

Minutes

**Royal Oak Environmental Advisory Board Meeting
Royal Oak Farmers Market
316 E. 11 Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024
7:00pm**

1. The meeting was called to order by 2023 Vice-Chair Woody Gontina at 7pm.
2. The agenda was approved.
3. November 2023 EAB and Water System Advisory Council minutes were approved.
4. There was no public comment.
5. New 2024 board members were welcomed (later in the meeting they were invited to introduce themselves and explain their motivation in joining the board):
 - Frank Komolo
 - Ed Slezak
6. 2024 officers were elected:
 - Chair: Woody Gontina
 - Vice Chair: Paul Vial
 - Secretary: Tom Regan
7. New Business
 - Social media: Brock and Zoe volunteered to coordinate EAB social media posts on Facebook and Instagram. The X (aka Twitter) account will be closed. We were informed that the city IT department will not allow us to post on Tik Tok. Sustainability Manager Angela Fox will also post on social media and will coordinate her posts with Brock and Zoe.
 - Calendar: we will meet on the 4th Wednesday 7pm this year except for November, when we will meet on the 20th.
 - Strategic Focus:
 - Andrew Sarpolis and Paul Vial suggested we hold public events to instruct people on how to apply for grants to decarbonize their homes and improve storm water capture.
 - Andrew Sarpolis suggested we participate in public campaigns to pressure the Michigan Public Service Commission to push privately-owned utilities to decarbonize the electric grid.
 - Julie Lyons-Bricker suggested we consult the S-CAP document to remind us of the strategic goals we set two years ago.
8. Aaron Filipski was absent, and there was no report from the Director of Public Services.
9. Sustainability Manager Angela Fox reported on the following:
 - Angela will continue holding Happy Hour events and library talks, which have been well- attended. The next Happy Hour will be February 21st, 5:30pm, at Alchemy in downtown Royal Oak.
10. Angela noted that the rain garden and rain barrel rebate program hosted by the Water Resources Commission exhausted its budget within a few days, and she expressed hope that the program would have a larger budget in the future.

- Angela and EAB board member Tessa Benziger will organize a table at the Farmer's Market on Saturdays to accept food waste for composting.
- Angela reported that she declined the Detroit Zoo's invitation to attend their April Earth Fest because an Earth Day event will likely be held in Royal Oak again.

11. City Commissioner Andrea Herzog reported on the following:

- The city commission approved a permit for a multi-family development on Troy Street that will be environmentally friendly.
- Commissioner Herzog will attend city traffic committee meetings to encourage the city to expand multi-modal transportation (such as transit, biking and walking).
- Commissioner Herzog will speak at the February SE MI Sierra Club meeting to speak on Royal Oak's climate change goals.
- Commissioner Herzog encouraged the EAB to participate in the city's St. Patrick's Day parade March 16th.

12. Unfinished Business

- Compost Crew: Tessa Benziger noted that she had folded her food compost efforts into Angela Fox's office.

13. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM

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