



OFFICIAL NOTICE AND AGENDA

of a meeting of a City Board, Commission, Department Committee, Agency, Corporation, Quasi-Municipal Corporation, or Sub-unit thereof.

Meeting: **SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**
Members: Mary Kluz (C), Carol Lukens, Jean Abreu, Jay Coldwell, Christine Daniels, Jesse Kearns
Location: Maple Room of Wausau City Hall, 407 Grant Street.
Date/Time: **Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of the Minutes of the August 8, 2024 Meeting
4. Presentation: City Hall Pollinator Friendly Garden – Natalie Doering
5. Discussion and Possible Action: Committee Work Plans
6. Discussion and Possible Action: Fall Yard Care Promotion
7. Discussion and Possible Action: Sustainability Manager Position Description
8. Update: Solar Array timeline, Committee Report to Council
9. Next meeting date: October 3
10. Adjourn

It is likely that members of, and a quorum of the Council and/or members of other committees of the Common Council of the City of Wausau will be in attendance at the abovementioned meeting to gather information. **No action will be taken by any such groups.**

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the City of Wausau will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the ADA Coordinator at (715) 261- 6622 or ADA_Services@ci.wausau.wi.us to discuss your accessibility needs. We ask your request be provided a minimum of 72 hours before the scheduled event or meeting. If a request is made less than 72 hours before the event the City of Wausau will make a good faith effort to accommodate your request.

Questions regarding this agenda may be directed to the City Planning Office @ (715) 261-6760.

This Notice was posted at City Hall and emailed to the Media on 08/30/2024

Any person wishing to offer public comment may email City Clerk Kaitlyn Bernarde at clerk@ci.wausau.wi.us with "SEEC comment" in the subject line prior to the meeting start. All public comment, either by email or in person, will be limited to items on the agenda at this time. The messages related to agenda items received prior to the start of the meeting will be provided to the Chair.

Other Distribution: Media, Alderpersons, Mayor, City Departments

MINUTES

August 8, 2024

Members Present: Jay Coldwell, Jean Abreu, Mary Kluz, Jesse Kearns, Carol Lukens, Christine Daniels

Others Present: Andrew Lynch, Dan Barth, Cathy Barth, Andrew Waupekenay, Brittany Reimer

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the Wausau Daily Herald in the proper manner.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Meeting started at 5:00 pm

2. Public Comment

Dan Barth spoke in favor of the solar array project and the GHG resolution.

Cathy Barth spoke about the need to move quickly to avoid further climate disaster. There were only a few years before too much damage was done.

Brittanie Reimer knows the solar project is ready and there are many credits available. She is willing to provide information and help.

Andrew Waupekenay: Solar array is a good idea.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the July 11 Meeting

Coldwell/Kearns motion/second to approve. All vote in favor.

4. Discussion and Possible Action: Responding to Citizen Requests for Information

Lynch spoke about requests for information or action that have come to the committee and the need for some discussion and education about this would be necessary. Lynch discussed how to respond to requests to the committee or for information. He suggested talking with staff and the chair to help find the appropriate committee or person to respond. If there was a question about water, it might be more appropriate at the Waterworks Commission or Infrastructure and Facilities Committee. Kearns reiterated that this committee is advisory and can recommend but does not have regulatory powers.

5. Discussion and Possible Action: Sustainability Manager position description

Lynch provided in the packet three different manager positions from other communities. Daniels asked about the process. This committee would decide what job functions are important, that would be taken to the HR department and eventually the HR committee for discussion. Kearns suggested the idea of using a graduate student from UWSP to lower the cost of the entry for a position. Lynch suggested that given the cross departmental nature of this position it may be best to have a full employee in order to speak with authority to directors and peers. Kluz suggested focusing the duties on executing the GHG resolution and future Climate Action Plan, and Kearns noted this person could be the advocate for the solar array. Committee asked staff for a more refined description to consider at the next meeting.

6. Discussion and Possible Action: Committee Report to Council

Lynch showed the report that was drafted for the Council. The provided charts showed energy use of two buildings and street lights to illustrate the impact of the switch to LED lights and the need for a deeper look at the information. Committee suggested adding more of the sustainability awards and note the challenge of tracking the solar array progress and that a sustainability manager could coordinate that information. Also changing the last section to Challenges and Opportunities.

7. Discussion and Possible Action: Committee Endorsement of Waterworks Solar Array

This item was moved up to item #4. Coldwell provides a recap of the Solar Array Task Force, history, and process going forward. City Council needs to approve borrowing money to build the array. There is currently an ARPA application going before Council to provide extra funding that will decrease the payback period. Staff has drafted an endorsement of the project for the committee as it helps fulfill the goals of the GHG resolution. Lynch noted that even if the current ARPA application fails at Council that does not mean the project is dead but this is a good opportunity to discuss the project and the impact. Kearns suggested adding clarifying language about stabilizing the cost of Waterworks operations.

Daniels/Abreu motion/second To approve the endorsement as presented with suggested changes. Approved unanimously.

