

2. Presentation by Sylvia Lopez, Northcentral/Northeastern Energy Advisor, Focus on Energy. Focus on Energy overview, accomplishments, and savings for the City of Stevens Point. Also, the potential for future collaboration, new programs, and grant opportunities. Opportunities to reduce energy consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Overview of Focus on Energy:

- Program helps Wisconsin residents and businesses save energy.
- Provides financial rebates and incentives for energy-saving upgrades.
- For every dollar invested, \$4 in benefits are generated for Wisconsin.
- Support includes energy advisor access, team coordination, training, and funding for projects.

Review of Stevens Point's energy projects over the past five years:

- Police Department: Multiple lighting upgrades, transition to LED.
- Street Lighting: Projects in 2020 and 2021.
- Parks and Recreation: 3 Solar PV installations in 3 parks in 2024 and 1 building furnace replacement.
- Community Facilities: Boys and Girls Club lighting, KB Willett LED Lighting.
- Emergency Services: Fire station lighting/HVAC upgrades, car replacement.
- Summary of savings: \$34,884 in incentives, \$3,394 therm savings, 822,713 kWh saved, 1,342,887 lbs. CO2 avoided, \$105,442 annual utility savings.

Importance of energy-efficient upgrades:

- Extends equipment lifespan, lowers utility bills, supports community carbon footprint reduction.
- Utility bill savings can be re-allocated to other critical budget needs.
- Long-term budget savings by reducing energy costs and improving efficiency.

Rebates and incentives:

- Standard rebates for one-to-one equipment replacements such as lighting and HVAC.
- Custom incentives for operational changes and advanced controls.
- Specific dollar amount rebates for installing qualifying energy-efficient equipment.
- Qualifying rebate incentives require early involvement in project planning.
- Renewable energy incentives (solar thermal, biogas, biomass, wind, hydroelectric). Discussed future changes and challenges anticipated for 2026.
- Work with your Focus on Energy advisor.

Project support, building and lighting upgrades:

- Project Assessment incentives up to \$15,000 to evaluate complex energy solutions, project planning bonuses of 10% to pre-plan energy efficient equipment with Focus on Energy, and building optimization to ensure buildings are operating efficiently.
- Lighting fixture or retrofit kit upgrades, including lighting controls and rebates.
- HVAC upgrades include high-efficiency heating and cooling and heat pumps, a ventilation system, and digital controls.
- Boiler tune-ups.
- Municipal roadway lighting incentives per fixture.
- Retro commissioning (RCx); audit program to improve performance and energy efficiency of existing building systems, equipment, and operations.

Technical assistance, resources and training:

- Working with your Focus on Energy advisor and contact information.
- Support for management plans, equipment checks, and contractor coordination.
- Training and scholarships for building operator certifications.
- Energy best practices guides.

Discussion and Q&A:

- Questions and discussion about solar PV incentives and the impact of federal changes, and the need for increased support for solar projects at the state level. Advocate for enhanced state-level incentives for solar PV projects, especially considering reduced federal support, and monitor updates on new or returning incentive programs.
- Suggestion from commission members to facilitate a meeting between the new Focus on Energy Advisor, Sylvia Lopez, and City department heads to introduce the new advisor and share updates on new incentives for 2026. Recommendation from Sylvia to schedule such meetings in February 2026 to align with project planning cycles.
- Continue and expand use of the Focus on Energy program for City energy efficiency projects, leveraging available financial incentives and technical support.
- Engage the Focus on Energy Advisor early in project planning, especially for new construction (such as the new City Hall Building), to maximize incentives and assistance.
- Encourage department heads to consider energy efficiency and sustainability in both planned and emergency equipment replacements.
- Recommend that facilities' staff participate in building operator certification programs offered through Focus on Energy to improve knowledge and practices.

3. Discussion of Sustainability Commission 2025-26 meeting calendar. Updates and potential new information for future meeting topics, presentations, and speakers.

Review of upcoming meeting calendar:

- Next meeting: February 5, 2026 (Zoom with the City of Middleton Sustainability Committee).
- March 5, 2026: Presentation from Recycling Connections.
- Send ideas for topics and speakers to Chairperson Greg Knight.

4. Discussion on the Sustainability Commission sustainability and climate resilience planning document process, goals, objectives, and timelines.

Development of Sustainability Commission planning documents and road map:

- Commission members to work on: outlining and sharing thoughts on key points and recommendations for development of a City sustainability planning document and/or roadmap.
- Discussion on cataloging accomplishments and identifying future priorities.
- Emphasis on public participation and collaboration with university partners.
- Develop a summary or outline of key points for future recommendations to the City Council.
- Document past and current City sustainability and energy efficiency achievements and programs.
- Invite and engage with City planning staff and external experts, UWSP, and UW Extension, at future meetings for additional ideas and planning tools.
- Identify and prioritize future actions and recommendations of the Sustainability Commission for the City Council, considering public participation and collaboration with local partners.

