

This is an in-person meeting only being held and recorded in the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. This in-person location will meet the legal requirement for our open meetings.

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
April 2, 2026 - 5:30 PM  
Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**(A quorum of the City Council may attend this meeting)**

**AGENDA**

Opening Section:

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

Discussion and Possible Action on:

1. To approve the Minutes of the March 5, 2026, Sustainability Commission Meeting.
2. Presentation and discussion by Katie Livernash, Community Development Educator at UW-Extension Portage County, and Caity Carmody, Technical Coordinator and Analyst for Climate Pollution Reduction at Wisconsin Department of Administration, Office of Sustainability & Clean Energy, Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Action Planning. The overall purpose is to develop a sustainability plan (report and recommendations) for the City of Stevens Point and deliver this plan at the November 16, 2026, Common Council Meeting.
3. Discussion on the structure, process, and responsibilities for developing the City's Sustainability Plan and formal recommendations.
  - a. Timeline and process mapping.
  - b. Roles and responsibilities.
  - c. Communication and collaboration.
  - d. Summarize decisions and assignments.
4. Discussion on the progress to date.
  - a. Review a plan format, expectations, and structure.
  - b. Next steps (determine the next meeting and purpose).
5. Discussion on determining the next meeting date of the Sustainability Commission and purpose.

## Closing Section:

### 1. Adjournment.

Any person who has special needs while attending this meeting or needing agenda materials for this meeting should contact the City Clerk as soon as possible to ensure a reasonable accommodation can be made. The City Clerk can be reached by telephone at (715) 346-1569, TDD # 346-1556 or by mail at 1515 Strongs Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481.

Copies of ordinances, resolutions, reports and minutes of the committee meetings are on file at the office of the City Clerk for inspection during normal business hours from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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

**Opening Section:**

**1. Roll Call.**

**PRESENT** Heather Phelps, Doug Stingle, Roberty Michitsch, Greg Knight, Ald. Sam Lang - District 9 (by ZOOM), and Ald. Allison Burr - District 5.

**OTHERS** **Speakers:** Susan Schuller, Executive Directro and Rylee Mullikin of  
**PRESENT** Recycling Connections.

**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 specific non-agenda items.

**Discussion and Possible Action on:**

**1. To approve the Minutes of the February 5, 2026, Sustainability Commission Meeting.**

Robert Michitsch **moved**, Ald. Burr **seconded**, to approve the Minutes of the February 5, 2026, meeting.

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

**2. Presentation and discussion with Susan Schuller, Executive Director and Rylee Mullikin of Recycling Connections on the City's downtown recycling program.**

### **Background on Recycling Connections:**

- Founded in 1981 through a grassroots effort in Stevens Point to provide curbside recycling.
- Played a key role in the establishment of local recycling infrastructure prior to the 1990 Wisconsin recycling law.
- Shifted focus over time to include education, statewide leadership, waste reduction initiatives, and zero-waste services.

### **Downtown, Main Street corridor garbage & recycling study:**

- Evaluate the current waste and recycling material found in trash bins and the bin locations in the downtown Main Street corridor.
- Develop recommendations to improve recycling access and diversion rates in the Main Street corridor.
- UWSP students participated in collecting data for this recycling study.

### **Current Main Street corridor garbage bins:**

- 35 City garbage bins; 15 are caged bins, and 20 are concrete, artist-painted bins.
- There are no public recycling bins in the Main Street corridor.
- Garbage collection occurs on Mondays and Thursdays.

### **UWSP Students waste Characterization study:**

- Conducted by UWSP Students with City approval.
- Trash was collected from sampled bins on March 11, March 25, and April 8.
- Trash waste was categorized into 12 material types.
- Key finding: Approximately 25% of downtown waste consisted of recyclable bottles and cans.

### **Additional study visual assessments:**

- Conducted on August 24, September 7, and September 21.
- Focused on identifying high-use and low-use trash bins.
- Highest-use bins are located around the square, bus stops, and near Frame Park.

### **Study recommendations:**

- Focus recycling efforts on bottles and cans only to minimize recycling bin contamination.

- Convert existing trash bins into 20 paired garbage and recycling stations.
- Repaint existing black trash cages to blue for recycling, fabricate 5 additional cages for recycling use.
- Use clear, consistent bin labeling and imagery to identify recycling bins.
- Pair the garbage and recycling bins to improve proper use.
- Maintain existing collection routes and Monday/Thursday schedule.
- Monitor bin overflow and recycling bin contamination during collection.
- Perform bin maintenance, including repainting and label upkeep.
- Recycling Connections can assist the City with monitoring and evaluation during implementation.

**Expected outcomes:**

- Divert an estimated 25% of downtown waste into recycling.
- Improve the City's sustainable image and visibility.
- Support downtown businesses and community events.
- Align with Stevens Point's sustainability goals and Green Tier Legacy Community designation.

**Discussion and questions:**

- Past downtown recycling was discontinued due to contamination issues associated with mixed recycling.
- Simplifying recycling of bottles and cans is expected to improve participation and reduce contamination.
- Liquids remaining in bottles may limit recyclability, but do not damage processing equipment.
- Residential recycling participation in Stevens Point was noted as strong.
- Commissioners expressed interest in future expansion to organic and food-waste diversion from garbage. There may be future state rules for cities to reduce organic and food waste going into landfills because of methane emissions.

**3. Discussion of the Sustainability Commission 2026 meeting calendar updates and new information for future meeting topics and presentations. Information on the April 2nd Commission facilitated a working meeting to begin developing a sustainability plan road map.**

**Review of upcoming meeting calendar:**

- April 2nd Sustainability Commission Meeting; facilitated the planning process and brainstorming session. The meeting will be facilitated by Katie Livernash, UW Extension Community Development Educator, and Caity Carmody, Department of Administration Office of Sustainability.
- Purpose: Begin outlining a 2026 Sustainability Commission report.

- Present interim report to City Council in December 2026.
- Potential Future Commission meeting topics: greenhouse gas inventory results, organic material removal from the solid waste stream, composting alternatives to reduce organic material going into the landfills.
- Renewable energy site visits (e.g., Midwest Renewable Energy Association). Doug Stingle will contact MREA for possible site visit tours.

**Closing Section:**

1. **The next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI. A work session for the commission to brainstorm and begin development of a City sustainability plan road map and development with recommendations for the City Council by the end of this year, 2026. This work session will be facilitated by Katie Livernash, Community Development at UW-Extension Portage County, and Caity Carmody, Department of Administration, Office of Sustainability & Clean Energy, Sustainability, Resilience, and Climate Action Planning.**
2. **Adjournment.**

Heather Phelps **moved**, Doug Stingle **seconded**, to adjourn the Sustainability Commission Meeting at **6:30 p.m.**

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

**Stevens Point Sustainability Commission  
Planning Discussion Outline**

**Overall purpose:** Develop a Sustainability Plan (report and recommendations) for the City

**Goal for today's conversation:** To align on the structure, process, and responsibilities for developing the City's Sustainability Plan and formal recommendation

<p><b>Welcome, Discussion Purpose, and Outcomes (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intros: share name, role, and why you chose to be a part of the sustainability commission</li><li>• Meeting objectives and context</li></ul>
<p><b>Summary of progress to date:</b> Where we've been and where we're going (10-15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recap how and why we came together</li><li>• Recap what has been accomplished so far</li><li>• What have we not finished yet? / What meetings are needed?</li></ul>
<p><b>Review of Plan Expectations (5-10 mins)</b></p> <p><b>Discuss and Decide on Plan Format and Structure (20 mins)</b></p> <p><b>Timeline and Process Mapping (15-20 mins)</b></p> <p><b>Roles and Responsibilities (5-10 mins)</b></p>
<p><b>Communication and Collaboration:</b> Agreement on how commission will work together between meetings (15 mins)</p>
<p><b>Wrap up and Next Steps (5-10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarize decisions and assignments</li><li>• Confirm next meeting date and purpose</li></ul>

### 3.57 SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION.

1) CREATION: A Sustainability Commission is hereby created. It shall be formed and have the powers and duties as described within this section.

(2) PURPOSE AND POWERS. The purpose of the Sustainability Commission is to study and make recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and city staff regarding strategies, projects, priorities, and investments to be adopted by the city for creating and maintaining a sustainable community. The commission's focus shall be on such topics as landscape conservation, clean water, clean air, climate change, environmental stewardship awareness, and efficient use and deployment of resources of all types within the City of Stevens Point. The commission may make recommendations on capital budgets, operating budgets, organization and use of city staff resources, grant opportunities, partnerships with other organizations both within and outside the Stevens Point community, and any other topic the commission identifies to advance its overall purpose.

(3) MEMBERSHIP: The Sustainability Commission shall be comprised of five (5) commissioners and one (1) alternate to be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council. Either one (1) or two (2) of the members shall be a current City Alderpersons. Each member should have, to the extent practicable, known experience and interest in subject matter relevant to the overall purpose of the commission.