8. Update: FOCUS On Energy – HOMES (Home Efficiency Rebates) website

Lynch noted that the HOMES site is the first of it's kind in the nation.

9. Next meeting date: September 5

10. Adjourn

Motion/Second by Kearns/Abreu. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 6:50 pm

Outline for Committee Work Plan

Planning to plan committee work

Discussion outline

1. Review of committee charge / mission (see attached)
2. A brief committee history
3. Desired input to the work plan
4. Process
 - a. Length of time allotted
 - b. Preparation?
 - c. Method
 - d. Scheduling

2.60.090 Sustainability, Energy and Environment Committee.

- (a) *Purpose.* The relationship between the built environment and the natural environment has a major effect on the quality of life. The Sustainability, Energy and Environment Committee is hereby created to act as an advisory body to the Common Council in the development of policies, programs, and decisions that affect the relationship between the City and the environment. The committee researches, advises, and recommends to the City Council policies and programs that advance sustainability in Wausau, with particular attention paid to sustainability in the following areas:
- (1) Energy management (City operations and the City as a whole);
 - (2) Large scale climate;
 - (3) Local food and agriculture;
 - (4) Ecology and wildlife;
 - (5) Livable neighborhoods and happy communities;
 - (6) Land use and development;
 - (7) Building practices;
 - (8) Purchasing practices;
 - (9) Economic development (green jobs);
 - (10) Solid waste, recycling, and hazardous waste;
 - (11) Water and wastewater management;
 - (12) Stormwater and watershed health;
 - (13) Transportation;
 - (14) Light pollution;
 - (15) Air quality;
 - (16) Environmental justice;
 - (17) Preparedness and resiliency.
- (b) *Definition.* "Committee" means the Sustainability, Energy and Environment Committee.
- (c) *Structure.* The committee shall be staffed by the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development and the Department of Public Works and shall assist and work with the Economic Development Committee, as well as the committees of the Common Council, as needed.
- (d) *Composition.*
- (1) *Committee membership.* The committee shall consist of seven members, including one Alderperson. The remaining members shall be citizen members who are Wausau residents and are actively involved as business representatives, preferably from a business that is recognized as a leader in sustainability; representatives from a sustainability industry; teachers, students, or staff from a Wausau public high school; faculty, staff members, or students from the UW-system or North Central Technical College; representatives of related government agencies or related non-profit entities; or other citizens with a related expertise. Members shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.
 - (2) *Terms.* The terms of all committee members shall be for three years or until their successors are qualified. However, the term of the Aldermanic member shall expire with the expiration of her/his

term as Alderperson, and the members appointed to the first term following the effective date of this ordinance shall be appointed to staggered terms. Two members shall serve an initial term of one year, two shall serve an initial term of two years, and two shall serve an initial term of the full three years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. However, the members appointed to the first term after the effective date of this ordinance who serve an initial term of less than three years, and any member appointed to fill the unexpired term of a former member, shall be eligible to serve two full consecutive three-year terms thereafter.

- (e) *Committee authority.* The committee shall have the following powers and duties in advising the Mayor and the Common Council:
- (1) Research, advise, and recommend to the City Council and other City committees policies and programs that advance sustainability in Wausau, with particular attention to the subjects referred to in [section] 2.60.290(a);
 - (2) Establish and administer guidelines and procedures for securing and distributing grants, and securing private funding for energy and sustainability upgrades;
 - (3) Advise municipal efforts to engage citizens, professionals and advocates and the community in a broad range of civic initiatives;
 - (4) Coordinate and support efforts to unite and focus municipal programs and services as they relate to the environment, energy and sustainability;
 - (5) Organize group purchases of services and products related to energy and sustainability;
 - (6) Develop goals to achieve a more sustainable City;
 - (7) Recommend specific actions, strategies, and policies to achieve these goals;
 - (8) Form working groups within the committee to work on specific actions.

(Ord. 61-5789 §2, 2018, File No. 18-0706)

This fall save time and reduce your workload by **LEAVING YOUR LEAVES!**

Why? Insects like fireflies, moths, butterflies, bees, and stick bugs spend part of their lifecycle overwintering in leaf litter. Removing the leaves sweeps away a world teeming with next spring's life, so doing less actually does more good!

Insects are in dire trouble.

- *40% of all insect species have declined globally and another 33% are endangered.* Their loss not only threatens the birds we love to see in our yards, but endangers the food sources our lives depend upon.
- Insects pollinate crops that feed us, control pests, help clean up waste, improve soil health, and are an important food source for many other species.
- *More than 1 in 4 birds have disappeared in the last 50 years (nearly 3 billion birds!) due to loss of habitat and food sources such as insects.*

What can we do?

