



**Minutes of the
Environmental Affairs Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, May 1, 2024
Avon Lake Public Library, McMahan Room**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. with Chair Naumann presiding and 12 others in attendance.

WELCOME/ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair Sam Naumann and Co-chair Jen Miller, Citizen Members Terry Robison and Terry Wyrock, Industry Members Tom Sulzer (Avient™) and David Messinger (Vestolit), Ward I Councilman and ex-officio member Rob Shahmir (via phone), and Deputy Clerk of Council Ramona Boggins.

Also Present: Ward II Councilwoman Jennifer Fenderbosch and Residents Tom Cizmar, Gary and Jeanne Gentry, Katelynn Hall, and William Zimmerman.

Absent: Citizen members Rita George, Kayla Goodwin, Amy Oliver, Marty Patton, and Malachi Witt; Industry members Mike McCormick (Applied Specialties), Michelle Hall (Ford Motor), and Ron Spears (Lubrizol Corp.).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Current Projects

Mr. Robison asked Councilwoman Fenderbosch if she was involved in the Lorain County Strategic Plan.

- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said she attended one meeting and was invited to another. She is not up to date with it.

Mr. Robison said there are six [pillars](#)¹, the last of which is the importance of natural resources². He sent a letter to somebody who's involved with it and feels that the EAAB should somehow be involved with that discussion. Someone on the staff of the County Commissioner is leading this special project.

¹ Following on from the Future Summit and launch of the Lorain County Strategic Action Plan, six initial Pillar Discussion Workshops are being held April through June 2024. Each workshop will represent one of the six Strategic Pillars from the Strategic Action Plan. The aim of the workshops is to dig deep into each pillar topic, build a task force for each topic, and provide realistic and obtainable actions and goals.

² June 17, 2024, Natural Resources, 10 am to 12 pm, Room 208, Spitzer Conference Center, Lorain County Community College, 1005 Abbe Rd N, Elyria, OH 44035.

- Co-chair Miller asked if it had to do with transportation because she did a [podcast with Kat Bray](#) on April 26, 2024.
- Chair Naumann asked how the information was circulated because he didn't remember seeing it.
 - Mr. Robison said it was in the Lorain County Future iQ [newsletter](#) that came out that day.

Wildlife Management Plan

Chair Naumann asked Mr. Robison what the next steps were and what the EAAB could do to support him so he's not doing everything on his own.

- Mr. Robison said he hopes to have it done by the next meeting so everyone can read it and comment on the draft. He'd like to use the Board as a focus group. Based on input from the last meeting, what began as a coyote plan expanded to include other animal species.

Urban Forestry

Chair Naumann asked Mr. Robison if Urban Forestry was still in consideration and if he had anything to report regarding the topic.

- Mr. Robison said he and Councilwoman Fenderbosch are on the Tree Commission and have made advances. The budget allowed for the start of a tree inventory, which will be used to educate the public on how valuable the urban forest is. St. Joseph fifth graders and Troy Intermediate School sixth graders went to the Nature Center for Arbor Day to learn about forestry.
 - Councilwoman Fenderbosch said the Tree Commission feeds up through the Public Service Committee in the organizational chart for money. The Public Service Committee acquired funds for the Tree Commission and the tree inventory for the Public Service Committee. Public Works Director Liskovec has experience developing an Urban Forestry Program, hiring urban foresters, and educating and encouraging employees to receive their licenses. He has been through the program, and this is on his agenda, but it will probably not happen until fall. Before having an urban forester, there will be a tree inventory so that individual has a baseline to work with.

Chair Naumann said the EAAB supports and wants to partner with other Boards and Commissions, like the Tree Commission, and the Community as it relates to other Clubs and Organizations, such as the Avon-on-the-Lake Garden Club.