(4) TERM: The Mayor shall appoint the commissioners subject to confirmation by the Common Council. The initial appointment upon creation of the commission shall be three-year terms for two of the five appointees, and two-year terms for the remaining three members. The choice of which appointees will serve the three-year terms will be made by the Mayor. Following these initial terms, each term shall be for two years. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as appointment.

#### (5) COMMISSION RULES:

(a) The Chairperson shall be elected by the commission. The Chairperson, or its designee, shall preside at all meetings. If the Chairperson is unavailable for a meeting, the commission shall select a temporary chair from among its members present as the first item of business. That commissioner shall serve as chair during that meeting.

(b) Action shall be by majority vote.

(c) A quorum shall be 3 or more members.

(d) All members present shall vote unless disqualified by conflict of interest. If a member is disqualified by a conflict of interest, that member shall state the nature of the conflict on the record prior to the vote.

(e) Regular meetings shall be held at least four times per calendar year but may be held more frequently as needed. Executive sessions may be held in accordance with Chapter 19 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

(f) The Designated Agent, in consultation with the Chairperson, shall prepare an agenda for all meetings.

**City of Stevens Point Sustainability Commission**  
**Compilation of the meeting minutes from March 2025 to March 2026**

The following is a compilation of my meeting minutes and tour notes that document the Sustainability Commission in review of City Departments operational practices, programs, and capital investments that work toward creating and maintaining a sustainable and resilient Stevens Point community.

The commission also met with the UWSP Office of Sustainability to learn about the university's climate action planning process and opportunities for collaboration on community sustainability and resilient programs and operations.

The commission held a Zoom meeting with the City of Middleton Sustainability Committee to learn about their sustainability and climate-resilient planning process and project development. The City of Middleton is of a similar population size to the City of Stevens Point.

**City of Stevens Point Sustainability Commission**  
**Committee Meeting Minutes for March 6, 2025 - 5:30 pm**  
**Community Room, 933 Michigan Ave.**

**Presentation by Scott Beduhn, Director of Public Works:**

Department operations and efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and adaptations to climate change.

- Director Scott Beduhn and Streets Superintendent Chris Johnson presented actions Public Works is currently using that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adaptations to climate change:
- As streets are reconstructed, staff look at opportunities to reduce road width, which slows traffic and requires less asphalt and/or concrete material. It also creates safer streets for pedestrians and provides boulevard space for planting trees and permeable surfaces for rain infiltration for less stormwater runoff.
- Adding sidewalks for most new street projects.
- Using asphalt paving emulsions (GSB88) on certain new paving project surfaces to extend the life of the asphalt.
- Using asphalt/fiber mix, when feasible, which adds strength to the asphalt and extends its life. In some cases, it can be used with a thinner layer of asphalt.
- The city recycles asphalt and concrete material from internal street projects as base material for projects rather than new materials, which also saves on gas and mileage on the trucks.
- Working along with the Utilities Department to determine street reconstruction projects to reduce pavement disturbances.
- City crews perform pavement patching for utility projects for less cost and faster response time.
- Putting in roundabouts to keep traffic flowing, less maintenance, and they're safer for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Slowly converting City-owned streetlights to LED bulbs using less energy.
- Doing signal timing studies to keep traffic flowing, minimizing the number of stops vehicles have to make.
- Composting and mulching of trees and yard waste.
- GIS System that has all our street signs, streetlights, trees, etc., for less travel and better planning when maintenance is needed in certain areas due to vehicle accidents or general maintenance.
- Using brine before a storm, as well as salt metering technology on the trucks, to reduce salt output.
- 9 Hybrid Police vehicles have been purchased (electric vehicles are not an option at this time, as the vehicles are used 24/7, which does not allow charging time).
- Right-sizing the fleet vehicles for the most efficient needs.

Things Public Works is working towards in the future to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adaptations to climate change:

- Hydrogen fuel as an alternative to large heavy equipment fuel.
- A new Public Works facility to accommodate the following:

- Electric vehicles (the current building blows fuses on what they currently use, making it inadequate for installing charging stations).
- Electric lawnmowers and small engine equipment (when the costs become more competitive and again when the street garage building is addressed).
- Building height limitations (the current building is too low to handle certain vehicles, such as the fire trucks where they're forced to do maintenance work outside).
- Building garage space (the current building can't house all the heavy equipment, so they are forced to store some of them outdoors in the elements).

**City of Stevens Point Sustainability Commission  
Committee Meeting Minutes  
April 3, 2025 - 5:30pm  
Community Room, 933 Michigan Ave.**

1. Roll Call: Present; Sam Lang- District 9 Alderperson, Allison Birr-District 5 Alderperson, Heather Phelps, Gregory Knight, Robert Michitsch, and Doug Stingle.  
Others Present; Adam Kuhn – Associate Planner/Zoning Administrator, Bill Fisher - 3032 Moses Crossing, Other?
2. Persons who wish to address commission – specific agenda items; None
3. Persons who wish to address commission – non-agenda item; None

**Discussion and Possible Action on:**

1. Report of the March 6, 2025 meeting of the Sustainability Commission.
  - Motion by Robert Michtisch to approve commission minutes / second Heather Phelps, all ayes.
2. Presentation by Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator:
  - Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition (WLGCC):  
The City of Stevens Point is a member of the WLGCC, a coalition of large and small Wisconsin communities that are addressing issues of community resilience and sustainability in response to a changing climate. Sharing of best practices for the sustainability of municipal facilities and operations. Provide a resource hub for local government.
  - Wisconsin DNR Green Tier Legacy Communities Program:  
City has been a member since 2017. Overview of the City's participation in this state-run program. The program provides sustainable management strategies score sheet for tracking community improvements in environmental performance in transportation, energy, land-use, water, waste, and health.
  - Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's Energy Innovation Grant Program.  
The city received a grant to complete a baseline Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHG) in 2025. This inventory of City and Community operations will provide a baseline to help the city determine priorities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing climate resiliency and efficiency.
3. Discussion on the implementation of Chapter 3.57 of the Stevens Point Revised Municipal Code: Goals and objectives of the Stevens Point Sustainability Commission.
  - Commission members discussed ideas and priorities for 2025 commission work planning, accomplishments, and potential meeting presentations for the remainder of the calendar year. Alderperson Birr suggested using the City of Green Bay Sustainability Commission 2025-26 work plan as a template for our commission work plan. This work planning process will be used to document progress, determine focus and priorities to achieve community sustainability and climate resilience, and develop a community-wide climate action plan.
4. Select a member to act as a Commission Liaison to the Green Tier Legacy Communities.
  - Heather Phelps was nominated to serve as a Sustainability Commission member, and Adam Kuhn representing the City. Motion by Allison Birr / seconded by Sam Lange. All Ayes.
5. Review 2025 Commission meeting calendar and presentations.
  - Chair Greg Knight reviewed the 2025 Commission meeting calendar. Commission members discussed potential meeting topics and field trips for the remainder of 2025. Greg Knight will update the calendar and send around to members for review.

6. Next meeting:

- Joel Lemke, Director, public Utilities and Central Transportation. The Commission Chair will be absent so the Commission members will need to select a temporary chair per 3.57 Sustainability Commission, (5) Commission Rules: (a).

**Closing Section:**

1. Adjournment: Motion by Sam Lange / seconded by Allison Burr, all Ayes.

By: Greg Knight, Chair of the Sustainability Commission.

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
May 1, 2025 - 5:30 PM  
Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**Opening Section:**

1. Roll Call.

PRESENT:

Sam Lang - District 9 Alderperson, Allison Burr - District 5 Alderperson, Heather Phelps, and Doug Stingle.

PRESENT OTHERS:

Joel Lemke - Director of Public Utilities

2. Selection of a temporary meeting chair. (3.57 Sustainability Commission, (5) Commission Rules: (a))

Alderperson Allison Burr asked for nominations for temporary meeting chair, Alderperson Burr was nominated with no other nominations. Motion by Alderperson Burr to nominate Alderperson Burr and close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot, seconded by Heather Phelps.

Call for the Vote: Ayes: All

Nays: None; Motion Carried

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

4. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission for up to 3 minutes regarding a non-agenda item.

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON:**

5. Minutes of Sustainability Commission on April 3, 2025. MPhelps moved, Alderperson Lang seconded, to approve the meeting minutes of April 3, 2025,

Call for the Vote: Ayes: All

Nays: None; Motion Carried

6. Presentation by Joel Lemke – Director of Public Utilities on;

- Department operations overview and efforts to increase efficiency and sustainability of operations that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and adaptations to climate change
  - Department defines sustainable operations as providing essential services while maximizing efficiency of financial resources, natural resources, and staff expertise.
  - All new projects are done through the lens of sustainability and the best financial decisions.
  - All existing operations are maximized for longevity and sustainability.
  - Financial resource savings and staff expertise are the most important factors in the efficiency of operations and future investments.
  - Example: Sewage treatment plant uses bio-gas for heat and other steps taken to reduce natural gas and electrical use (expense).

