

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2025

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Open to the Public -- Zoom Webinar Meeting

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https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Eskit16hS62VEsKN4DH4YQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Attendees: Melissa Schweisguth, Thaddeus Waterman, Rayya Newman, Malgorzata Bereziewicz, Janet Nackoney Staff Liaison Dawn Taft **Guests:** Jim Tufa, Mary Ellsworth, Kelson Nisbett

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation.
2. Approval of July Meeting Minutes (August meeting cancelled/no quorum)
 - a. Unanimous approval (after some revisions)
3. Public Comment Period (Comments limited to 3 minutes per person)
 - a. Jim Tufa - Complaint about Bamboo Growth - Contacted PG county, City Councilmen, etc. Councilman did something to get neighbor to cut bamboo, but neighbor didn't dispose of the waste
 - i. Dawn will connect with Jim offline to discuss and get situation resolved
4. Unit-based pricing for solid waste (Director Riddle) (15 minutes)
 - a. City met with WasteZero to talk about a unit-based pricing model for solid waste. WasteZero looks at trash as a utility, which the City also sees solid waste as a utility. The tipping fees are now close to \$100, and will continue to rise. We could end up in a position where we can't afford to send things to the dump. Most of Maryland's waste is currently being sent overseas.
 - b. City staff have been working hard to divert things from waste streams. Already working on recycling programs for mattresses, clothes, batteries, etc.
 - c. The last part of this is to get people to actually recycle more. We have to make an effort to change the way we look at trash.
 - d. If we can reduce our footprint as a city, it will make a difference. Waste trash likely to keep rising.

- e. Having the HEC committee at some point prompt council would be helpful. Some council members will be supportive, but it would be a good idea for HEC to be on a meeting and present.
- f. Questions
 - i. What is in the proposal that is going before council?
 - 1. What is being talked about with WasteZero is a pilot. The city would just have to buy the bags. Eventually we will need to also replace our existing toters. Pick up will be restricted to what
 - ii. Does this mean all waste will go in bags?
 - 1. Unfortunately yes, that is one of the downsides. But it does remove a lot from the waste stream. Plastic bags happen to be best way
 - iii. What about things that can't be easily bagged?
 - 1. This is something we will have to talk about with WasteZero. We also have to be aware of what keeps city staff safe as well.
 - iv. There were a few different options that WasteZero presented, was just the bags the way the City is interested in going with?
 - 1. Bags seem to be the best way to go about this instead of just unlimited trash opt out option. Bags are pretty easy logistically. These logistics still need to be determined though
 - v. Are there other municipalities doing this?
 - 1. Greenbelt is already doing this, and doing it pretty well. Plans in motion for reaching out to Greenbelt to see how their program is going.
 - vi. Why are we replacing our toters?
 - 1. The Green toters/carts for trash are not recyclable and just go to dump. As we have to replace them as they are worn out, we want to work with a company that has a recyclable cart that we can replace them with. The goal is to replace as things break instead of all at once.
 - vii. What is the expected household costs for this program?
 - 1. If you are already reasonable with your habits (recycling where you can) the solid waste curve will drop immediately. We don't see an increase in anyone's trash service, but will have to see.
 - viii. What is the time frame?

1. Needs to happen soon. Leslie would like to get a timeline from WasteZero to talk to council. May be ideal for HEC to talk to council at the same time in support. Need to get on the council docket the next few months

5. Climate Action Plan Update (Dawn Taft) (5-10 minutes)

- a. The sample survey that was sent previously to committee members (by email) was sent out prematurely. What the committee saw was part of the brainstorming survey. The survey is still being revised, and the final survey is expected to be 3-5 minutes in length. Further input on the survey will be requested by HEC at a later date
- b. StanTec has been selected to work on the actual Climate Action Plan. StanTec has requested the city to provide a Community GreenHouse Gas Inventory, which Hyattsville will be coordinating with COG (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) for.
- c. Municipal Greenhouse Gas Inventory is also being compiled by the City of Hyattsville.
- d. Questions?
 - i. Is there a timeline established for the Climate Action Plan?
 1. Currently not a specific timeline. Main timeline concern currently is the production of the survey which is being performed by University of Maryland students. A further timeline may be developed in meetings with StanTec.

6. Sustainable Maryland submission refinement: Establish timeline for Green Team/HEC [Objectives](#) form SMD [Action Plan Template](#) (Dawn Taft & committee, 30-45 minutes)

- a. Sustainable Maryland recommended that we add dates/timelines for the 7 items we listed in the HEC Goals-Priorities document. Sustainable Maryland is looking for a little more depth in submissions
- b. Need to resubmit the document by Thursday to Sustainable Maryland
- c. HEC went through the document item by item to add dates to our HEC goals

7. Action/decision: Tabling at County [Green Festival](#), 10/11/25 (5-10 minutes)

- a. Need to decide immediately if HEC is going to table this year at the Green Festival in Driskel Park - deadline for signing up for a table was September 5th
- b. City doesn't have a table, but the Tree Board has a table that we could ask them about if we could join them at

- c. Rayya is offering to be at the table/booth as a resource to talk about what incentives are available to Hyattsville residents for greening their homes. Thad & Janet also potentially available to support booth
 - d. Concerns that the the event is not very well attended by Hyattsville residents
 - e. Dawn will follow up with Tree Board on if it is possible for HEC to join their table
8. Any Other Business
9. Announcements
- a. Invasive removal in Ward 5. On September 17th there will be door knocking to ask for permission to remove invasives. Invasive removal to be conducted on the third Saturday (September 19th).
 - b. Invasive removal planned for next several months on the third Saturday to remove vines from trees on private property.
 - c. Dawn will share map of where we are removing vines with HEC.
10. Adjournment

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- Please keep other devices (e.g., cell phones, televisions, radios, etc.) silenced during meetings to minimize audio distractions.
- Please use the “Raise Hand” feature if you would like to speak during the public comment periods of the meeting.
- The City does not enable the Chat function for guests. Please use the Q&A function to share questions and comments.