Mr. Wyrock's Initiatives Update

Mr. Wyrock shared details on the upcoming May 11, 2024, Avon-on-the-Lake Garden Club's Plant Sale where he plans to pass out hornbeam saplings, monarch butterfly information that includes instructions for growing butterflies from egg to adult, and seeds and instructions for growing milkweed.

Mr. Wyrock shared an update on the Kopf Family Reservation. Builder Rodney Williams withdrew two zoning variances after the last Zoning Board meeting and followed up with two new ones, one for a setback (withdrawn) and one having to do with utilities (denied). Mr. Wyrock then shared some history on Save the Woods³ and how EAAB members and many others showed up to protest the builder's project.

- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said the Community Development Department decided Mr. Williams has to apply for a subdivision via regular means, and there is currently no project.

Action: Chair Naumann said that with the approved 2024 budget, Members can be reimbursed for expenditures related to projects as long as receipts are submitted.

Co-chair Miller's Initiatives Update

Co-chair Miller shared details on the May 14, 2024, Environmentally Speaking Series with Councilman Shahmir. Both Sun News and Morning Journal have reached out to Councilman Shahmir for an interview.

Co-chair Miller reached out to Alicia Harcula at Erievew Elementary School who runs a summer science program, [Camp Invention](#), June 10-13, 8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. to see if the EAAB could be involved in some way. She shared ideas to involve the students in Mr. Patton's Water Sampling Initiative Project through their participation in Camp Invention.

Co-chair Miller said she was beginning work on the Artificial Reef Program for Lake Erie. Placing building material into the lake creates a habitat for fish to breed.

- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said Jim Ziemnik and Cornell University (Cornell) are involved, and there is a grant. Cornell is looking for a location along Lake Erie, and they like Avon Lake for putting in an artificial reef that would attract fish so there would be migratory birds. Cornell wants a migratory bird school there with the hopes of bringing in students from the inner city, and the Metro Parks has a bus to do that.

Action: Councilwoman Fenderbosch said to reach out to Jim Ziemnik for details about the Artificial Reef Program.

Chair Naumann's Initiatives Update

Chair Naumann said he spoke with Planning & Zoning Manager La Rosa, who has been engaged with the Northeast Ohio Resilient Cities and Counties Leadership-and-

³ Beginning in 2003, a group of Avon Lake residents began discussing the preservation of a large tract of forest land in their city. Thus, "Save the Woods" was born, and over the next few years, an agreement between "Save the Woods", the City of Avon Lake, and the Lorain County Metro Parks brought to fruition the creation of another beautiful Metro Park. In the summer of 2008, development of trails began, and on November 8, 2008, Kopf Family Reservation officially opened to the public. It was named after local builder/developer Herman "Bucky" Kopf for his gracious donation of 68 acres of the 162-acre park. More trails have been added since then, bringing the trail to over 3 miles.

Learning Cohort (the Cohort). The Cohort has decided on a project that the EAAB can partner on. Details will be provided when they are available.

Chair Naumann said the approved EAAB budget has funds allocated for an Avon Lake City Schools Foundation Environmental Studies Internship Program for high school seniors interested in that field of study.

- Councilman Shahmir said he has the email written to Avon Lake City Schools Foundation and will send it once there is clarity from Finance Director Widman on who to send the check to.

INDUSTRY MEMBER UPDATES

Vestolit - Mr. Messinger

Mr. Messinger said he was just hired on with Vestolit and that there are no issues, leaks, or concerns to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Upcoming Council Reports

Chair Naumann pointed out the Meetings/Events section on page 2 of the agenda. He said it would be great if the EAAB could have a presence at the Communications, Environmental & Recreational Programming (CERP) Committee meetings to help connect the dots between what the EAAB is and what it functions as. Those attending could bring reports from the EAAB and also ask for updates from Council (if pending).

Action: Let Chair Naumann know which CERP Committee meeting(s) you can attend so there can be a collaborative formal report to bring.

Action: Deputy Clerk of Council Boggins said she would distribute the CERP Committee minutes to the EAAB Members as they are approved.