- 2002-2003 Focus on Energy Audit completed all the easy to do energy efficiency projects.
  - On-going Focus on Energy grants received to date over \$500,000 to invest in energy-saving projects.
- 2003-2011 Energy efficiency projects completed.
  - Energy-efficient dissolved oxygen probes, blowers, and other equipment.
  - Turning off non-essential equipment when not in use.
  - Lighting efficiencies.
  - Low energy methods of mixing sludge.
  - Heat pumps for heating and cooling using effluent water.
  - Bio-gas sewage digester energy source for heating.
- 2012 Bio-gas utilization and energy production.
  - Bio-gas digester runs 180KW generator for electric power. The generator was replaced with using Bio-gas methane for heating, which was less costly than electric power generation.
- 2015 Stevens Point Brewery project.
  - Stevens Point Brewery project to cost share with Brewery to direct line transport high strength waste directly to Bio-gas digester plant. City and Brewery saved significant costs by removing the waste stream from the City's sanitary sewer line system and going directly to the bio-digester.
- Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater management.
  - Lining of sanitary sewer in high groundwater areas to reduce groundwater intrusion into the system. Stormwater sewer systems are separated from the sanitary sewer system. No combined sewer systems.
  - There is a program for resident storm water lateral systems for basement sump pumping of groundwater. Most stormwater from streets and hard surfaces is infiltrated.
- 2018 Utility garage Solar energy and heat pump project.
  - Heat pump for heating and cooling using effluent from the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
  - Photo voltaic 131Kw solar panels on utility garage for offsetting energy demand and producing savings on power costs.
  - E-gauge and MuGrid tools for monitoring and data collection of electric power use of various operations and equipment to manage operation efficiencies and determine the feasibility of solar power use.
- 2019 Bio-solids dewatering and drying project.
  - Class A bio-solids produce organic products like Milorganite that can be used and sold as fertilizer or an organic product. Class B bio-solids produce organic products that are disposed of by land spreading on agricultural fields. City wants to produce class A biosolids for more efficient disposal and eliminates the costs of land spreading.
  - Class B bio-solids are more expensive to dispose of because of hauling costs to land spreading areas, agricultural land available for spreading, and fees for land spreading acres.
  - Class A bio-solids are easier product to sell or dispose of at a lower cost.
  - PFAS in biosolids can affect disposal and the ability to land spread. Landfill leachate is the number one source of PFAS contamination in the sewage treatment plant process. Landfills dispose of leachate in municipal treatment plants for safe disposal of this leachate.
  - Well head protection of the City water system includes groundwater monitoring wells upstream of well head recharge areas.
- Other projects.
  - Lift station replacement results in efficient sizing and reduced costs of operating, resulting in energy use savings.
  - Fiber optic network connecting all City facilities resulted in no duplication of service in phone and data, and eliminate network provider fees.

- E-gauge tool will continue to be used to monitor electric power use to determine power efficiency options and cost effective use of solar power use. Current monitor projects to determine solar power suitability; Well number 11, Airport lighting, City transit building, Waste water plant facilities.
  - Questions and Discussion.
    - Stormwater management and potential flooding in high rainfall events; The City is always working to reduce or mitigate flooding, but flooding cannot be eliminated. Most stormwater runoff is overland flow through ditches and infiltration swales. A Citywide Stormwater sewer system that could handle all high rainfall events is not feasible.
    - Bio-gas methane emissions; Depending on the heating demand, some methane gas produced by the digester cannot be used and is flared (burned).
    - Establish a City budget allocation for investigating the potential cost savings and investing in future solar power & battery storage at City facilities, Electric vehicle charging stations for City use, Micro-gas turban electrical generation using bio-gas.
8. Selection of a meeting date in duly for field trip of Public Works facilities.
- Presentations are planned for the May and June meetings.
  - Staff designee for May meeting (Joel Lemke, Director of Public Utilities and Central Transportation).
  - June will be Parks and Forestry
  - Commission to explore a potential field trip for the commission for July meeting
  - July meeting dates to be discussed offline due to the normal schedule falling next to the July 4 holiday.
9. Next meeting: Staff designee (Dan Kremer, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry).
- Ald. Lang suggested topics include; Solar park shelter, EV charging stations, Food forest, Short term projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**CLOSING SECTION:**

10. Adjournment.

Heather Phelps moved, Ald. Lang seconded, Motion to adjourn at 6:44pm  
 Call for the Vote: Ayes: All Nays: None; Motion Carried

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
 SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
 June 5, 2025 - 5:30 PM  
 Community Room  
 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**Opening Section:**

1. Roll Call.

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

Doug Stingle absent.

PRESENT OTHERS: Dan Kremer - Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry. Todd Ernster – Forestry & Landscape Operations Superintendent.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific non-agenda items.

4. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission for up to 3 minutes regarding a non-agenda item.

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

## DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON:

### 5. Minutes of Sustainability Commission on May 1, 2025

Ald. Allison Birr moved, Heather Phelps seconded, to approve meeting minutes of May 1, 2025

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

### 6. Presentation by Dan Kremer – Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry.

- Department operations overview and efforts to increase efficiency and sustainability of operations that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adaptations to climate change
  - Dan presented a power point of examples of sustainable operations and projects the Department does and has completed to increase efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to changing climate.
- Forestry.
  - City plants 300 trees and removes 100 annually. Diverse species planted for more resilience to pests and climate change (red maple is the most common tree).
  - City Utility funds about \$30,000 for tree planting because of significant stormwater mitigation benefits. Alder person added \$5,000 in FY25 funding for tree planting.
  - 2024 updated city urban forestry management plan.
  - Trees reduce storm water runoff and increase water infiltration.
  - Value of reduced storm water runoff is \$283,000 (361,000 gallons).
  - Trees reduce/sequester carbon in the atmosphere and reduce city heat island effects.
  - Value of carbon sequestration is \$575,000.
  - No estimates for numbers and contributions of private trees in the city.
  - Urban orchards or the planting of fruit trees in city parks available to pick by the public are being considered/planned.
- Pollinator Areas.
  - Program to replace no mow May with planting of pollinator gardens in city parks and planning & information assistance for private citizens to participate.
  - Increase storm water infiltration and reduce runoff.
  - Store carbon and increase plant diversity for pollinator habitat.
  - Boost biodiversity and resist climate change stress.
- Naturalized areas in Parks.
  - 300 acres of park land with about ½ of area that is not mowed.
  - Naturalized (not mowed) area increases storm water infiltration and stores more carbon than mowed areas.
  - Save money on maintenance and reduce carbon impact from less mowing and maintenance.
  - Increases pollinator habitat.
- Battery Power.
  - Push mowers, weed whips, leaf blowers, chain saws, other power tools have been or are being converted to battery power: Lighter, less maintenance & expense to operate, Less carbon emissions.
  - Will acquire battery powered front-mount riding lawn mowers when they become available.
- New Build Park Projects.
  - Consider solar power in all park building projects.
  - Consider wood vs steel in all new park structures.
  - Net metering solar arrays are installed in Seramur and Groholski parks.
  - Level 2 electric car charger is installed in Groholski park.

- Net metering covers most or all the electric utility cost of the two parks including most of the cost of the car charger (\$18 to \$22/month expense).
- Other energy saving upgrades and future upgrades.
  - New insulation to increase building energy efficiency.
  - LED lighting in interior of buildings.
  - LED lighting and timers for exterior lights.
  - Ice chiller upgrade KB Willett ice arena.
  - Large window panels were installed for increased natural lighting.
  - Restroom timers and sensors to turn off lights and mechanical.
  - Sink water metering to limit water consumption.
  - Consider solar power in all new facility projects.
  - Use wood and gravel to replace asphalt and concrete in trail and trail bridge projects.
  - Use wood to replace steel in park facilities construction.
  - Expand the use of battery power tools, equipment and EV vehicles.
  - Consider city tree carbon credit market for new revenue source if this market becomes available.
- Questions and Discussion.
  - Could plant more trees but new tree planting requires a 5 to 10 year commitment to watering and pruning to ensure survival and good start. Increasing tree planting would require more personnel time.
  - Suggestion to sign orchard plantings to let people know they can pick the fruit.
  - There are 15 full-time and 26 park time/seasonal staff in the Forestry and Parks department.
  - Pollinator garden planting areas are limited by funding. Naturalized areas in parks are mostly area that is not mowed or left in original wild state.
  - Athletic field playing turf has limited fertilizer & herbicide use to maintain.
  - Carbon Credit program; currently looking for opportunities to sell carbon credits. Tree inventory does not include carbon sequestration and storm water mitigation contributions from private trees.