1. **Leave your leaves! (They are literally called leaves, so we should leave them!)** Bumblebees nest in them, birds forage in them, and butterflies overwinter in them. Leaves provide nutrient-rich mulch, help retain moisture, regulate soil temperatures, and keep weeds in check. As they break down, leaves add valuable nutrients to the soil. Pine needles also make an excellent, cost-free mulch and, despite common belief, won't acidify your soil. (*Invasive plants and pests can travel in purchased mulch, so your own leaves are actually a preferred resource.)
2. **Leaving your leaves creates a cozy shelter for overwintering pollinators.** This layer, the Subnivean Zone, is full of life! The earth's warmth melts the snow at ground level while the leaves and twigs create a protective ceiling, keeping the space from freezing. The vast majority of insects and invertebrates remain in your yard over winter and will live and grow in this layer.
3. **Leave the leaves *whole*** (don't shred them)! Whole leaves provide better cover and shredding destroys the pollinator eggs, caterpillars, and chrysalises in the leaves. *If you have too many leaves, offer them to neighbors* who understand what a rich resource they are.
4. **Plant a perennial garden.** Fall is a great time to plant! Consider replacing some of your lawn with native plants. Endangered species can be brought back from the brink of extinction if we plant native perennials wherever possible - even in small spaces!
5. **Leave perennials standing** (don't cut them down!). The seed heads of perennial plants provide winter food for seed-eating birds such as finches, chickadees, and more. The stems and stalks create vital shelter for native bees during hibernation and nesting sites for birds in the spring.
6. **Avoid using pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides** and contact a horticulturalist through UW-Extension for safe alternatives.

More information and sources:

Tebo Davis, Mary, Urban and Community Natural Resources Field Specialist. *Leaving Leaves and Flower Stalks for Wildlife*. University of New Hampshire Extension, September, 2022.

<https://extension.unh.edu/sites/default/files/media/2022-09/leaving-leaves-and-flower-stalks-for-wildlife-fact-sheet.pdf>

[Some Things To Consider When Using Or Storing Mulch](#)

[Protecting Pollinators at Home](#)

[What You Need to Know Before Spraying for Mosquitoes](#)

[Leave The Leaves: Winter Habitat Protection](#)

[Let Your Garden Grow Wild](#)

3

4 **POSITION PURPOSE:**

5 The Sustainability Coordinator develops, coordinates, and promotes sustainability programs and
6 policies to advance Wausau’s sustainability and clean energy goals. This position will advocate for
7 and promote sustainability throughout the organization. The Sustainability Coordinator will develop
8 metrics and targets for municipal sustainability and energy, determine environmental impact
9 footprints, and identify lowest life-cycle cost solution in operations, services, and infrastructure.
10 This position will serve in supporting all departments to realize life-cycle cost savings and
11 reductions from a fiscal and sustainable perspective. Additionally, the Sustainability Coordinator
12 will work closely with departments (Public Works, Community Development, Finance, etc.) as a
13 project facilitator supporting sustainable aspects of projects planning and implementation.

14 **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:**

15 Provide vision and leadership in the development of sustainability and resiliency plans and
16 programs for the City; serve as project manager for City sustainability initiatives.

17 Implement sustainability goals and actions as outlined in various city-wide plans; track, analyze,
18 and report on progress through annual reporting and/or regular updates.

19 Research, and apply for, applicable grants to further develop and improve sustainable City
20 initiatives.

21 Administers and manages grants if received to improve City sustainability efforts or conservation
22 efforts

23 Develops criteria, policies, and procedures for sustainable programs. Administers training and
24 outreach to City personnel for the development, adoption and implementation of sustainable
25 practices in City operations.

26 Serve as staff liaison and facilitator for the Sustainability Committee; attend and present at various
27 city boards and commissions as needed.

28 Serve as Wausau’s representative on regional climate and sustainability partnerships; develop and
29 maintain partnerships with partner agencies such as, DNR, WLGCC and other energy providers and
30 units of government throughout the county and state.

31 Coordinate with departments, committee members, and local media outlets to provide information
32 on public outreach to promote and increase awareness of sustainability efforts and highlight
33 accomplishments of the city’s sustainability programs and goals.

34 Maintains current knowledge of trends and initiatives in the field of sustainability by attending
35 relevant conferences/seminars, and/or by networking with counterparts at other organizations.

36 Directs the preparation of reports, documents and correspondence and makes public
37 presentations;

38 Performs other duties as required.

39

40 **QUALIFICATIONS:**

41 Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in natural or environmental science or
42 studies, sustainability studies, public policy, or a substantially similar area and three (3) or more
43 years of work experience in sustainability policy and program development, research and analysis,
44 and project management. Combination of experience & education will be considered.

45 Must possess a valid driver's license.

46 Knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following areas:

47 Considerable knowledge of issues, laws and regulations related to all areas of sustainability
48 including resource conservation, transportation, pollution prevention and public health protection,
49 and community and economic development.

50 Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; including making presentations to a
51 variety of audiences throughout the City and community.

52 Ability to research new initiatives and implement in a seamless fashion.

53 Ability to identify, analyze and problem solve, assisting departments in incorporating sustainable
54 practices into the organization.

55 Ability to develop, implement and evaluate projects and programs.

56 Ability to provide effective project management oversight.

57 Ability to interact effectively with City staff, the public, and City boards and commissions.