

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

November, 18 2025

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Open to the Public - Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Melissa Schweisguth, Thaddeus Waterman, Rayya Newman, James Wigley, Staff Liaison Dawn Taft, Councilor Edouard Haba **Guests:** Malik Ferguson, Maria Dabrowski

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation.
2. Approval of [October](#) minutes
 - a. Unanimous approval of October meeting minutes
3. Public Comment Period (Comments limited to 3 minutes per person)
 - a. Maria introduced themselves, interested in joining the HEC committee
 - b. Malik introduced themselves, and is joining the HEC committee
4. Pay-As-You-Throw (Waste Zero) pilot recommendation (30 min)
 - a. City doesn't have a specific plan in place yet for a Pay-As-You-Throw pilot
 - b. The City and Kristen are looking for grant opportunities to pay for the pilot of a Pay-As-You-Throw program
 - i. Potential grant opportunity due December 12th
 - c. Idea hasn't been presented to council yet, but was talked about several years ago
 - i. Council was concerned last time it was presented about equity issues
 - ii. Could disproportionally impact low-income households
 - d. Pilot grant would be expected to help cover education about the Pay-As-You-Throw program
 - e. Pilot would likely have different phases, so that all the changes won't be made at once for residents
 - f. At some point Pay-As-You-Throw program will need to be presented to council, but City staff are pursuing grant opportunities ahead of time
 - g. Some concerns from HEC
 - i. Enforcement
 - ii. Security (taking pictures of trash)
 - iii. Pushback from residents
 - iv. Having spokespeople for the program that aren't just profiting from the endeavor

- h. HEC members are bringing up concerns that they think other residents may have with a Pay-As-You-Throw program. Members recognize the need to do something as trash cost rise
- 5. HEC - new member applications
 - a. Possibly four new members joining the Hyattsville Environmental Committee!
- 6. [HEC Goals](#): Leads and implementation plan (30 min)
 - a. Hyattsville Climate Action Plan -
 - i. An outreach workshop is currently being planned for January
 - ii. City tour occurring this Friday for consultants putting together action plan
 - iii. Not currently a need for a HEC working group on this, but HEC still wants to be involved with this initiative going forward
 - b. Resident Resource Guide
 - i. Currently an existing guide for businesses but not for residents
 - ii. There may be another organization that is doing this that we can pull from
 - iii. Tree board is working on flyer for tree-related details for residents
 - iv. Rayya volunteered to be the point person for this initiative
 - c. Participating in events to raise awareness of Hyattsville's environmental programs
 - i. Dawn already has a box of materials to be used for events, but it could use some updating
 - ii. Participation in city events is an ongoing priority (Summer Jams, Green Summit, Police event, etc)
 - iii. Melissa volunteered to be the point person for this initiative, but others will also help with this
 - d. Support Hyattsville's tree protection and canopy initiatives
 - i. Janet is already involved with HAP
 - ii. City could use support with advertising to residents to get a list of trees that need vine removals
 - iii. Free trees for homeowners on hold til the Spring
 - iv. HEC did not assign a point person for this initiative
 - e. Diversify HEC membership
 - i. New members coming on, may have new organizations to meet with, point person to be decided later
 - f. Work with city to reduce barriers for environmental event promotion
 - i. Rayya volunteered to be the point person for this initiative
 - g. Support Hyattsville's effort to renew its Sustainable Maryland Certification
 - i. City already renewed its certification until 2028

- ii. Could be opportunities to look for initiatives ahead of time to elevate to council from Sustainable Maryland
 - iii. Thaddeus volunteered to be point person for coordinating with Sustainable Maryland in the future
- 7. HEC [Calendar](#) 2026 - needs to be agreed upon by December meeting
 - a. Check out the calendar, need to approve in our December meeting
- 8. HEC chair & secretary elections: January 2026
 - a. Elections will be held in a future meeting
- 9. Any Other Business
- 10. Announcements
 - a. Edouard is considering consolidating HEC and Shade-Tree board, will be on December agenda
- 11. Adjournment