7. Review of the Sustainability Commission 2025 meeting calendar and presentations.

- Tour of Public Works garage and recycling facility was held on July 10 at 5:30 pm.
- Tour of Public Utilities wastewater treatment plant facility was held on August 19 at 5:30 pm.
- Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner/Zoning will present at the regular September 4 Sustainability Commission meeting.

8. Next meeting: September 4, Staff designee (Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner/Zoning.

- Update on zoning code revision and greenhouse gas inventory.

**CLOSING SECTION:**

10. Adjournment.

Robert Michitsch moved, Ald. Sam Lang seconded, Motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm  
 Call for the Vote: Ayes: All      Nays: None; Motion Carried

**Sustainability Commission Tour Notes  
 Public Works Garage/Recycling Facility, 100 Sixth Avenue  
 July 10, 2025 at 5:30pm**

Attendance: Greg Knight, Heather Phelps, Alder 5 Alison Birr, Alder 9 Sam Lang + guest, Andre Olson citizen, Scott Beduhn Director of Public Works, Chris Johnson Superintendent Fixed Operations, Luke Kronstedt Superintendent Construction.

Notes from the field Tour;

Citizen Andre Olson has some concerns about the city acquisition of an old building next to the County annex that was acquired for the new city hall.

- Does the city have a building asset management program? What is the plan and how does the new city hall or the public works garage fit into the plan?
- What is a sustainable building?
- Vehicle fleet management and replacement, buy new or used?
- Concerned about tax burden.

**Superintendent Fixed Operations Chris Johnson presented following information;**

1. T4&T5 diesel exhaust fluid tanks storage inside the garage is a health and safety issue. This fluid is used in all diesel powered engines to capture sulfates from exhaust. Fluid is used by Public Works and Parks departments.
2. Garage Roof leaks
3. Lighting inside garage is fluorescent and could be converted to LED.
4. Salt and sand are available to residents for winter ice use.
5. Recycling, need a cardboard compactor to reduce the cost of hauling cardboard to the County landfill. Take furniture, scrap metal (\$15 each), used oil, batteries, cardboard.
6. Electrical Power, building does not have 3-phase so limited welding, vehicle battery charging, cardboard compactor operation, etc.
7. Wood Mulch, city will deliver to residents, used for city projects but is not clean mulch and can contain invasives. Do purchase clean mulch for playgrounds.
8. Tub Grinder is 45 years old, has been on the capital replacement budget for 15 years.
9. Mulch leaves, garden, grass waste are taken by Busy Bee Compost company. No disposal cost.
10. Salt Shed (big brown tarp & cement building). 5,500-ton storage capacity. Use brine and sand to reduce salt use. Salt costs go up (\$102/ton). Want to reduce salt use. Potential surface and groundwater contamination risk because salt does not break down in the environment. Salt breaks down concrete and corrosive. Try to minimize salt use next to river and water bodies.
11. City has storm water infiltration versus storm water sewer pipe. Salt can infiltrate into the groundwater.
12. DNR salt wise program has recognized city for salt use reduction efforts.
13. Plow trucks use sand mix, gps routs, and meter salt use to use less salt on streets. Only use plow trucks for snow plowing. Parked outside non-winter seasons. Should be stored inside.
14. Salt replacement options include brine (city has brine mixing tanks) and have looked at cheese brine whey, Beer waste.
15. Wooden building is sand/salt mix storage. Wood rot and structurally deficient, need to be replaced.
16. Metal Building, brine mixing and storage (salt + water). Two 6,000 gal storage tanks. Save \$ by mixing your own brine. Old equipment, hard to find parts, needs to be replaced. Building needs insulation. Only use brine on high traffic streets. Did try beet juice but city residents did not like the smell so stopped using. Do not sell brine, not worth costs in staff time.
17. \$4 million in plow trucks, garbage trucks, heavy equipment, etc. are parked outside all year in the weather. 33% increase in costs to equipment maintenance & replacement when you park outside.
18. Lack of inside and outside storage space due to small size of the existing garage facilities site.
19. Vehicle and heavy equipment Replacement, do not have a replacement schedule. Need a buy new and replace in 5 years schedule for all fleet vehicles and equipment. Purchasing new and replacing in 5 years maximize trade/lease value and significantly reduce minimize maintenance costs.
20. Mechanics Bay in Garage building, Too small, must move stuff and parked vehicles around every time you want to work on equipment or vehicles in the Bay. No 3 phase electrical power limits use of tools and welding. No back up emergency power. Large equipment must be working on outside in any weather because of lack of space. Parts and stockroom has \$3million in inventory. Have to work on Fire department ladder truck once a month outside of bay. Space is too small for the needs, not efficient, working outside in all weather conditions. All the city fleet and equipment is serviced and maintained in the Mechanics Bay.
21. Garage building, very old building 1966 built, No backup emergency power, Roof cannot support solar Pannels, Not efficient space to use. Not energy efficient no AC in hot summers and not good air exchange, Needs better LED lighting. Not ADA compliant building or bathrooms. Very limited ability to improve this building. Should plan for replacement now,

22. Site Space, can not do future expansion of crews or equipment or storage. Could convert to recreation park space. Ideal site would be 20 acres.
23. Burn gas and waste oil to heat the garage building. HVAC upgrade estimated at \$500,000 too expensive for this building. Poorly insulated, not energy efficient.
24. Critical infrastructure and operational need to be working in disaster planning. Warming climate; flooding, heat, wind disasters. Need to be able to survive and respond.
25. Old building future \$ investments not efficient use of limited funds. Costly to maintain and operate.
26. All Facilities analysis and Capital replacement facilities planning, Co-locate Parks Recreation Forestry with Public Works, get parks out of Goerke park. Plan for fewer building by co-locating departments and share administrative staff with fewer buildings and share resources, equipment, staff across departments to improve efficiencies, cross train people, disaster planning, etc. A new Public Works/ParksRecForestry facility could cost \$40+ millions but we need an accurate estimate and plan to pay for.

Facilities analysis & planning; 1. Inventory, 2. Space needs, 3. Co-location, 4. All city facilities, 5. Energy savings. Use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor to do the analysis and planning. No increase in staffing but greater efficiencies.

**Sustainability Commission Tour Notes**  
**Public Utilities, Wastewater Treatment Plant Facilities, 300 Bliss Ave**  
**August 19, 2025 at 5:30pm**

Attendance: Greg Knight, Heather Phelps, Doug Stingle, Robert Michitch, Becca Franzen Professor of Environmental Education UWSP, Joel Lemke Director Public Utilities, Chris Lefebvre Wastewater Superintendent.

Notes from the field Tour:

- Operations have changed significantly in the last 2 decades and will continue to change in the future. Employees must buy into the sustainability mission. Define the goals and allocate budget to invest in energy saving projects that are operationally sustainable (efficiencies in personnel and material) and also financially sustainable (efficient costs of operations). Sustainable operations can also bring operational resilience to deal with changing climate and social conditions.
- Examples of projects and tools to save energy and reduce operational costs; Bio-gas for heat, heat pumps, solar pannels, E-gauge tool to determine electrical demand and feasibility of solar power, LED lighting conversions, Turning off electrical equipment and lights when not in use, Focus on Energy grants & program, Fiber optic cable network connecting all city buildings.
- City Budget Allocation for Sustainable Operations; Joel stated that Departments need budget investment to investigate potential cost saving ideas and invest in projects that increase efficiency of operations. Sustainable operations require financial sustainability.
- 130Kw Solar Pannels on Utility building: power feeds into electrical pannel and runs heat pump and electric motors. The heat pump is using treatment plant effluent as a heat source rather than in-ground. The cities power provider Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) does not do net metering of any city solar panel power production. You are only going to install solar panels on your top 5 energy use buildings where the financial rate-of-return pays to install the solar panels and equipment versus purchasing that power from WPS.
- E-gauge tool: Joel gave a presentation on how the tool is used to track hourly electricity demand and can show solar panels contribution to power demand. This data can also help you determine if solar panels' energy source is suitable for a particular application and how to size the solar panel system. Some Focus on Energy program grant applications require E-gauge data. Doug Stingle mentioned that Wisconsin Public Service (City energy provider) will not provide E-gauge type data on your energy use. Utility department is currently using the E-gauge tool to evaluate Airport, Well 11, Well fields Road, Transit building for solar panels to supply power. Can consider other facilities with predictable power demands.
- Battery Storage: Heather Phelps asked about battery storage potential for solar power supply and mitigation of power supply interruption. Financially battery storage technology is not providing enough benefits to power resiliency for rate payers. But the battery storage technology is improving,

and prices are coming down. The new City Hall will have battery storage back up for all Information Technology systems. The wastewater treatment plant does not need battery storage backup, but the utility garage building could benefit from battery storage backup.

