

Allentown Environmental Advisory Council Meeting - 4/8/2024 - 5:15pm
Virtual through zoom as well as Allentown Public Library Basement

Attendance: Tinku Khanwalkar, Veronika Vostinak, Tim O'Brien, Jeremy Taylor, Jessica Armbuster, Maria Ocasio, Felice Craigin, Maddie Davidson, Santo Napoli, Jennifer Swann, Diane Cheer, Kyle Ropski

Old Business

1: Approval of March Minutes

Approved

2: Vacancies on the EAC

We have a new vacancy due to Tim unfortunately having to depart COA, putting us a few members short. Please be mindful of communication and make sure we get the message out. Put our "recruitment hat on".

3: Sustainability Coordinator Update !

Veronika : She started about a month ago and she is originally from the Allentown area as a Parkland graduate. Her most applicable work experience background ties to a small city near san francisco. She started the sustainability management as well as held other roles in public works. She is excited to be here and to serve the town where she grew up.

Current focus is on equitable tree planting associated with grant funding as well as the development of our first climate action plan. Energy efficiency is another priority which has several initiatives in the works right now. Feel free to reach out and talk to her about things! Councilperson Napoli noted the efforts to get the position as well as her potential role in future capital projects such as the Police Department. Jennifer indicated she needs to keep us in the loop with what support she may need and to be cautious about getting burnt out. There is a lot on her plate.

Maddie brought up the potential of a meet the sustainability coordinator event for Muhlenberg students. Potentially at Ecofest. They were integral in the process of convincing council. Our interns and student workers can assist. Keep the momentum of excitement among the students on

the petition list. Kyle is interested in acquiring that list for future legislative endeavors. Would be good to have an email list for future efforts to demonstrate public interest in environmental matters brought before council

Veronkia noted that there is currently an opening for a sustainability intern position! Application period closes soon so get your aps in.

4. Approval of revised 2024 Goals

Amendments noted on document for approval at future EAC meeting. Kyle will be taking over secretarial duties as stated in the bylaws.

5. Approval and presentation of 2023 Annual Report to City Council

Tabled until next meeting.

6: Status Reports from Leads on EAC Goals

1. We have been making connections with organizations in Jordan Heights neighborhoods with plans for block parties and cleanups in support of our on-going community engagement goals. Spreadsheet is being made in the background. Drawing veronika in as well as others to assist.
2. Veronika is currently working on the eecbg application. We also have the pilot program for EV's. Wilson Engineering is developing an energy management plan. There is a deadline to get the projects uploaded to the DOE website by the end of April so it's a priority.
3. Maria needs to look into specific ordinances on sustainable warehousing and our options .
4. Felice has done an amazing job on the BirdTown monthly environmental program. Their work has resulted in many connections with community partners and wonderful presentations to children. So far the program is under budget (budet was \$500 received from BirdTown grant).
5. EAC Email and drive are operational and have been going well. EAC members are encouraged to cc the email on their communications. Now that a system for agendas and minutes is established, the next initiative is the reforming of the email list. More to come.
6. Community inventory for GHG emissions will unfortunately not be completed in time because UGI did not yet provide the requested data on gas useage. Might be finished in

the future by the intern who will be working under Veronkia. Municipal operations GHG footprint may be finished for posting this summer.

7. The Lehigh Valley Breathes event discussed previously hosted by Maria will happen sometime in May or June. She will keep us updated as it will focus on air quality and other resources.
8. CDP disclosures begin around now. Need to check in on it.
9. Tinku will work with Veronika to complete the Bird Town report by the end of the year.

New Business:

1: Arbor Day planning (sign up sheet below)

- https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fqduOr7zHI9Ea8fZkUwxPGNxe-3exOHowiwq_xvMETyU/edit?usp=sharing

Please sign up! Kyle wrote arbor day rather than earth day. Oops. What does the city do on arbor day? Allentown gardening club, they have been invited to do something, maybe tree planting?

Felice is planning our earth day activity and crafts. Birdtown stuff is at Felice house x library which will be on our table.

Ecofest, Muhlenberg has not come up with something specifically to do. One EAC member can join the tree walk, but they are not directly connected. Maria will staff the table at the fest, looking for assistance.

2: Update on potential EAC allocation from City Council

Jennifer noted that CeCe has not gotten back to her. It was “allocated” but it did not come up in the budget. Years ago it was “allocated” and put into the parks and rec budget. There was no clear process how we would access that money, we never got it under Karen (previous parks and rec director). Santo reached out to Mike Hanlon, but it must have fallen through the cracks.

Transition of directors and council members could be the reason. Any background we have on this we should send to Santo via email. If we do manage to get any money, we need to be strategic about our monetary asks to avoid trouble caused by procurement. Kyle noted that we

should not anticipate any money and are more likely to get something if we draft specific monetary asks and request for them rather than a blanket 5k that is void of procurement.

3: Letter Reviews

- (Letter1) ACME Cryogenics, Inc. regarding Public Notice of Intent to Submit an Application for NPDES Individual Stormwater Permit Renewal PA0065561

We have two from them. Issued it for stormwater. All of it was clear and passed code.

- (Letter2) St. Lukes Health Network Inc. - Air Quality Program State-Only (Synthetic Minor) Operating Permit No. 39-00057

No issues.

Jeremy Taylor pulled the permits and they were added to the EAC database to be organized in coordination with these letters. KYLE will establish letter organization system.

4: Social Media Outreach Update (Felice)

Working on it. Contact w/ Genesis and Chelsea at the City. There is confusion for our socials and passwords as well as the Mayor's one allentown message. In the meantime Felice is figuring out the best way. There was an idea floated by Kyle and Felice to potentially partner up with the City for earth day promo. Kyle will inquire with Genesis on Wednesday.

New logo that was drafted by Felice. Concerns over potential size problems. Kyle proposed a motion to suspend the rules and vote on the new logo tonight to have it prepared for earth day. Seconded. Approved.

5. Updating AEAC web site

- Email list form creation and addition
- 2024 updated goals
- 2023 report updated and added
- Membership is wrong

6. Youth Climate Corps Press Event

Press event coming up on youth climate corps soon.

7. Safe Streets for All Steering Committee

Same people that did Allentown Vision 2030 are involved in the Stakeholder process for this Committee. Allentown EAC is voting to participate. Seconded. Approved. Add to the 2024 goals.