeffrey Crow, City of Jackson Engineering*

III. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Dobies and seconded by Commissioner Kazmier to approve the agenda as amended by adding 'Discussion on Data Centers' under New Business by Commissioner Kloos approved unanimously.

IV. Approval of the minutes for the 04-15-26 and 05-13-26 meetings

Motion made by Commissioner Kloos and seconded by Commissioner Dobies to approve the minutes for the 04-15-26 and 05-13-26 meetings as presented approved unanimously.

V. Old Business

- i. Progress updates on the Tree Inventory & Management Plan, Consumers Energy Renewable Energy Program, Municipal Waste Study, and the potential addition of statutory ex-officio members.*

Commissioner Kazmier requested that Mr. Crow discuss the progress updates on the above-mentioned items, to which Mr. Crow responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Crow mentioned that the Tree Inventory & Management Plan is available on the City's website: <https://www.cityofjackson.org/841/Environmental-Commission>. He mentioned that the invasive Tree of Heaven specimens identified within the public right-of-way in the report were removed by a contractor in March 2026. He also stated that the report's recommendations for new trees were used to advertise a project to furnish, deliver, plant, and maintain 200 street trees during the Fall 2026 planting season. He also mentioned that there are no new updates regarding the Consumers Energy Renewable Energy Program, upcoming Municipal Waste Study work by City staff, or the addition of statutory ex-officio members to the Commission.

Commissioner Kloos mentioned that the pest insect references and their associations with certain tree species appear to be inaccurate in some sections of the report's appendix.

Commissioner Kazmier discussed the Tree of Heaven species and its characteristics that contribute to its designation as a hazard to the City. She mentioned that she may reach out to MSU Extension to discuss potential funding options for invasive tree removal on private property.

Commissioner Dobies mentioned that the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program could provide an opportunity to fund invasive tree removal on private property and shared the program link during the meeting: <https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/grants/misap>. He also suggested that tree planting costs could potentially be reduced by converting City-owned vacant lots into tree nurseries.

ii. *Research on LEED for Cities and Communities*

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she will continue her research on this topic. She also mentioned and Commissioner Dobies, Commissioner Kloos, and Commissioner Johnson agreed that she may draft a letter to City staff supporting the development of a program related to LEED for Cities certification.

iii. *Discussion on Urban Agriculture and Pollinator Gardens*

Commissioner Kloos mentioned that the City owns several parcels that are too small for future structural development and may be better suited for conversion into pollinator gardens.

Commissioner Kazmier outlined a proposed pilot program timeline as follows: pollinator garden implementation would require fall site preparation and planting, followed by spring soil preparation, seeding, and watering for a two-month establishment period. She added that, if the City were to partner with Grow Jackson, that organization could potentially handle all planting and maintenance activities for the pilot program.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned that Grow Jackson primarily focuses on vegetable gardening. He suggested the Environmental Commission identify specific parcels for the pilot program before presenting the proposal to City staff.

Commissioner Kloos discussed the concept of establishing a sponsorship for pollinator garden maintenance, where continued use of the site would be revoked if expectations are not met.

Commissioner Dobies mentioned that the establishment of pollinator gardens could support future eligibility for Bee City USA designation. He also referenced the City's prior experience converting two vacant parcels at 800 S. Mechanic Street into a community orchard, highlighting it as a relevant precedent for repurposing vacant land into a community space.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned and Commissioner Dobies, Commissioner Kloos, and Commissioner Johnson agreed that she may draft a letter to City staff supporting the development of a Pollinator Gardens pilot program.

VI. New Business

i. Discussion on Tree City USA designation

Commissioner Kazmier discussed that she submitted a letter to Mr. Crow recommending the City begin pursuing Tree City USA designation and work toward meeting any remaining program requirements.

Mr. Crow mentioned that he discussed Tree City USA designation with City staff and plans to apply when applications open in September 2026 to evaluate the City's current compliance with designation requirements.

Commissioner Dobies discussed that he emailed Commissioner Kazmier a draft amendment to the Environmental Commission ordinance that would help better position the City for Tree City USA designation status.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned and Commissioner Dobies, Commissioner Kloos, and Commissioner Johnson agreed that she may draft a letter to City staff recommending adoption of the amendment that Commissioner Dobies prepared to the Environmental Commission ordinance.

ii. Discussion on Data Centers

Commissioner Kloos suggested that the Environmental Commission develop an opinion on potential data center development within City limits, including evaluation of environmental impacts and consideration of a data center moratorium.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she serves on the Planning Commission and will provide updates on any data center-related discussions at upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

VII. Citizen Comments

None.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Kazmier suggested adding an “Achievements” page to the Environmental Action Plan during its next update, to which Commissioner Dobies, Commissioner Kloos, and Commissioner Johnson agreed.

Commissioner Kloos suggested involving the Youth Council when updating the Environmental Action Plan. She also suggested holding the meeting outdoors, to which Commissioner Kazmier, Commissioner Dobies, and Commissioner Johnson agreed to revisit the idea at the next Environmental Commission meeting.

Commissioner Kloos asked that Mr. Crow discuss City of Jackson’s conservation fund for the Environmental Commission, to which Mr. Crow responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Crow mentioned that Sections 2-370 and 2-371 of the City ordinance establish the conservation fund, allowing Council and private donations to support the Environmental Commission’s activities. He added that no funds are currently allocated to the Environmental Commission. The sections are provided below: https://library.municode.com/mi/jackson/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH2AD_ARTII_BOOC_DIV10ENCO_S2-370COBUACES

Commissioner Dobies mentioned that pursuing Bee City USA designation would be a good example of a project that could be funded through a conservation fund, as designation and related activities require funding.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned and Commissioner Dobies, Commissioner Kloos, and Commissioner Johnson agreed that she may draft a letter to City staff identifying budget needs associated with specific projects and initiatives the Environmental Commission would like to pursue.

IX. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 08-12-26 at 6:00 pm

X. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Dobies and seconded by Commissioner Kloos to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:03 pm.