

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Open to the Public - Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Melissa Schweisguth, Janet Nackoney (notes), Malik Ferguson, James Wigley, Bradley Phelps, Staff Liaison Dawn Taft, Rayya Newman, Ross van Dongen, Kelson Nisbett. **Guests:** None

Agenda Items:

INTRO

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation.
2. Approval of February [minutes](#): **APPROVED**
3. Public Comment Period (Comments limited to 3 minutes per person)
 - a. No public comments
4. Welcome new members! (5 min)
 - a. Ross van Dongen– Ward 5 resident– welcome!

OLD BUSINESS

5. Clarification on Pay as You Throw/Zero Waste - What is DPW asking HEC to do/provide and by when? (Dawn, 10 min)
 - a. Not a lot of new updates; Lesley is retiring. The trash situation will eventually become untenable. The City is looking for ideas and options from HEC on ways that we can reduce our trash costs. They would like us to come up with some ideas by July (the start of the new budget year).
 - i. HEC can likely commit to coming up with some ideas in the May/June timeframe
 - ii. Three options are preferred.
 - b. Why? This issue has started because we are quickly running out of space to put our trash (nationwide to global issue). Costs will be going up exponentially in the future. Some regional municipalities are experimenting with pay-as-you-throw models.
 - i. The proposed Pay-as-you-go model/WasteZero pilot did not get approved for council consideration by the City Council Executive Committee. They have asked for some additional suggestions from HEC.
 - c. Ross will be attending the National League of Cities Congressional Cities Conference next week and will ask around about potential models.
6. HEC/City coverage for Hyattsville Aging in Place (HAP) invasive removal program (5 min) (Janet handing off)

- a. Janet has spoken with Lina Parikh from the CCAN ivy volunteer network and she is interested in taking on the leadership of HAP ivy removal. Janet is also talking with Sue Slotnick, another CCAN ivy volunteer, to co-lead with Lina.
- 7. HEC Goal follow up - diversifying outreach (10 min) (Chair facilitates)
 - a. Any updates on outreach or support/contacts needed?
 - i. Thaddeus is following up with Sustainable Maryland
 - ii. Bradley will follow up next meeting on connections with schools
 - b. School Community Gardens funding (Haba)
 - i. <https://cbtrust.org/grants/prince-georges-county-community-gardens/>
 - 1. Table till next meeting when Haba is present
 - 2. Melissa will also reach out to Ben Simasek.

NEW BUSINESS

- 8. Creative Thinking Workshop for Homeowners - dates, partnership & ideas (20 min) (Rayya)
 - a. Rayya's business got a grant from the City of Hyattsville to put together a workshop for homeowners focused on sustainability, historic preservation, stormwater management, electrification, etc. Hosted by ArtWorks Now.
 - b. Looking for ideas for a 2026 workshop.
 - i. Weatherization tax credits are expiring this year; counties in the region are trying to fill in the gaps. Might be helpful to hold a workshop focused on ways to continue to fill the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) demand and gaps.
 - ii. Some demand around the electric car rebates (focusing on the at-home charging). Synergizing dwelling/building energy with transport and car charging.
 - iii. Energy modernization and Maryland Historic Trust rebates; some reticence to embrace mini-splits and heat pumps, but can be doable
 - iv. EMPOWER rebates for energy efficiency
 - v. PGC Raincheck Rebate program
 - vi. Smart thermostats
- 9. Interest in in-person meeting(s)
 - a. One idea is to meet in person bi-annually (in spring and fall). Melissa can ask about the availability of hybrid technology.

OTHER

10. Any Other Business

11. Announcements

- a. Chesapeake Bay Trust Raincheck Rebate Program [Workshop March 12](#) (informational): 5:30-6:30pm
 - i. Hyattsville raincheck rebate tour on May 9, 2026
- b. Anacostia Watershed Society [Earth Day Cleanup](#): Saturday, April 25 2026 at Melrose Park in Hyattsville.
 - i. Malik will be co-leading with Sam Denes from Hyattsville Health, Wellness and Recreation Committee.
 - ii. Registration will open soon.
- c. Invasive removal events:
 - i. March 21, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Ward 4 (Heurich Park, 2800 Nicholson St).
 - ii. March 21, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (Driskell Park)
- d. March 21, 1pm-5pm: [Healthy Homes Fair](#) at Catholic University

12. Adjournment