

**City of Portage Environmental Board  
Minutes for the Meeting on April 12, 2023**

**Members present:** Justin Gish, Joseph Chamberlin, Lauren Thompkins, Jason Beasley, David Lancaster, Thomas Schaffer, Diedre Courtney, Aanya Goel (Youth Advisory Committee), Jerry Kroehn, Jamie Harmon (ex officio)

**Guests:** None present

**7:02p.m.** Meeting called to order

**7:03 p.m.** Welcome and Introduction of Guests

- Aanya Goel from the Youth Advisory Committee joined this meeting.

**7:04 p.m.** Public Comment

- No members of the public present to speak.

**7:06 p.m.** Approval of the March Minutes

- Thomas S. made motion to accept these minutes. Joe C. seconded. Motion passed.

**7:06 p.m.** Arbor Day/Tree Planting

- Event planned for April 28<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at Portage Central. A white oak will be planted and be a focal point for the Portage Central Campus community. The Portage Central gardening club from the area will plant and maintain the tree. The city manager and school officials will be in attendance. Environmental Board Members are encouraged to attend.

**7:15 p.m.** Urban Bird Treaty

- The oak tree being planted on Arbor Day will benefit bird species. The City of Kalamazoo will be involved with this urban bird treaty. Response to the Urban Bird Treaty application has not been received.

**7:23 p.m.** Renewable Energy

- Lauren T. will speak with industry leaders who may present to the board on issues surrounding renewable energy policies.

**7:30 p.m.** Master Plan Discussion

- Diedre C. attended the public event at the senior center. She stated that the public event focused on issues of housing and natural space, two topics of interest to the Environmental Board.
- Jaime H. stated that the plan would most likely not be approved for a year and a half. Jaime H. encouraged Board members to attend and share their environmental members

knowledge. Justin G asked if there was any effort for those who are drafting the master plan to come speak to the board directly. Jaime H. will reach out to the drafters of the master plan to see if a special arrangement can be made for these folks can speak with the board directly. Joe C. suggested adding an agenda item for the next meeting to create a master plan committee. Thomas S. made a motion to create this committee at the next meeting. Joe C. seconded. Motion passed.

**7:34 p.m. KPL Speaking Engagement**

- Thomas S. attended this event and reported back on the moves Ann Arbor is making towards a sustainable city. Thomas S. appreciated Ann Arbor's focus on vulnerable populations and how sustainability can improve their lives first.

**7:40 p.m. Board Member Discussion**

- Thomas S. commended Diedre C. and David L. on their recent appointments at local higher education institutions.
- Jaime H. stated that Hope College will be doing research on the local bogs.
- Jason B. asked about an Environmental Board table at the local farmer's market. Jaime H. stated that if the Environmental Board wants a table they simply need to ask. Joe C. asked for an agenda item be made at the next meeting. Lauren T. suggested the creation of a survey for attendees of the farmer's market.
- Thomas S. would like to see an eco-competition between the two Portage high schools.

**8:03 p.m. Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn made by Thomas S. Seconded by Diedre C. Motion passed.