- Biogas energy: Wastewater treatment plant reduces waste through anaerobic digester that produces biogas that can be burned as a heat source and significantly reduces the need for purchasing natural gas for heat. In the summer with lower building heating demand some gas is flared. The hydrogen sulfides and soloxanes are removed from the biogas. The biogas heats buildings and the anaerobic digester system and dries the biosolids. The anaerobic digester produces biosolids and some cake sludge. A small volume of cake sludge goes to the landfill. The biosolids drying process reduces the volume of biosolids by 98% or 12 truck loads to haul and land spread versus 600 truck loads if the drying process were not done. This is a very large transportation savings. The development of technology for removal of PFAS from the wastewater stream will be critical for the future of land spreading of biosolids to prevent land contamination.
- Stevens Point Brewery: Cost shared project with the city were able to pipe high strength brewing waste directly into the anaerobic digester to avoid mixing with the normal waste stream, saving treatment plant operating costs and saving the Brewery company sewer utility costs and cost sharing with the city to install the pipeline. This increases the company's financial sustainability.
- 6 employees run the wastewater treatment plant 24/7. 140 miles of sanitary sewer. No stormwater sewer. Sewer flows by gravity but there is some pumping due to elevations. 90 years of continuous sewage treatment plant operations since treatment plant was first constructed. Original treatment plant facility building was constructed in the 1930's and is still in use today. Major upgrades to the sewage treatment plant occurred in the 1950's, 1970's, and 1990's.

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
September 4, 2025 - 5:30 PM  
Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**Opening Section:**

1. Roll Call.

PRESENT: Sam Lang - District 9 Alderperson, Allison Birr - District 5 Alderperson, Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Doug Stingle.

PRESENT OTHERS: Adam Kuhn – Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator. Lara Broderick – District 4 Alderperson

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific non-agenda items.

3. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission for up to 3 minutes regarding a non-agenda item.

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON:**

4. Minutes of Sustainability Commission on June 5, 2025

Ald. Sam Lang moved, Robert Michitsch seconded, to approve meeting minutes of June 5, 2025

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

5. Presentation by Adam Kuhn – Associate Planner / Zoning Administrator. Adam Kuhn presented on the city zoning code rewrite and the Green House Gas (GHG) inventory.

Zoning Code Rewrite:

The current city zoning code has had no significant updates since 1979.

Planning versus zoning codes: The city comprehensive planning process covers many topics like land uses, transportation, recreation & parks, housing and business development and provides the vision for orderly development.

The zoning code are the rules & regulations process that implements the city's comprehensive plan: 1. Promote & protect health, safety and general welfare of citizens. 2. Environmental and natural resource protection. 3. Community character & aesthetics.

Zoning maps: designate a zoning district for each property.

Ordinance: describes regulations that apply to each zoning district.

The zoning code rewrite is a 2-year process to complete (started in 2025). Deliverables include updated zoning codes and maps. This process includes community engagement; public surveys, neighborhood meetings that included discussions on topics such as housing, business, industrial, transportation, allowable uses, aesthetics, setbacks, sustainability, etc.

Purpose of the zoning code rewrite:

1. Have the existing built environment be reflective in zoning regulations to reduce the amount of legal nonconforming situations.
2. Reflect modern development and land use practices.
3. Be compliant with State & Federal laws.
4. Increase efficiencies and user-friendliness.
5. Consider contest-sensitive design standards.

Adam asked sustainability commission members for input on incorporating community and environmental sustainability principles into comprehensive city planning and the updating of the city zoning code.

Commission member discussion topics included:

- Environmental goals, green space preservation, supporting native plants & trees, flood mitigation such as limiting impervious surfaces because the city relies on rain infiltration to mitigate storm water runoff.
- Identify flood water and rain infiltration areas to mitigate potential flood damage.
- Outdoor lighting & illumination standards for buildings, sinage, and streets to "put the light where it is needed" and mitigate nuisance lighting. Encourage "dark sky".
- Forest/tree requirements and conservation & parkland land use designations for greenhouse gas emissions mitigation and carbon sinks.
- Identify undeveloped parcels in the city that should be designated parkland or conservation.
- Extending the green circle trail to existing and new neighborhoods.
- Require new park development as new residential neighborhoods are developed and annexed to the city.
- Provide bus transportation options and bicycle, walking, safe streets to reduce the need for cars.
- Planning and zoning codes should encourage and/or incentivize the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Should there be requirements?
- Groundwater protection should be a mandate and requires effective zoning codes and coordinated planning and zoning with adjacent municipalities and Portage County to protect this most important natural resource.
- Discussed question about the regulatory approach to use for implementation of zoning codes, Incentives or mandates? Some codes require mandates such as health and safety. Some codes require a flexible approach as to how to accomplish the code objectives such as aesthetics, housing types & density, park development. Some codes may require a combination of incentives and mandates.
- Social fairness in planning and zoning codes, it is important that the city be a place where all residents can find affordable housing, transportation, healthcare, social support, jobs, lifestyle, amenities, and educational opportunities. The future success of Stevens Point will depend on keeping and attracting a workforce and people who want to live in the city.

#### Green House Gas (GHG) inventory:

The GHG inventory was funded by a 2024 Public Service Commission (PSC) planning grant and Wisconsin Local Government Climate Coalition.

This inventory collects data on Community-wide CO2 emissions (not just city operations). The categories of emission sources and energy consumption in Stevens Point are; Stationary energy, Transportation, Waste, Industrial processes.

Energy sources are primarily electric natural gas, electricity, and oil.

The inventory data is collected from: Wisconsin Public Service (WPS), city utilities, and all other users of electricity, natural gas, oil. This data is analyzed using the software tool, ClearPath.

The GHG inventory data and ClearPath software tool will be used to:

1. Establish community baseline emissions and sources.
2. Model future scenarios and policy impacts.
3. Inform the city's Sustainability Commission climate action planning.

The city will need to continue funding the annual fee for the ClearPath software in the 2026 city budget.

Heather Phelps suggested the commission plan a future meeting to explore ClearPath tool and run simulations to help the commission prioritize GHG reductions strategies. Heather will also contact Middleton, a city of similar size, that has experience with running the ClearPath simulations and sustainability planning for advice and ideas.

Discussion by commission members suggested these goals in a climate action plan:

- Food waste diversion from landfills. A significant amount of GHG emissions occur from landfills due to too much organic material disposal.
- Solid waste management improvements to reduce GHG emissions.
- Fleet management and planning to reduce GHG emissions, reduce vehicle replacement costs, lower maintenance costs, realize higher trade in values when replacing vehicles.

Alder District 4, Lara Broderick addressed the commission and agreed with the priorities for GHS simulation exercise using the ClearPath tool and discussion on goals for the climate action plan.

6. Update on new contact for the Focus on Energy program and contacts with UWSP and the Portage County Planning & Zoning Department.

The city has a new Focus on Energy representative, Silvia Lopez. The city has utilized the Focus on Energy program incentives and grants to produce annual savings on gas and electric utility bills and reductions in CO2 emissions for city facilities. Silvia will have been contacting the city to continue this program.

Austin Holland, Associate professor conservation & community planning extension specialist was contacted for future assistance and input on city sustainability planning efforts. Austin's comments are that there is city operational & financial sustainability and social-community sustainability. Sustainability planning must also consider the social factors for community success or the stuff that makes Stevens Point a city where people want to live and can be successful. It is important to include equity in sustainability planning so all citizens can participate. Examples: affordable housing, transportation modes, parks, main street, etc. Collaboration with adjacent communities; Plover, Park Ridge, Whiting, Portage County, UWSP are important to creating a sustainable community.

Austin suggested contacting Katie Livernash, community development, UW-Extension, Portage County, for collaboration on city sustainability planning.

7. Review of the Sustainability Commission 2025 meeting calendar and presentations.

Chair Greg Knight reviewed confirmed presentations for the October 2, November 6 and December 6 commission meetings. The Chair asked commission members for potential topics and speakers for 2026 commission meetings. It was suggested that the city of Middleton could be contacted to present on their sustainability planning, and they are a city of similar population. Heather Phelps will contact the city of Middleton for a potential speaker.

In 2025 the commission could use the Green House Gas (GHG) tool for analysis of GHG inventory data to help determine sustainability & CO2 reduction planning priorities.

Other suggested sustainability commission agenda items: Food waste diversion from landfill and solid waste management, Fleet management and vehicle replacement strategy, Collaboration meetings with adjacent communities and UWSP.

8. Next meeting: October 2, 2025, at 5:30 at 933 Michigan Avenue.

Presentations by Staff designees: Police Chief Kussow and Fire Chief Moody on police, fire, and EMS sustainable and resilient operations.

**CLOSING SECTION:**

9. Adjournment.

Ald. Alison Birr moved, Heather Phelps seconded, Motion to adjourn at 7:30 pm  
Call for the Vote: Ayes: All Nays: None; Motion Carried

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
October 2, 2025 - 5:30 PM  
Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**Opening Section:**

1. Roll Call.

PRESENT: Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Doug Stingle. Sam Lang - District 9 Alderperson and Allison Birr - District 5 Alderperson are excused absence. Member of the public Nathan Sandwick was also present.

