

# Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council Meeting

Tuesday, June 25th, 2024

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**Attendees:** In-Person: Portia Zwicker, Heather Ipsen, Khila Pecoraro, Alex Lykins, Charlie Davidson, Susan VanVorst, Jasenya McCauley, Bob Titus, Ryan Szepek, Jack Hagerty

Virtual: Donna Esposito, Ashok, Kathy Fisher, Sara Mae Pratt

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## Privilege of the Floor (Guests)

- None

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## Agenda Additions or Modifications (Council Members)

- None

## Approval of last meeting's minutes

- Approved

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## Project, Standing Committee, Commission, and Liaison Reports

- **CSC Task Force Updates - Charlie Davidson**
  - Received soft quote for EV purchases using Clean Energy Communities money. Waiting to make sure the soft quote is good enough to use for the application. \$125,000 for EVs
  - L&S looked at court house, partial/soft study results coming soon
- **Natural Resources Inventory subcommittee meeting - Nick Klemczak**
  - Ashok presented to Legislature during privilege of the floor and is looking to make a longer presentation in the future to include public outreach
- **Pesticide subcommittee meeting - Charlie Davidson**
  - Library did use pesticide. Issue was brought to the Legislature and use was stopped.
  - Less pesticides can mean more manual labor
  - When this happens, mistrust and lack of communication can cause issues
  - Ashok wants to meet with Charlie to speak to the County Manager's Office to speak about this issue including outreach. Ashok would also like to discuss the difference between not using them in general versus using them on invasive species.
  - Charlie gives background on Pesticide Subcommittee progress up to present; issues with use at libraries. Want to ensure that libraries are included in the ban on all county properties
- **Skip the Stuff - Portia Zwicker/Charlie Davidson**
  - Subcommittee volunteers?
  - Portia, Heather, Charlie met with Legislators Pratt and Ruzzo to get an update on the zero waste guide for the county
  - Looking for a reward system for restaurants in the area, not a local law, but an initiative to reward local restaurants who take sustainable actions. Looking at expanding beyond plastic issues.
  - Working with Discover Schenectady to do this because they have resources like marketing, etc. It's coming back to us to come up with the guidelines for this program.

- Skip the stuff would only be a piece of this, along with divestment and composting.
- Creating an action list similar to CSC with the aim to highlight participation within the community for tourism as well as locals.
- Will form a subcommittee. Volunteers include Khila, Portia, Heather, Alex, Nancy and will include Leg. Pratt and Ruzzo
- **Drip Drop/Fit Pick - Jasenya McCauley**
  - Captured 2685 items to donate about 1747 pounds of textiles destined for landfill
  - Distributed 718 items, 485 pounds
  - 1967 items left and working with career closet at SCCC, YWCA and other local organizations, and recycling companies
  - Kids edition with Bethel Northside of VanVranken in August for Back to School
    - August 24th Drip Drop and August 31st Pick a Fit
- **Zero Waste Guide**
  - Rhonda and Portia working to revise and Rhonda is creating first draft

## **Administrative Agenda**

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### **Treasurer's Report**

- T-shirt update - None at the moment

### **Executive Committee**

- Orientation - Alex: Some folks want another one, Alex will schedule for August
- Union liaison - Portia: Amelia is traveling and couldn't attend today; term will start in August; we can take a look at Amelia's resume soon
- Turf at Central Park Pool - Portia: Plastic grass
  - Alex: could the county work on a sustainable designs/landscaping guide, municipalities could potentially adopt in the future
  - Heather: Roadmap to Sustainability- has access to the website, SCEAC could revamp for the county. Heather says we could contact Chris Wallin for further information

## **Upcoming Meetings and Events of Interest**

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- No July meeting: required to have 9 meetings, but we can have more! We'll tentatively have a meeting on August 27th, online only.
- Food scraps collections at Summer Night - Friday, July 12 - Charlie: food scraps collection is happening! Leah and Yaro will handle the hauling via Sycamore Collaborative. Looking for volunteers to help with this initiative. Event is 5-10PM
- Culture Fest - Jasenya: July 13th, August 17th, September 14th. Looking to separate waste and create a more zero waste event. Located at Jerry Burrell Park
- HHW - Charlie: Saturday, August 24th
- Mabee Farms on July 4th - Susan: Zero waste
- Khila teaching classes at the libraries: July 1st Kids and Teens Paper Making, July 10th How to Recycle, July 24th Backyard Composting, July 25th Climate and Sustainability

Vote to adjourn the meeting 1st Alex, second Heather

Meeting adjourned at 6:02