

A regular meeting of the Sustainability & Energy Commission (SEC) was called to order by Dan Small at 6:02 p.m. on Thursday, August 14, 2025, in the Council Chambers of Grand Haven City Hall.

Present: Pamela Blough, Ryan Cotton, James Hagen, Patti Nelsen, Nancy O'Neill, Dan Small, and Jean Madden.

Absent: Andrei Skelly. Brittany Goode and John Kinch have resigned.

Also present: Eric Law (Administrative Liaison)

Call to Audience: No members of the audience were present.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the May and July meetings were approved.

Agenda

Forest Management Update

Madden will present an update to City Council on August 18 at a special session beginning at 6:30 p.m. Her presentation will include a brief history of the 2022 Forest Stewardship Plan, a summary of the impacts of deer overgrazing on forest health, and results from the recent drone and street survey of the City's deer population. Nik Kalejs, a biologist with the Department of Natural Resources, will also attend to answer Council's questions.

Community Energy Update

Hagen attended a Zoom call regarding The MI Healthy Climate Challenge #2: Unlocking Elective Pay, a Michigan program that provides grants to help non-profit and governmental entities access federal clean energy tax credits through a process called "Elective Pay." The Elective Pay Ambassador Program places local experts in each of Michigan's ten Prosperity Regions to assist entities in applying for and utilizing Elective Pay. Grand Haven does not meet the criteria to be eligible to apply.

Other Business

Hagen reported that he had sent information to City Administration regarding Community Solar on both sides of the Harbor Island Substation but has not yet received a response. If the City wishes to consider Community Solar on Harbor Island—consistent with one of HDR's proposals—there is some urgency due to federal funding drying up.

Small made a motion for a resolution, which was supported by O'Neill and received unanimous approval.

Resolution: The SEC recommends that the City of Grand Haven adopt the implementation of the Community Solar Power Development as presented in the HDR rendering on the former J.B. Sims Power Plant site on Harbor Island, in order to access IRA funding before it expires on July 4, 2026. The following schedule is recommended: start of conceptual engineering by October 2025, with continuous construction beginning no later than July 4, 2026, or by meeting the Continuity Safe Harbor Guidance.

Adjournment: Small made a motion to adjourn at 7:24 p.m. Blough supported. Motion carried by unanimous consent.