PRESENT OTHERS: Dennis Zvara – Assistant Chief, Fire and EMS. Robert Kussow – Police Chief, Police Department.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

3. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission for up to 3 minutes regarding a non-agenda item.

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON:**

4. Approval of the Minutes of Sustainability Commission on September 4, 2025

Correction noted for future agenda item number 3 wording to change “specific agenda” to “specific non-agenda” items for persons who wish to address the commission. Correction noted for agenda item number 5 to change meeting location at 100 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 933 Michigan Avenue.

Doug Stingle moved, Heather Phelps seconded, to approve meeting minutes of September 4, 2025.

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

5. Presentation by Police Chief Robert Kussow – Stevens Point Police Department.

In 2017 the police department moved from the basement of the county courthouse to the present location at 933 Michigan Avenue.

Department overview and staffing:

There are 51 total members, including 18 patrol officers, 12 auxiliaries, 6 chaplains, 3 K9 (two specialized and one therapy).

Department manages the un-housed and those with mental health issues.

Number one call is resident welfare checks (600 in 2024). Officers are trained in crises intervention.

Dispatching is through Portage County dispatch center. Staffing vacancies are an ongoing issue because dispatching is a stressful job.

SWAT team and negotiation team is a partnership with Village of Plover.

Budget and Cost Controls savings, Energy savings, Sustainable operations:

The Department has managed department with a 0% increase in budget for the last 5 years.

- Fleet savings with replacement of patrol vehicles with “hybrid vehicles”. There is a total of 12 patrol vehicles in the fleet. In 2024 the first hybrid was purchased and used 25% less gas consumption compared to a non-hybrid vehicle. In 2025 there are 8 hybrid vehicles in the fleet with an estimated

savings of 28% in gas use and maintenance. Previous budget for fleet gas & maintenance was \$83,000 but that cost has been reduced to \$42,000.

- 2026 two unmarked fleet vehicles will be replaced with hybrid vehicles.
- EV vehicles are currently not feasible for the police department because police fleet is operated 24/7 which eliminates re-charging time.
- MRAP military surplus vehicle. No cost for acquisition. Used for SWAT and is a high-water vehicle used for flooding events.
- Focus on Energy program energy savings; Building interior lighting is converted to LED and operates on motion sensors to turn off lighting when not in use. Building window replacement is the biggest need for energy savings. 14 windows are budgeted for replacement and will plan to replace all the windows.
- Drones are used by the department for search and rescue, and other applications. This tool saves a significant amount of time and personnel needed.
- Digital evidence collection and sharing using smart phones and other technology saves paper, time, elimination of DVDs, and increases efficiencies and capabilities.
- Training cost and time savings using in-house virtual classroom and remote log-in. Eliminate travel.

#### Severe Weather and Emergency Management:

Heat and cold are the most significant threats to city residents and employees.

- Cooling shelter is available using city transit buses and designated city and county buildings.
- City applied for a storm shelter/emergency power BRIC grant but did not receive it.
- EOC (City Emergency Operations Center) is in the city transit facility and provides a unified and coordinated response to all disaster events. Portage County also has an EOC facility and these two EOC can coordinate the emergency response of city and county departments.
- Black board Alert System provides emergency text notifications and information to City residents.

6. Presentation by Assistant Chief Dennis Zvara – Stevens Point Fire & EMS Department.

Mission statement of the department is community safety and preparedness. This includes sustainable operations and mitigating the threats posed by climate change. In 2026 a new 5-year plan will be completed.

#### Department overview and staffing:

- 5 department chiefs including emergency management.
- Ambulance and fire services work in shifts to maximize coverage and personnel.
- County contract for ambulance service. 5 Ambulances with 2 on call 24/7 cover the NW ¼ of the county.
- Fire investigation MOU with Police Department.
- Boat, Confined Space, Trench Collapse rescue capability.
- Provide public education and career exploration, completed 114 speaking events.
- CAP services
- Calls: EMS = 4,018 (increase of 10% over prior year). Fire = 1,227 (increase of 20% over prior year).
- SPFD, two fire stations built in 1969 and 1883. Training site use theater fog to simulate smoke for safer training. Both fire stations have backup power generation.

#### Sustainable operations, reducing energy and fuel use, budget savings:

- Utility Trailers; used to haul supplies and equipment. Pulled by pickup trucks. Reduce the number of support vehicles needed.
- HVAC upgrades for fire stations
- Steel roofing to reflect heat from the sun.
- LED and motion sensor interior lighting.
- Use Microsoft TEAMS for communication and sharing of information to reduce travel for face-to-face communication.
- Training in-house and online to reduce travel.
- Pickup Trucks use more fuel efficient V6 engine rated to 29mpg.
- Battery power fire tools for lighting, fans, chain saws, other saws. Reduced operating and maintenance costs.
- Replaced truck with a fire department car for fire inspections.

### Emergency Management and Climate Change heat and storms:

- Emergency management is coordinated with Portage County emergency management and the University.
- Next generation Siren warning system.
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is city transit building and can be relocated to the city garage. Backup EOC with County and University facilities.
- City-wide employee training and planning for emergency management.
- Public can get phone/text notification emergency alert system.
- City has backup emergency generators and can assist University and County.
- Fire trucks can not function in water over one foot deep.
- Flooding in the RR underpasses are the main threat for deep water.
- Heat wave (85 degrees or higher) emergency can open designated cooling shelters and air-conditioned buses.
- Air-conditioned buses are used to mitigate fire fighter and emergency responder heat stress.
- Solar panels could be put on fire station roof and used to shade parking area.
- Mutual aid agreement when additional emergency response resources are needed.
- Pop up splash pads used around the city neighborhoods for heat mitigation.
- Fire department can recharge batteries for residents' medical equipment during power outage.

### Questions and Discussion:

Heather Phelps: EV batteries and other battery fires? Battery fires are hard to put out and require significantly more water. Disposal of burned electric vehicles and damaged batteries requires towing company safe storage on sand lots in case of fire. Auto dealerships require separate storage of EV batteries. Battery fires are more likely in off-brand or after market batteries. Need for more battery fire risk awareness.

Charging stations for EV vehicles are safe but need more data on safety of home use charging equipment.

Robert Michitsch and Doug Stingle: How fast will the cost of battery powered fire engines decrease? Battery power for large vehicles will need significant improvement in cost and utility before it is cost competitive to purchase.

Fire station Battery storage for backup power in combination with solar panels could be feasible.

You can install solar panels to metal roofs and not have to drill through the metal roof.

Solar panels for power and sunshade could be installed in parking lots at the fire stations.

Police Department building could have roof solar panels.

7. Review of the Sustainability Commission 2025 meeting calendar and presentations.

Chair Greg Knight reviewed confirmed presentations for the November 6 and December 6 commission meetings. The Chair asked commission members for potential topics and speakers for 2026 commission meetings. Future meeting suggestions include:

- City of Middleton sustainability committee zoom meeting.
- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions modeling exercise.
- Food waste landfill diversion and reducing landfill gas emissions.
- Facility Tours; Police and Fire Departments – open invitation.
- Planning meeting to develop commission report, roadmap, next steps, etc.

8. Next meeting: November 6, 2025, at 5:30 at 933 Michigan Avenue.

Presentations by UWSP office of sustainability, Dave Barbier and Michelle Gullickson on campus sustainability programs and potential for city and university collaboration on GHG emissions reductions and sustainability planning.

## **CLOSING SECTION:**

### 9. Adjournment.

Heather Phelps moved, Doug Stingle seconded, Motion to adjourn at 7:30 pm  
Call for the Vote: Ayes: All Nays: None; Motion Carried

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
November 6, 2025 - 5:30 PM  
Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

## **Opening Section:**

### 1. Roll Call.

PRESENT: Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Doug Stingle. Sam Lang - District 9 Alderperson and Allison Birr - District 5 Alderperson.

PRESENT OTHERS: Dave Barbier – UWSP Office of Sustainability. Michelle Gullickson – UWSP Office of Sustainability. Members of the public: Arron Hintz, UWSP student, Quinn Erst, UWSP student, Joel Lemke, City of Stevens Point were also present.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

3. Persons who wish to address the Sustainability Commission on non-agenda items.

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

## **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON:**

### 4. Approval of the Minutes of Sustainability Commission on October 2, 2025.

Heather Phelps moved, Sam Lang seconded, to approve meeting minutes of October 2, 2025.  
Call for the Vote: Ayes: All Nays: None; Motion Carried

5. Presentation by the UWSP office of sustainability, Dave Barbier and Michelle Gullickson on campus sustainability programs. Discussion on potential for city and university collaboration on GHG emissions reductions and sustainability planning.

