

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2026

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Open to the Public - Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Melissa Schweisguth, Thaddeus Waterman, Malik Ferguson, Rayya Newman, Staff Liaison Dawn Taft **Guests:** Jimmy McClellan

Agenda Items:

INTRO (10 min)

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation
2. Approval of May minutes
 - i. Meeting minutes approved
3. Welcome new member Jimmy McClellan!
 - a. Joined Committee yesterday, will be an official member next month
4. Public Comment Period (Comments limited to 3 minutes per person)
 - a. No public comments

OLD BUSINESS (20 min+)

5. Waste Reduction options for DPW/City consideration - follow up on action items (15 min)
 - a. Starting document to discuss various trash reduction options
 - i. [Waste Reduction Strategies Document](#)
 - ii. Numbers may need to be refined with Hyattsville specifics
 - iii. Need to request information from the Clerk's office for Hyattsville-specific costs
 1. Hyattsville Trash Costs
 2. Cost to replace bins for all households
 3. Compliance Officer Cost
 - iv. Information can be requested from Greenbelt for the cost to apply RFID tags to trash bins
 - v. May want to remove the stricter enforcement option as a stand-alone option
 - vi. The weight-based option is the most effective, but it is not as prevalent in the United States and requires more logistics to implement

1. Weight-based systems also require calibration
2. Barcodes could be used instead of RFID to reduce On-board truck scales cost
3. May be beneficial to find a company that can discuss how weight based systems can be implemented
- vii. The Variable Trash Can Size estimates may be artificially low, Hyattsville had budgeted over \$750,000 for new RFID trash bins
- viii. Waste Zero may have more accurate numbers upon request, Ross has been coordinating with Waste Zero for questions HEC may have
 1. Questions about why Waste Zero presented current food waste as 0 instead of having actual food scrap capture
 2. User Experience Map/Resident experience for each option of trash reduction
 3. Why does the department cost never change?
- ix. Further actions:
 1. Dive into specific numbers for Hyattsville to obtain better cost estimates
 2. Create a document of questions for Waste Zero

6. HEC goals: diversifying outreach: quick report-back from Sustainable Maryland panel on outreach to Spanish-Speaking/Hispanic communities (Melissa) (5 min)
 - a. Recommendation to have someone who actually speaks Spanish attend events to outreach to the Hispanic community
 - b. Churches and Soccer events are locations and opportunities to reach out to the Hispanic community

NEW BUSINESS (30 min+)

7. increasing resident participation in Hyattsville's environmental programs. (Thaddeus) (20 min)
 - a. If Dawn has a list of programs that could use more engagement, we could brainstorm new ideas to consider. Some of the other municipalities in our state have been increasing engagement through approaches such as having residents adopt a specific plant to be responsible for in the food forests.
 - i. Dawn has a small group of residents for the food forest that she includes on outreach when events are occurring. City residents are not participating as much as expected at events despite the efforts

of city staff. Advertising, list-serves, posters, and other outreach are not having the desired impact.

- ii. 55 people registered for recent Home Owner event but only 50% attended when the event was offered for free. People from other towns joined and were interested. People more likely to attend if they have to pay to attend.
- iii. Maybe having a champion for an event can be helpful
- iv. Could ask people to volunteer to take care of specific plants, do something like adopt-a-plant or section of the food forest that encourages people to get involved. Could divide up plots along the trail and have sections where different groups could compete on cleaning up and taking care of.

8. Tabling at Summer Jam? (10 min)

- a. Materials needed?

OTHER (15 min)

9. Any Other Business

10. Announcements

11. Adjournment