Councilman Shahmir said sharing the CERP minutes with the EAAB is perfect because there are a lot of details about the stormwater connection and retention pond at the Power Plant in them. Related to that, he said he received a call from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Division of Surface Water about the connection. They only approved the Permit to Install and were also confused about how permission was given. He will contact Tony Nosko on Monday to follow up.

Upcoming City Communications

Chair Naumann said there was a conversation at the previous EAAB meeting about the EAAB doing a better job of providing information to the public. He said that taking something from nothing to a highly popular avenue for people to communicate, such as a social media page, is usually someone's full-time job. Doing something like that

with a group of volunteer citizens may be an uphill battle. The best opportunity may be to use the strong following of the Communications and Technology Department to leverage their existing platform for communication.

- Co-chair Miller said she regularly updates an EAAB webpage that has the recorded [Environmentally Speaking Program presentations](#). Also, she publicizes programs that the EAAB does and events that they hold. She is getting ready to work on the June newsletter and asked if anyone had anything they would like to contribute.

Action: Contact Co-chair Miller if you have anything to contribute to future editions of the Avon Lake City [Newsletter](#).

Chair Naumann asked Mr. Robison if the Wildlife Management Plan (the Plan) is something that would be able to be presented in the June newsletter.

- Mr. Robison said the EAAB could at least write a short article that the Plan is being worked on and include points being made.
- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said once the Plan is complete, it will need to be adopted by Council to make it official. Councilman Shahmir can do that through his CERP Committee.

Councilwoman Fenderbosch said there have been studies done as to the audience that a library attracts. One of the things the EAAB has in common with the library population that it's going out to is that over 80% of the people who are active at a library are environmentally interested. By Co-chair Miller having her office and studio in the Library basement, Communications Manager Shea Allmont can work with Library Director William Rutger to make sure that books, movies, and periodicals are exhibited on the same topics being presented by the EAAB and at the Environmentally Speaking Programs. This is another way to brand with your base population who will be your EAAB activists.

- Chair Naumann said that was a good reminder. EAAB's budget also allocated money to be spent on the Libraries [Discovery Works](#) campaign by sponsoring an educational exhibit or a hands-on experience for children and caregivers.

Upcoming Events/Partnerships

Lorain County Beautiful Day is a County-wide initiative to take time to find a way to beautify the world around you. Avon Lake participates in that in the form of Avon Lake Cleanup Day. Many clubs and organizations annually participate in this event, such as the Avon Lake Boat Club and the Avon-on-the-Lake Garden Club.

- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said the ten Avon Lake [Civic Gardens](#) are cleaned up, and leaf humus and mulch are put down. They are looking for industry partnerships, and if they connect with the President of the Avon-on-the-Lake Garden Club, Anne Lyon, or they call the Public Works Department to speak with Celena Crytzer, she can match industry members who are residents with those gardens.

- Chair Naumann said some EAAB Members are part of other organizations and have long-standing participation. Last year the EAAB provided water to the volunteers who were working in the sun and asked if that was something the Board would want to do again.

Action: Chair Naumann said he would call the Public Works Department to check if they have heard about any groups planning on being outside on Avon Lake Cleanup Day so the EAAB can potentially support them, similar to last year.

Councilman Shahmir said he received an email from Resident Ron Holub about tree limbs and leaves coming out of Heider Creek.

- Councilwoman Fenderbosch said Director Liskovec reached out to the resident with helpful documents and needs to meet with him. She then asked Councilman Shahmir if he received a copy of that review because she would send it to him if not. There's historical information about wave action, wind, and where the debris may be coming from.
- Councilman Shahmir did see an email about wind-driven wave action, so he went out on a few occasions and saw waves moving in both directions at that location. He is interested in seeing the other documentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Submitted by Ramona Boggins, Deputy Clerk of Council

/s/ Ramona Boggins