- Key points:

- Draft of the UWSP Climate Action & Resilience Plan is ready for stakeholder feedback
- Plan aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience and adaptation strategies (environmental, social, economic)
- Process overview:
- Stakeholder kickoff in Feb 2024 with 100+ attendees representing business, community, university, and political leadership.
- Nine working groups formed: Academics and Curriculum, Buildings and Operations, Economics and Procurement, Ecosystems and Planetary Health, Health and Wellness, Risk Management and Safety, Social Equity and Governance, Transportation and Travel, Waste Management.
- 63 projects identified out of the 9 working groups.
- Community engagement model adapted from The Nature Conservancy
- Draft plan reflects input from over 100 stakeholders
- Plan structure:
- Written for a broad audience (on/off campus)
- High-level overview; The “what” not the “how”. Plan draft is about 30-40 pages and describes “what to do but not how to do it”. The Technical details will be developed in supplementary documents.
- Four main sections: Sustainability Values, Climate Action Mitigation, Climate Action Resilience, Thriving Campus Community

- Appendices and carbon neutrality plan to be released in early 2026
- Achievements:
- 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2007 baseline (as of last year)
- Ongoing projects include decarbonizing travel, emergency preparedness, campus bike/pedestrian master plan
- Focus on education and outreach
- Feedback:
- Two feedback forms (campus and community versions) for public comments on the plan draft located on UWSP Office of Sustainability web site.
- Deadline for feedback: December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

#### Discussion: City-University Collaboration

- Suggestions for collaboration:
  - Infrastructure projects (e.g., transportation, emergency preparedness, energy)
  - Waste management and composting
  - Joint grant applications for larger-scale projects, collaboration at “scale”
  - Student internships and fellowships with city departments to help with sustainability planning, public outreach, project development, grant applications.
  - Shared outreach and education campaigns (e.g., waste reduction)
  - Water quality and groundwater protection.
  - Forestry and air quality initiatives, especially in response to climate impacts (e.g., storms, flooding, wildfire smoke, extreme heat)
  - Health and wellness (mental health)
- City Sustainability Commission goals:
  - Catalog city sustainability efforts
  - Develop benchmarks, goals, and planning process for 2026
  - Emphasis on collaboration due to limited commission size

#### Student & Community Engagement

- Student involvement through working groups, SGA, and clubs
- Outreach via social media, presentations, and direct invitations
- Opportunities for students to participate in projects and internships

#### Resilience & Energy Discussion

- Campus power plant:
  - Overbuilt capacity; boilers nearing end of life
  - Plans to study and transition to renewable/alternative energy sources (solar, geothermal, etc.)
  - Emphasis on parallel systems for reliability (e.g., backup generators, battery storage)
- Broader resilience topics:
  - Flooding risks, emergency preparedness, and infrastructure planning
  - Improving partnerships and collaboration with the broader community
  - Importance of communication and outreach on climate issues
  - UWSP campus has shower, power, food capabilities for campus and community response to emergencies.
  - Solar covered parking lots, multiple battery backup systems, emergency backup systems, improving technology, multiple power sources, fossil fuel backup generators still part of the mix.
  - Sustainable building development, green construction and development.
  - Transportation options, traffic infrastructure.
  - Where can we get sustainable electrical power? Increasing demand for power.

#### Other Topics Discussion

- Importance of intentionality in new development and re-development (efficiency, multi-use, employee wellness, sustainable practices, transportation)
- City’s role in setting sustainable expectations for incoming businesses/industries
- Use of community resilience building workshops for public engagement
- City resources for sustainability planning and public engagement; The Nature Conservancy (TNC) community resilience building guide and materials.

7. Review of the Sustainability Commission 2025 meeting calendar and presentation topics.

Chair Greg Knight reviewed and confirmed presentation topics for the following commission meetings:

- December 4: Sylvia Lopez (Focus on Energy program advisor for the City)
- January 2026: No meeting (holiday break)
- February 5: Meeting with City of Middleton sustainability committee (Zoom)
- March 5: Recycling Connections presentation

The Chair asked commission members for potential topics and speakers for 2026 commission meetings.

Future meeting suggestions include:

- Dedicated session on City sustainability commission planning process, road map, report, and public engagement process.
- City greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory emissions modeling exercise (Adam Kuhn)
- Food waste landfill diversion and reducing landfill gas emissions.
- Facility Tours; Police and Fire Departments – open invitation.

8. Next meeting: December 4, 2025, at 5:30 at 933 Michigan Avenue.

Presentation by Sylvia Lopez, Northcentral/Northeastern Energy Advisor, Focus on Energy. Overview and accomplishments of the Focus on Energy program with the City of Stevens Point. New Focus on Energy programs and potential for future collaboration.

**CLOSING SECTION:**

9. Adjournment.

Robert Michitsch moved, Allison Birr seconded, Motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm

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

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT SUSTAINABILITY  
COMMISSION MINUTES  
December 4, 2025 - 5:30 PM Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**Opening Section:**

**1. Roll Call.**

PRESENT Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Doug Stingle, and Alderpersons Sam Lang - District 9 (Zoom) and Allison Birr - District 5.

OTHERS Speakers: Sylvia Lopez, Northcentral/Northeastern Energy Advisor, Focus on PRESENT Energy.  
Members of the Public: UWSP Students; Thomas Hoover, Zander Labrec, Quentin DeBoer, Sam Giguere. Nathan Sandwick (Zoom).

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

**Discussion and Possible Action on:**

**1. To approve the Minutes of the November 6, 2025, Sustainability Commission meeting.**

Robert Michitsch moved, Heather Phelps seconded, to approve the meeting Minutes of November 6, 2025.

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

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 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. One 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 have increased in 2025.
    - New construction 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 preplan energy efficient equipment with Focus on Energy, Building Optimization to ensure buildings are operating efficiently.
    - Lighting Fixture or retrofit kit upgrades including lighting controls rebates.
    - HVAC upgrades include high-efficiency heating and cooling and heat pumps, Ventilation systems, Digital controls.
    - Boiler tune-ups.
    - Municipal roadway lighting incentives per fixture.
    - Retrcommissioning (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 Syliva 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), 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 (Zoom with City of Middleton Sustainability Committee).
    - March 5: Presentation from Recycling Connections.
    - Send ideas for topics and speakers to Chair 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; outline and share their 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, UW extension, to 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.
    - Nathan Sandwick (zoom participant) suggested commission focusing on sustainability principles in the city's comprehensive plan, particularly in economic development, transportation, and future land use. Public and private investments should provide long-term value versus short-term least cost. Sustainability is largely about creating systems built to last and impact long-term infrastructure.
  - Discussion of file sharing solutions for collaborative work.
    - Chair Greg Knight will contact city administrative support to find out if there is a way to set up a file sharing account for commission members to file information and work on document drafts.

**Closing Section:**

1. The next meeting is scheduled for February 5, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI. Zoom presentation and discussion with the City of Middleton's Sustainability Committee Members on their planning process, community involvement, and development of climate sustainability and resilience goals, projects and carbon neutrality by 2050 goal.
2. Adjournment.

Heather Phelps moved, Allison Birr seconded, to adjourn the Sustainability Commission Meeting at 6:59 p.m.

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

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

**Opening Section:**

**4. Roll Call.**

PRESENT Heather Phelps, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Alderpersons Sam Lang - District 9 and Allison Birr - District 5. Doug Stingle was absent.

OTHERS Speakers: (Zoom call) Kelly Hilyard, Sustainability Coordinator Middleton, Lisa PRESENT Janairo, City of Middleton District 6 Alderperson, Laura Buchholz, City of Middleton Sustainability Committee Vice-Chair, Deb Weitzel, City of Middleton Sustainability Committee.  
Members of the Public: Bill Fisher, resident.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

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

There were no people who 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, 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 via Zoom call with the City of Middleton Sustainability Committee members to share the committee's sustainability history, planning process, objectives and priorities, policies, lessons learned.

Middleton's Sustainability Committee background:

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

Energy and Infrastructure:

- o 50% of city electricity comes from renewable sources, largely solar.

- 30% of community-wide electricity comes from renewable sources.
- Solar installations on municipal buildings (golf clubhouse, water utility sites).
- LED's streetlight conversion.
- City fleet EV purchasing.
- Planning for a new civic campus (city hall, library, senior center)
- LEED certification for all buildings and commercial buildings.

#### Policy and Planning Framework:

- Middleton consolidated its sustainability planning by aligning: 2021 Comprehensive Plan, 2020 Energy Plan, 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 Request 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 input and support of city staff (survey and training staff).

#### Community Engagement & Education:

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

#### 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, presentations.

#### Review of upcoming meeting calendar:

- Next meeting March 5, 2026: Presentation by Recycling Connections.
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainability Commission facilitated planning process and brainstorming session meeting at the Portage County Courthouse Annex. Meeting will be facilitated by Katie Livernash, UW Extension Community Development Educator and Caitly Carmody, Department of Administration Office of Sustainability.

