



Minutes

EPC MONTHLY MEETING

October 16, 2023

City Hall, Conference Room 2000

[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Attendance

EPC Members (13)	Status	Staff
Dan Beattie	P	Melissa Atwood, T&ES
Eldon Boes	P	Ryan Freed, OCA
Alexander Clark	P	
Benjamin Cuddy	P	
Jennifer Debias	E	
Oleksandr Faryga	E	
Kathie Hoekstra, Chair	P	Guests
Anna Marino	P	Scott Barstow
Philip Mobilia	P	
Michael Olex, Vice-Chair	E	
Theresa Romanosky	P	
Marta Schantz	PR	
James Vandeputte	PR	

P: Present; **PR:** Present Remotely; **A:** Absent - Unexcused; **E:** Absent – Excused; **N:** Not a Member

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Kathie Hoekstra called meeting to order and introductions for all attendees followed.

2. Public Comment

No public comments.

3. Administrative Items

a) Meeting Minutes

Vote on September 18, 2023, meeting minutes for approval. **Motion:** Ms. Theresa Romanosky; **Second:** Mr. Benjamin Cuddy; **Vote:** Unanimous approval, with Chair Hoekstra abstaining.

b) Approval of Letter to City Council and City Manager regarding the EPC 2024 Legislative Agenda

Vote on approval of Letter to City Council and City Manager. **Motion:** Ms. Theresa Romanosky; **Second:** Mr. Dan Beattie; **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

c) Reports from Commissioners

- Update from Mr. Dan Beattie: Meeting with Senator Ebbin and Delegate Bennett-Parker is scheduled for Thursday, October 19th at 4:00pm. Chair Hoekstra or Mr. Eldon Boes will attend along with Mr. Dan Beattie.
- Chair Hoekstra mentioned discussions with various state representatives. One discussion related to how the state would replace the money from gasoline taxes when EV use increases and gas use decreases. Referred to California bill that uses vehicle miles traveled and value/weight of the vehicle for taxes.
- Chair Hoekstra mentioned that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government has committee meetings that focus on Northern Virginia and the surrounding region. Meetings include Climate, Built Environment, Chesapeake Bay, and Air Quality.

4. Update on 2024 Earth Day Planning

Business Recognition Program (Ryan Freed, Climate Action Officer)

Office of Climate Action is launching the Green Business Recognition Program for businesses that reach various levels of achievement to obtain an Eco-City Business Recognition of bronze, silver, and gold levels. Office of Climate Action is hoping to get the press release out this week. Afterwards, they plan to host a couple workshops, likely during the day, to help businesses work through the application process and enter necessary information. Businesses are required to fill out the application to be eligible. Office of Climate Action is looking for EPC volunteers to help businesses during the workshops as well as requesting help to distribute order sheet cards at businesses. Cards mention how important it is to shop/visit businesses that are recognized through this program, which is an EAP2040 initiative.

Earth Day Updates (Melissa Atwood, Office of Environmental Quality)

Continuing with Earth Month idea from last couple years. Adding some type of communication/game idea, such as Bingo, to get interest and attention on Earth Day before April. Idea is to link activities/events to Eco-City values. Bingo idea would be planned for March. Earth Month activities in April.

- Office of Climate Action is working on possible event.
- TES/Transportation Planning would like to work with Mr. Eldon Boes on developing Safe Bike Routes Around the City.
- Mr. Eldon Boes mentioned possibility of connecting with Environmental Clubs at the schools and connecting Ryan and Melissa with the STEM Coordinator.

- Chair Hoekstra mentioned how attendees at the last EPC educational event liked the Ask an Expert aspect of the workshop. EPC could possibly consider something like that during Earth Month.

