

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES
February 5, 2026 - 5:30 PM
Community Room
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call.

PRESENT Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Ald. Sam Lang - District 9, and Ald. Allison Birr - District 5.

ABSENT Doug Stingle.

OTHERS PRESENT **Speakers:** Kelly Hilyard - Sustainability Coordinator for Middleton, Lisa Janairo - District 6 Alderperson for Middleton, Laura Buchholz - Sustainability Committee Vice-Chairperson for Middleton, Deb Weitzel - Sustainability Committee Member for Middleton.
Others Present: Bill Fisher, City Resident.

2. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission on specific agenda items must register their request at this time.

No one wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

3. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission on non-agenda items must register their request at this time.

No one wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

Discussion and Possible Action on:

1. To approve the Minutes of the December 4, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting.

Heather Phelps **moved**, Ald. Allison Birr **seconded**, to approve the meeting Minutes of December 4, 2025.

Call for the Vote: Ayes: **All**
Nays: **None**; Motion **Carried**

2. Presentation and discussion with the City of Middleton Sustainability Committee members regarding the committee's sustainability planning process, goals, objectives, and Priorities.

Middleton's Sustainability Committee background:

- The sustainability committee was formally created in 2009.
- The Committee includes residents, a high school student voting member, an Alderperson, and a full-time City Sustainability Coordinator.
- The 2016 climate referendum showed 82% public support for city climate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- In 2018, Middleton adopted 100% renewable energy resolution goals (city by 2040, community by 2050).
- In 2019, the city established a full-time city sustainability coordinator, enabling grants, planning & policy implementation, and major projects to be completed.

Energy and Infrastructure:

- 50% of the city electricity comes from renewable sources, largely solar.
- 30% of community-wide electricity comes from renewable sources.
- Solar installations on municipal buildings (golf clubhouse, and water utility sites).
- LED streetlight conversion.
- City fleet EV purchasing.
- Planning for new civic campus (City Hall, library, and Senior Center).
- LEED certification for all buildings and commercial buildings.

Policy and Planning Framework:

- Middleton consolidated its sustainability planning by aligning the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, 2020 Energy Plan, and existing sustainability goals.
- This streamlining approach improved clarity and city council adoption.
- **Sustainable Purchasing Policy:** 2017 policy, but was underused. Policy was updated in 2023 to include: life-cycle cost analysis for all major purchases, vehicle fleet replacement requirements for evaluating gas vs. EV vs. hybrid, contracts/purchasing requests for proposals (RFP's) must include sustainability criteria (e.g., low-carbon concrete).
 - Policy implementation included staff listening sessions, training, and tools (e.g., fleet life-cycle calculator).
 - Departments now must justify purchases in budget requests using sustainability criteria.
 - Must have the input and support of city staff (survey and training staff).

Community Engagement and Education:

- High school student representatives play an active role in bringing sustainability goals to the school district; one helped pass a school district sustainability resolution (100% renewable by 2035).
- The School District's EV bus purchase, solar panels were installed on buildings, and a voter referendum that also supports sustainable projects.
- Partnerships with local organizations support public education of city sustainability goals (e.g., bird-safe building design).
- The "Sustainable Middleton" Awards Program recognizes individuals, nonprofits, schools, and businesses' accomplishments towards a Sustainable Middleton.

Challenges and Future Issues:

- **Data Centers** are emerging as a major concern because of the very large energy and water demands.
- Middleton is considering policies similar to Madison's Data Center Moratorium and may seek involvement in the Dane County Data Center Task Force.
- Staff capacity and funding remain an ongoing challenge.

Q&A with Stevens Point Commissioners:

- Sustainability issues and synergies with Madison and adjoining communities.
- Integrating sustainability into zoning codes and comprehensive city plan updates.
- Training resources.
- Implementation outcomes from the sustainable purchasing policy.
- Data center impacts.
- Committee structure and city staff support.
- Middleton provided detailed examples, emphasizing alignment of plans, staff buy-in, and persistent advocacy.

3. Discussion of Sustainability Commission 2026 meeting calendar updates and potential new information for future meeting topics and presentations.

Closing Section:

- 1. The next meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI. A presentation and discussion with Susan Schuller, Executive Director, and Rylee Mullikin of Recycling Connections on the city's downtown recycling program.**