**Closing Section:**

3. 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. Presentation and discussion with Susan Schuller, Executive Director, and Rylee Mullikin of Recycling Connections on the city's downtown recycling program.
4. Adjournment.

Robert Michitsch moved, Alderperson Sam Lang seconded, to adjourn the Sustainability Commission Meeting at 7:10 p.m.

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

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

**Opening Section:**

**1. Roll Call.**

**PRESENT**           Heather Phelps, Sough Stingle, Robert Michitsch, Greg Knight, Alderperson Sam Lang – Distric 9 (Zoom), and Allison Birr – District 5.

**OTHERS**           **Speakers:** Susan Schuller, Executive Director and Rylee Mullikin of Recycling  
**PRESENT**           Connections.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on specific agenda items.

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

There were no people who wished to address the Commission on non-agenda items.

**Discussion and Possible Action on:**

**1. To approve the Minutes of the February 5, 2026, Sustainability Commission meeting.**

Robert Michitsch **moved**, Allison Birr **seconded**, to approve the meeting Minutes of February 5, 2026.

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

**2. Presentation and discussion with Susan Schuller, Executive Director and Rylee Mullikin of Recycling Connections on the City's downtown recycling program.**

**Background on Recycling Connections:**

- Founded in 1981 through grassroots effort in Stevens Point to provide curbside recycling.
- Played a key role in establishment of local recycling infrastructure prior to the 1990 Wisconsin recycling law.
- Shifted focus over time to include education, statewide leadership, waste reduction initiatives, and zero-waste services.

**Downtown, Mainstreet corridor garbage & recycling study:**

- Evaluate the current waste and recycling material found in trash bins and the bin locations in the downtown main street corridor.
- Develop recommendations to improve recycling access and diversion rates in the main street corridor.
- UWSP students participated in collecting data for this recycling study.

**Current Mainstreet corridor garbage bins:**

- 35 city garbage bins; 15 are caged bins and 20 are concrete, artist-painted bins.
- There are no public recycling bins in the Mainstreet corridor.
- Garbage collection occurs Mondays and Thursdays.

**UWSP students waste Characterization study:**

- Conducted by UWSP students with city approval.
- Trash collected from sampled bins on March 11, March 25, and April 8.
- Trash waste was categorized into 12 material types.
- Key finding: Approximately 25% of downtown waste consisted of recyclable bottles and cans.

**Additional study visual assessments:**

- Conducted August 24, September 7, and September 21.
- Focused on identifying high-use and low-use trash bins.
- Highest-use bins located around the Square, bus stops, and near Frame Park.

**Study recommendations:**

- Focus recycling efforts on bottles and cans only to minimize recycling bin contamination.
- Convert existing trash bins into 20 paired garbage and recycling stations.
- Repaint existing black trash cages to blue color for recycling, fabricate 5 additional cages for recycling use.
- Use clear, consistent bin labeling and imagery to identify recycling bins.
- Pair the garbage and recycling bins to improve proper use.
- Maintain existing collection routes and Monday/Thursday schedule.
- Monitor bin overflow and recycling bin contamination during collection.
- Perform bin maintenance including repainting and label upkeep.
- Recycling Connections can assist the city with monitoring and evaluation during implementation.

**Expected outcomes:**

- Divert an estimated 25% of downtown waste into recycling.
- Improve the City's sustainability image and visibility.
- Support downtown businesses and community events.
- Align with Stevens Point's sustainability goals and Green Tier Legacy Community designation.

**Discussion and questions:**

- Past downtown recycling was discontinued due to contamination issues associated with mixed recycling.
- Simplifying recycling to bottles and cans is expected to improve participation and reduce contamination.
- Liquids remaining in bottles may limit recyclability but do not damage processing equipment.
- Residential recycling participation in Stevens Point was noted as strong.
- Commissioners expressed interest in future expansion to organic and food-waste diversion from garbage. There may be future State rules for cities to reduce organic and food-waste going into landfills because of the methane emissions.

3. Discussion of Sustainability Commission 2026 meeting calendar updates and new information for future meeting topics and presentations. Information on the April 2<sup>nd</sup> Commission facilitated working meeting to begin developing a sustainability plan road map.

**Review of upcoming meeting calendar:**

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainability Commission meeting; Facilitated planning process and brainstorming session meeting. Meeting will be facilitated by Katie Livernash, UW Extension Community Development Educator and Caity Carmody, Department of Administration Office of Sustainability.
  - Purpose: Begin outlining a 2026 Sustainability Commission report.
  - Present interim report to City Council in December 2026.
- Potential Future Commission meeting topics; Greenhouse gas inventory results, Organic material removal from the solid waste stream, Composting alternatives to reduce organic material going into landfills.
- 
- Renewable energy site visits (e.g. Midwest Renewable Energy Association). Doug Stengle will contact MREA for possible site visit tours.

**Closing Section:**

1. The next meeting is scheduled for April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI. A work session for the commission members to brainstorm and begin development of a city sustainability plan road map and recommendations for actions by the city council by the end of the year 2026. This work session will be facilitated by Katie Livernash, Community Development, UW-Extension Portage County, and Caity Carmody, Department of Administration, Office of Sustainability & Clean Energy, Sustainability, Resilience and Climate Action Planning.

2. **Adjournment.**

Heather Phelps **moved**, Doug Stingle **seconded**, to adjourn the Sustainability Commission Meeting at **6:30 p.m.**

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

2025\_2026 Meeting Calendar and Presentations April 2, 2026

Sustainability Commission

Date	Presentation	Description
January 21, 2025	Organization & Elections Mayor Wiza	Sustainability Commission organizational meeting.
March 6, 2025	Public Works	Scott Beduhn, Director: Streets, Fleet, Facilities, Resident garbage, compost, recycling.
April 3	Community Development -Planning & Zoning	Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner/Zoning: Wis Local Gov Climate Coalition, GHG Inventory.
May 1	Public Utilities and Central Transportation	Joel Lemke, Director.
June 5	Parks, Recreation & Forestry	Dan Kremer, Director
July 10 Field trip	Public Works. Scott Beduhn Chris Johnson	Garbage & recycling, Garage facilities planning & Sustainability. 5:30pm at 100 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue.
August 19 Field trip	Public Utilities. Joel Lemke	Waste Water Treatment plant; Bio-gas, heat pumps, solar, E-gauge operations.
September 4	Community Development Adam Kuhn, Associate Planner/Zoning	Zoning code revision update. Green House Gas inventory status update.
October 2	Fire and Police Moody and Kussow	Fire, EMS, Police departments sustainable projects and plans.
November 6	UWSP office of Sustainability	Dave Barbier & Michelle Gullickson, Climate action planning and opportunities for collaboration.
December 4	Focus on Energy program	Sylvia Lopez, N Cent/N East Energy Advisor
<b>2026</b>		
January 8	<span style="color: red;">No meeting</span>	
February 5	City of Middleton	Middleton Sustainability Committee Zoom meeting, planning process and projects
March 5	Recycling Connections	Susan Schuller Executive Director and Rylee Mullikin. Downtown recycling program.
April 2	Commission work session Report outline, timeline for report, internal & public review, Work assignments.	Sustainability road map & plan development Katie Livernash, UW-Extension Caity Carmody, DOA office of sustainability
May 7		<span style="color: red;">Check In?</span>

June 4	Commission 2 <sup>nd</sup> work session for commission report	Katie & Caity, WLGCC excell data report and commission member data.
July 2		
August 5	GHG inventory report	Adam Kuhn – tentative.
September 3		
October 1		
November 5 Nov 16	Common Council meeting	Sustainability Commission report and plan for expiring 2-year terms and future work.
December 3		
2027		

Potential Presentation and/or Topics for future Meetings

1. Modeling scenarios and sustainable planning priorities for Green House Gas (GHG) emissions using the ClearPath tool (Adam Kuhn – August 5?)
2. Food waste diversion from landfills: Amanda Haffele Portage County Solid Waste Director and Kelly Adlington Bucket Ruckus.
3. Fleet management planning and replacement tools.
4. City facilities/buildings master planning for LEED.
5. Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) site visit (May or June?)
- ❖ Portage County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan (safe streets, etc.) **Close to final plan approval?**
- Planning meeting(s) to develop Sustainability Commission report, recommendations, road map, timelines, etc.
  - Caity Carmody, DOA Office of Sustainability & Clean Energy, sustainability, resilience, climate action planning.
  - Katie Livernash, Community Development UW-Extension Portage County, sustainability, resilience, climate action planning.
  - Austin Holland, UWSP Center for Land Use Education, community sustainability and regional cooperation for sustainability, resilience, climate action planning.
  - Dave Barbier & Michelle Gullickson UWSP office of sustainability.