



## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD

### MINUTES

August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Committee Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC

Voting Members – Matthew Kopac (chair), Jessalee Landfried (vice chair), Laura Marie Davis (secretary), Jessie Birkhead, Matthew Herman, Rashmi Joglekar, Rachel McIntosh-Kastrinsky, Jasmine Stammes, Roberto Valle Kinloch, Chi Vo, Casey Collins

Ex Officio Members/Staff – Paul Cameron, Tobin Freid, J.V. Loperfido, Wayne Fenton, Vicki Westbrook, Ellen Reckhow, DeDreanna Freeman

**I. Call to Order at 6:02 pm**

**II. Approval of July Minutes, 10-0**

**III. Announcements**

- a. M. Kopac shared the Board's appreciation and best wishes for Rachel McIntosh-Kastrinsky as this is her last meeting as a member of the Board.
- b. T. Freid will be sharing a link for individuals to make public comments on the Clean Energy Plan for implementation of Executive Order 80.
- c. J. Birkhead shared that a new law directs the Department of Transportation to prioritize native plants.
- d. R. Kastrinsky shared that Durham County won the distinction of NC Smart Fleet Leader at the 2019 Sustainable Fleet Technology Conference & Expo.

**IV. New Business and Continuing Business**

- a. **Comprehensive Plan Update** – M. Kopac:
  - The Executive Committee is in conversation with Planning Department Staff on how we can remain updated on the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan.
  - The Planning Department is tentatively planning to provide quarterly updates for all Boards & Commissions beginning in September.
  - Over 100 people nominated for the Outreach Committee (L.M. Davis is serving on the Outreach Committee) which began meeting in July and will have the first public event in October.

- More information on community engagement for the Comprehensive Plan Update and other projects can be found at [EngageDurham.com](http://EngageDurham.com)
- b. **Ordinance on consumer fee for bags and disposable carry-out items** – Cyrstal Dreisbach, Executive Director, Don't Waste Durham; Michelle Nowlin, J.D., Clinical Law Prof., Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic (ELPC); Alicia Zhao, MEM Student, Nicholas School of the Environment; Nancy Lauer, Science and Policy Fellow, Duke ELPC
- Don't Waste Durham (DWD) pursues systemic change to reduce waste by innovating & demonstrating solutions, and advocating for evidence-based policy changes.
  - DWD also recognizes that waste is an equity issue.
  - The Duke ELPC has been working with DWD over the last year and a half to develop a model for an incentive program to reduce plastic waste in Durham.
  - The State Solid Waste Act gives considerable discretion to Cities, including the authority to impose fees for solid waste management and waste reduction.
  - The Duke ELPC has drafted a proposed City ordinance to implement a fee for carryout bags.
  - To address inequity, transactions where purchases are made with state or federal nutrition assistance programs are excluded from the fee in the proposed ordinance. Additionally, the fee would be retained by the business.
  - The enforcement section of the proposed ordinance can be modified to best suit the City's organization and capacity.
  - Survey showed that local businesses are generally in support of a bag fee and a Styrofoam fee.
  - The Duke ELPC requests the EAB to pass a resolution of support for the proposed ordinance.
  - W. Fenton shared that the Solid Waste Department currently has just one staff member in charge of code enforcement, and the Department would need more capacity in order to enforce the proposed ordinance.
  - Plastic pollution in the recycling stream is a serious and costly problem for waste management facilities.
  - L.M. Davis moved that the EAB formally support the proposed ordinance. C. Collins seconded.
    - Discussion: The ordinance will likely adapt to feedback from the City moving forward. The EAB also recommends that the

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Duke ELPC moving forward provides further information and clarification on:

- Fee collection and remittance
  - Equity of information & impact including geographic distribution of businesses and consumer attitudes
  - Enforcement
  - Fee amount
  - Ability to measure impact
- C. Collins moved to amend the current motion to include the recommendations outlined above. R. Kastrinsky seconded. Amendment carried 11-0.
  - R. Kastrinsky moved that the EAB formally support the proposed ordinance with recommendations. R. Valle seconded. Motion carried 11-0.

**c. Durham Transit Director Letter – Jessalee Landfried:**

- The position (Director of Transportation) has been open for some time and can have a substantial impact on Durham environment & quality of life.
- The letter recommends ... different backgrounds...
- C. Collins moved to submit letter to the City Manager. R. Kastrinsky seconded.
  - Discussion: Do we want to add more specific language focusing on electric vehicles to align more intentionally with our vision in terms of climate adaptation? (EO 80?)
  - The language is sufficient to make the point that we recommend hiring someone is not just an engineer.
- Motion carried 11-0.

**d. Stormwater Quality Beaver Dam Retrofit Study – Christine Cailleret, Environmental Planning/Compliance Coordinator, Public Works Department:**

- In 2013 the EAB recommended a study to evaluate whether beaver pond leveler will impact dissolved oxygen levels, as a potential method for improving stream quality without disturbing wildlife.
- After many unforeseen challenges, the study showed that the leveler had a minimal increase in dissolved oxygen but remains most useful for managing water levels. (And the beavers did continue working to maintain their dams.)

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e. **EAB Annual Planning: Committee Report-Outs**

- C. Vo shared the Education and Community Outreach Committee priorities, including engaging with students. R. Kastrinsky recommended including college students as well as k-12. L.M. Davis recommended active collaboration with the Soil & Water Conservation District staff. D. Freeman recommended including a focus on charter & private schools. V. Westbrook noted that Water Management also has a presence in DPS.
- C. Collins shared the Energy & Climate Committee priorities, mainly implementation of the City's & County's Renewable Energy and GHG Emission Reduction Plans. More support is needed on this Committee specifically to maintain relationship with staff. D. Freeman volunteered to take this on.
- R. Valle shared the Circular Economy Committee priorities, including funding a circular economy study/report for Durham, and piloting a sustainable model for composting in at least one Durham School. Multiple committee members are also attending monthly breakfast discussions.
- M. Kopac noted common threads between different committees, including building relationships with DPS and potential for job training programs.
- J. Landfried shared the Green Infrastructure Committee priorities including engagement with the Comprehensive Plan and providing input on the hiring of the new Transportation Director.
- M. Kopac noted that since the Energy & Climate Committee needs support this could be a priority in new member recruitment.
- J. Stammes switched from Circular Economy Committee to Energy & Climate Committee.

**V. Work Session**

- a. Already past 8:00 so no time for Work Session but next time the Board will discuss options for time management and modifying the official meeting & work session times.
- b. M. Kopac noted that Steven Hicks resigned as Director of General Services. P. Cameron shared that Jina Propst is currently Interim Director. (Members of the Board noted that this may be another opening where the Green Infrastructure Committee would like to prepare a letter with hiring recommendations.)

**Adjourn 8:06pm**

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Page 4 of 4