5. 2024 Budget Discussion

- EPC numbers referenced on the budget focus areas table being discussed in the meeting come from the letter to Council regarding recommendations for the \$1.85 million in last year's budget.
- Environmental Justice, EPC #2, Community Solar.
EPC to propose the City only purchase renewable energy credits (RECs) from Alexandria residents and use the remaining funds to fund or directly purchase solar for affordable housing.
 - o Discussed pursuing power purchase agreements (PPA) versus RECs. RECs are a current possibility with City. Consider if PPA is the new baseline and if this is a real possibility to pursue in conjunction with or in place of RECs.
 - o Ryan Freed stated that all options are possible for consideration where value is seen – RECs versus installing solar panels.
 - o EPC requested the Energy Manager look at this to help determine the best option.
 - o Repurposing the REC budget line item for additive solar. Questioned what process to follow to make this change possible.
- Education, Capacity Building and Outreach, Includes EPC #3, 4, 5.
Discussion around funding a Green Building employee for the school system and if City can fund a school employee. Consider if it would be possible to connect this employee to the Office of Climate Action and the City.
 - o ACPS used to have an energy manager.
- Chair Hoekstra will write budget letter. Mr. Al Clark will review letter. Final letter will be submitted to City Council and the City Manager.
- **Motion** to approve 2024-2025 budget request as reflected in the budget table prepared by the Chair: Mr. Dan Beattie. **Second:** Ms. Anna Marino. **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

6. Other Discussions:

- Ms. Marta Schantz proposed the EPC write a letter in support of the Zoning for Housing Initiative. Ms. Schantz and Mr. Ben Cuddy will draft the letter.

- Scott Barstow requested the EPC consider including financial support of Housing Alexandria’s Buildings Up initiative in their budget letter or a separate letter, however EPC deems most fitting.
 - o EPC previously wrote a letter of support for a grant request associated with this initiative that can be used to draft the letter of support under discussion.
 - o **Motion** to approve support via a letter to City Council and the City Manager: Mr. Al Clark. **Second:** Mr. Eldon Boes. **Vote:** Unanimous approval. Mr. Barstow will draft letter and EPC will finalize. Deadline to submit is November 1, 2023.
- Mr. Eldon Boes is continuing to connect with the schools to initiate conversations and partnerships related to climate action.
- Chair Hoekstra announced that Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker is working to allow more virtual and hybrid meetings for Commissions without a required in-person quorum. Currently permitted 25% virtual attendance throughout each year. Virtual attendees are not considered for quorum.
- Melissa Atwood mentioned that Office of Environmental Quality will be visiting Samuel Tucker Elementary School. Ms. Marta Schantz will email cognitive tests related to indoor air quality to use for reference.
- Mr. Eldon Boes asked if Earth Day/Month might include a tabling at the Farmer’s Markets. Consider if “ask an expert” would be a good fit. Chair Hoekstra indicated Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) set up a table at the West End (Ben Brennan) Farmer’s Market where they asked attendees to take the pledge that appliances will be replaced with electric, when replacement is needed. They exceeded their goal for number of pledges.

7. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Eldon Boes; **Second:** Mr. Al Clark; **Vote:** unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05p.m.

Next regular meeting is Monday, November 13, 2024.

FY2024 Attendance

Member	Sept 18, 2023	Oct 16, 2023	Nov 11, 2023	Dec 11, 2023	Jan 22, 2023	Feb 26, 2023	Mar 18, 2023	Apr 15, 2023	Retreat	May 20, 2023	Jun 17, 2023	TOTALS
Dan Beattie	P	P										100.0%
Eldon Boes	P	P										100.0%
Alexander Clark	P	P										100.0%
Benjamin Cuddy	P	P										85.71%
Jennifer Debias	P	E										85.71%
Cynthia Elliott	P	N										85.71%
Oleksandr Faryga	A	E										85.71%
Kathie Hoekstra	E	P										71.43%
Anna Marino	P	P										85.71%
Philip Mobilia	N	P										100.0%
Michael Olex	P	E										71.43%
Theresa Romanosky	P	P										85.71%
Marta Schantz	P	P										100.0%
James Vandeputte	P	P										85.71%