



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 16, 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. 08-12-26 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. Discussion on Michigan Green Communities Challenge
- C. Discussion on Urban Agriculture and Pollinator Gardens
- D. Discussion on Sustainable Food Initiatives
- E. Discussion on Data Centers

F. Discussion on Invasive Tree Species

6. NEW BUSINESS

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

(3-Minute Limit)

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

9. NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY, 10-14-26 AT 6:00 PM

10. ADJOURNMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 08-12-26
MEETING MINUTES (PREPARED 08-26-26)
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Date: Wednesday, 08-12-26

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 6:08 pm.*

II. Roll Call

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

Absent: *Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood*
Commissioner Derek Dobies

Staff: *Jeffrey Crow, City of Jackson Engineering*

III. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Kazmier and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve the agenda as amended by adding 'Discussion on Invasive Species' under New Business by Commissioner Kazmier approved unanimously.

IV. Approval of the minutes for the 06-17-26 meetings

Motion made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Kloos to approve the minutes for the 06-17-26 meeting as presented approved unanimously.

V. Old Business

- i. 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.*

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 project to furnish, deliver, plant, and maintain 200 street trees during the Fall 2026 planting season was advertised, but no bids were received. He mentioned that the project is currently being re-advertised for the Spring 2027 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 requested that Mr. Crow discuss Sec. 28-105 Landscape Standards, Subsection (g,1) 'Proposal by Applicant for complying with requirement' and Subsection (h) 'City Tree Fund', to which Mr. Crow responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Crow mentioned that Subsection (g)(1) allows developers unable to meet on-site landscaping requirements to propose alternatives, including contributing to the City Tree Fund, while Subsection (h) requires those funds to be used for planting trees and shrubs within the City. Mr. Crow mentioned that he is unaware of an established City Tree Fund. Sec. 28-105 is below: https://library.municode.com/mi/jackson/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH28_ZO_ARTIVSIBUDEST_S28-105LAST

ii. Research on LEED for Cities and Communities

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that LEED requires participating cities to affirm that submitted information is accurate and maintained, which would require ongoing staff support. She expressed interest in pursuing the more feasible Michigan Green Communities Challenge instead, which is discussed under 'New Business'.

iii. Discussion on Urban Agriculture and Pollinator Gardens

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she submitted two letter-memos to Mr. Crow. The first recommends a pollinator garden pilot program, a process for residents to steward City-owned vacant lots, pursuing Bee City USA status, and funding for Environmental Commission conservation and outreach activities. The second recommends designating the Environmental Commission as the City's Community Tree Board to support Tree City USA efforts and exploring a City-owned tree nursery to reduce future planting costs and expand the urban tree canopy.

Mr. Crow mentioned that both letters are tentatively on the 08-18-26 City Council agenda for distribution and potential discussion by the Mayor and City Councilmembers.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she recently spoke with Mr. Inosencio from Grow Jackson, who indicated that Grow Jackson is willing to plant and maintain a site if the City identifies a suitable vacant lot.

iv. *Discussion on Data Centers*

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she serves on the Planning Commission and that data centers were discussed at a recent meeting. She referenced Saline Township's data center project and the discussion on the potential need for broader planning and zoning standards to guide appropriate locations for data centers, such as encouraging brownfield redevelopment over greenfield development.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned that data centers are a growing topic of discussion and that additional standards may be needed, particularly regarding potential impacts to aquifers.

Commissioner Kloos revised and distributed language from another city's data center moratorium. The revisions included extending the proposed moratorium from six to 12 months and updating the applicable dates to reflect the City's potential consideration of the moratorium.

Motion made by Commissioner Kloos and seconded by Commissioner Kazmier to authorize Commissioner Kazmier to prepare a memo to accompany the data center moratorium for the City Manager's consideration of placement on an upcoming City Council agenda approved unanimously.

VI. New Business

i. *Discussion on Sustainable Food Initiatives*

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she spoke with Vice Mayor/Councilmember Dancy about residential composting as a sustainable food initiative. She referenced Lansing's food scrap drop-off program, which has an estimated six locations, and expressed how such a program would benefit residents.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned that establishing a composting program would require additional resources and a suitable location for operations.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that Councilmember Dancy may be exploring the initiative further and that the Environmental Commission could provide support as it develops.

Motion made by Commissioner Kazmier and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to authorize Commissioner Kazmier to prepare a memo outlining the sustainable food initiative and potential next steps for the City Manager's consideration of placement on an upcoming City Council agenda approved unanimously.

ii. *Discussion on Michigan Green Communities Challenge*

Commissioner Kazmier provided an overview of the Michigan Green Communities (MGC) Challenge and mentioned that she would like to work toward a potential application by City staff when applications open in January 2027.

Commissioner Kazmier requested that Mr. Crow review and attempt to answer the questions under the Metrics section of the MGC webpage ahead of the 09-16-26 Environmental Commission Meeting, to which Mr. Crow responded in the affirmative. The webpage is below:
<https://migreencommunities.com/challenge-action-items>

iii. *Discussion on Invasive Tree Species*

Commissioner Kloos revisited the discussion from the previous 06-17-26 Environmental Commission meeting regarding the City's contract with an arborist to remove invasive Tree of Heaven specimens identified in the Tree Inventory & Management Plan, which is available on the City's website. She mentioned that the trees would have been more appropriately removed in the fall rather than the spring due to their tendency to resprout during the spring and summer.

Commissioner Kloos requested that Mr. Crow provide the locations on where the Tree of Heaven specimens were removed, to which Mr. Crow responded in the affirmative.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she recently observed numerous Tree of Heaven trees growing near the walls of the historic Jackson prison and expressed concern that the overgrowth could potentially damage the historic structure.

Commissioner Kloos mentioned that she spoke with a representative from the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISIN) regarding potentially outdated or inaccurate pest information in the Tree Inventory & Management Plan available on the City's website, including information on the Spotted Lanternfly. She mentioned that she and the MISIN representative agreed on the importance of sharing information, maintaining accurate records, and developing mitigation strategies for invasive species.

Commissioner Kazmier mentioned that she discussed invasive species with Ms. Singh of the Jackson County Conservation District. She mentioned that Ms. Singh provides educational presentations on invasive species in Jackson, Lenawee, and Washtenaw counties and may be able to provide City staff with a presentation on invasive species identification and management sometime between May 2027 and April 2028, pending confirmation of City interest and grant funding availability.

VII. Citizen Comments

None.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

None.

IX. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 09-16-26 at 6:00 pm

X. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Kloos to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:29 pm.