



City of Bloomington

Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to advise the City of Bloomington on how its actions and policies may preserve and enhance the quality of Bloomington's environment, including the life-supporting processes that natural ecological systems provide to humans and other organisms.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION NOTICE and REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

February 27, 2025, 6:00 PM
Hooker Meeting Room #245
Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here: https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/8657231124?pwd=mPqboSiD0AhVwKSgkuW2aO7NHixi_hO.1&omn=81563021562

Meeting ID: 865 723 1124

Passcode: COBPT

or on Community Access Television Service (CATS): <https://catstv.net/government.php>.

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation: 6:02

2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		
Rachael Johnson, City Liaison	X		

3. New Business

a. Nominations and officer election*

Matt moved to vote. Dave seconded

All voted yes

b. Review of quorum requirements (Legal)

Enedina Kassamian, Assistant City Attorney, gave the commission information on quorum and Open Door Laws.

Shannon asked about whether quorum was a function of active members or the number of seats. This can be changed by editing the bylaws (de minimis). This does not have to go through council.

Indiana Open Door Law: all meetings of “governing bodies” are subject, this includes the EC.

Bloomington municipal code: majority of members constitutes quorum, unless bylaws specify otherwise.

Carrie asked how the law applies to subcommittees. The most conservative understanding is that all meetings are subject to the law. Email is effectively only for scheduling, no substantive conversations.

Rachael will submit public notice for any meetings, including notifying the local newspaper. 48 hours notice is required.

Carrie recommended setting scheduling working group meetings on a recurring basis.

Members of the public must be able to view and record all meetings.

Remote options (Zoom, etc) are not required.

Any member joining remotely must have their face visible. May not join remotely more than 2 consecutive meetings, may not join remotely for more than 50% of meetings.

Only in-person attendance counts for reaching quorum.

Carrie asked about “formalities” (agenda, etc) in working groups. It is required if the group meets quorum.

Without quorum, you may adjourn, recess, or take other efforts to reach quorum. No official business may occur without quorum.

The conservative view is to not discuss anything related to the commission without quorum. It may be considered a “serial meeting”

Carrie asked about changing the “categorization” of a meeting on short notice. That is not permitted.

Rachel asked about scheduling back-to-back meetings. Each meeting can be canceled individually.

Working groups may have a lower quorum than the commission as a whole, provided it is explicit in the bylaws.

Quorum must be met for ANY official meeting.

It is possible for each working group to have a different quorum.

Agenda is required for any meeting that reaches a quorum of the commission

as a whole.

Nadia and Carrie asked about setting quorum to 2 to allow all our working groups to meet.

Nadia asked about livestreaming. Livestreaming is not required, you may meet anywhere provided it is publicly accessible.

Legal will follow-up regarding quorum for working groups.

Setting de minimus requires “New Business” on the agenda.

Carrie asked if the 4 member Eco Heroes working group can meet given current quorum rules. The conservative answer is no.

Matt moves to add updating the de minimus as new business Item D. Nadia seconded.

All present voted Yes.

c. Riparian Buffer regulation (Jackie Scanlan)

Currently measuring from the center of the stream bed, each buffer is 25 ft.

Different communities measure in varied ways.

In March it will be proposed to the Plan Commission for Clear Creek and Jackson Creek to have 50 ft added to their buffers in the Southern portion of town.

Mitchell mentioned working with undergrad IU students to help with the measurement.

d. By-Law Modification*

Matt suggested drafting a de minimus stating that half of the appointed members + 1 would constitute a quorum with a minimum of 5. Working groups would have a de minimus of half of the groups members + 1 with a minimum of 2.

The minimum of 2 is because of how few members are on some subcommittees.

Nadia asked about the phrasing of “half + 1”

Rachael asked if the bylaws must state how many members must be in each working group. Legal said no.

Rachael mentioned that other sections of the bylaws need updated.

Matt motioned to vote on the changes, Mitchell 2nd. All present voted yes.

