

URBAN AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE (UAC)
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday July 9, 2025
Mulick Park (1632 Sylvan Ave SE, Grand Rapids 49506)

Call to Order: 5:37 pm

Roll Call

Present: Kimberly (Kim) Moore, Muriel (Dolli) Lutes, Evvia Marshall, Connie Bohatch, Robert Cloy

Absent: Carlos Calderon

Other: Nicole Rapacki – Public Services, Robert (Bob) Swain – Public Services, Amanda Faber, John Everett (Grand River Gardens)

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Kim, supported by Rob, to approve the July 9, 2025, agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Kim, supported by Evvia, to approve the May 14, 2025, minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Amanda Faber: Starting a farm in Northern Kent County. Presenting at an event at Kids Food Basket this Friday – all are welcome. Working on a project to expand biostimulants, which are a fertilizer-like substance with no man-made chemicals added. It is based on using waste materials (organic), and there is a liquid product and a solid product.

John Everett (Grand River Gardens): Working on a number of community gardens. Received some money for the youth to experience gardening. Looking out for the Parks Department funding for community gardens. Just received nonprofit status. Gardens are on lots around Kalamazoo and Hall St.

Round Robin Announcements - Committee Members

Robert: Last day at GVMC is next week. Got a new job at the Sustainability office at the City of Grand Rapids.

Evvia: Working on a proposal for the Urban Agriculture Committee. Evvia will send the proposal over to Carlos and Kim to review. Hosting an event on Friday for urban farmers at Kids Food Basket. Kids Food Basket will be having tours of the farm.

- Robert Swain: Public Services would like to be involved in conversations involving urban farming.

Dolli: Healing from surgery.

Kim: Kids Food Basket is in full swing. Next week is the last week of summer school. Muskegon site is taking off. Several grants are in full swing & closing. Kids Food Basket is continuing to provide produce to their 16 community partners in the four counties they serve: Ottawa, Kent, Muskegon, and Allegan. They continue to host farm to table events almost weekly.

Connie: The Environmental Justice grant is moving to the City Commission next Tuesday. There is a line on that agenda item that calls out that this committee will be involved.

Agenda items

New Business

Grand Rapids Public Services – Composting (*presentation*)

- Partnering with We Care Denali. Just started a food scrap pilot internal to the City. Looking to have a couple drop-off sites in each ward. After that, they'd look to do consumer food scrap collection at restaurants, etc.
 - It would be great to collaborate with this group on how to get information about food scrap drop-offs.
- Every resident gets one free cubic yard of composting a year between May – end of July. Staff will occasionally deliver composting to community gardens. Contact Bob and Nicole for drop off. This drop off also applies to businesses or really any type of urban farm.
- Public services are looking for more input on the most effective model for food scrap drop off and working to create a master plan for this service for the next 10-15 years. July 29th Commission Night Out is the first time they are really rolling out to the community for input.
- They are going to be looking to apply for a biochar machine via a grant coming from EGLE.
- At Commission Night Out, there will be clothing and electronic recycling services for residents.

Grand Rapids Commission Night Out – Outreach opportunity (*discussion item*)

- Robert & Dolli will participate and bring flyers.

Urban Agriculture working session (*discussion item*)

- Kim: Loved both sessions and is now ready to get down to some action steps.
- Next working session to discuss next steps: July 25, 1-3 pm at Kids Food Basket.

Old Business

State of Michigan Grant – Community Gardens

- The grant is going to the City Commission on Tuesday, July 15.

Adjournment:

Next Meeting – September 10, 2025, at Roberto Clemente Park.