4. Approval of January 2025 minutes*

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carrie Albright	X		
Nadia Cain	X		
Matt Caldie	X		
Shannon Gayk	X		
Adam Martinez	X		
Mitchell Owens	X		
David Parkhurst	X		

5. Public comment

Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

One present in the Zoom call, no comments.

6. Old Business

a. Working group updates

i. Light Pollution

On pause until after Eco Heroes.

Carrie reminded the group to submit public notice with an agenda.

ii. Water Quality

None

iii. Biodiversity

Shannon mentioned that ~12 were present at their recent meeting. They discussed the Bee City USA draft resolution. How to pay the yearly application fee was a topic of note, as well as the steps the city has taken that align with Bee City's recommendations.

Council may be able to add it to their agenda on either April 2nd or 16th, before Earth Day.

Matt mentioned the EC has the funding to pay the application fee, though the Parks Department may be contributing as well.

Matt asked about how Bee City uses the money, Shannon will look into it.

The fee scales based on the city's population. Given Bloomington's population the fee will be \$400 yearly. The max fee is \$500.

Carrie recommended committing to paying the fee for a set number of years, then reevaluating.

Rachael proposed editing a spelling error and removing highlighted text.

The group is cooperating with IU so that the city and campus can apply together.

1. Bee City USA - draft resolution*

David moved to vote on approving, Matt seconded.

All present voted yes.

Mitchell suggested cooperating with Wonderlab to some extent.

Shannon said that the next step would be starting on the application.

i. Special Projects

No update.

b. Eco-Heroes Planning

We have a theme, draft fliers, and educational resources for teachers.

April 11 is the final day to drop off submissions.

Rachael confirmed that there will be a form for donations and the release form from last year can be used again.

Eco Heroes has a balance of \$1363.28

To spend any funds the treasurer would email Rachael with a request and she will contact the appropriate staff.

Areas of focus are contacting teachers and potential donors.

Maybe create a new account to avoid using our personal accounts?

The group can send a draft to Rachael who will send it to the appropriate address (using a more official email address) and forward replies.

There may be issues with using a government email to solicit donations. A public press release may be acceptable.

Shannon may know a student who is willing to reach out to businesses to share the publicly available notices with local businesses.

Carrie recommend that the Eco Heroes working group meet on Thursday the 6th at 6 P.M.

Rachael will send the draft press release.

7. Staff Update

a. City Council Schedule Update

Annual report will be after April.

b. Environmental Commission 101

Rachael gave a brief "EC 101" presentation.

8. Reports from:

a. Tree Commission (TC)

The TC meeting was short and uneventful.

b. Environmental Resource Advisory Council (ERAC)

Chair and vice chair were appointed. “Jack in the pulpit” seems to be doing well, suggesting deer population is decreasing. Griffy has proportionally more deer pellets than other properties. There is an invasive species of plant at Griffy Lake. Removal is progressing. Various educational initiatives are underway.

c. Friends of Lake Monroe (FOLM)

None

d. Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)

Matt watched the meeting, mostly administrative.

They discussed 2025 priorities, there was praise for the EC’s yearly priority selection.

e. Monroe County - Identify and Reduce Invasive Species (MC-IRIS)

Applications are open for invasive tree replacement.

Parks encouraged Weed Wrangle participation.

9. Commissioner announcements

Neighborhood Planting Project has tree starts available.

Nadia will not be at the July meeting.

Matt moved to extend the meeting by 5 minutes, Carrie seconded. All present voted yes.

10. Social Media

a. March Posts

Commissioners are encouraged to share ideas.

11. Upcoming Meeting

a. March 27, 2025, 6:00 pm, Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS

***delayed one week due to Indiana University spring break

12. Adjournment:

Matt moved to adjourn, Shannon 2nd.

8:00 PM

** Item to be voted on*

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some

individuals.

If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

As a quorum of the Commission or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.

The Bloomington Environmental Commission (EC) wishes to acknowledge and honor the indigenous communities native to this region, and recognize that the City of Bloomington, Indiana was built on indigenous homelands and resources.