

1. 1. Environmental Commission Agenda

Documents:

[2021.04.26 AGENDA.PDF](#)

2. 2A. 03-22-2021 Meeting Minutes

Documents:

[2A. 2021-03-22 ENV MEETING MINUTES.PDF](#)

3. 3A. Opportunities To Broaden Participation In Environmental Efforts

Documents:

[3A. OPPORTUNITIES TO BROADEN PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS.PDF](#)

A. 3B. Preliminary Discussion Regarding The Environmental Commission

Documents:

[3B. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION WEBPAGE.PDF](#)



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 provides that a meeting of a public body may be conducted via telephone or other electronic means if meeting in a public location is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or declared emergency. Due to the declared health pandemic, this Environmental Commission meeting will be held through electronic means rather than in-person.

You may participate in this meeting by joining the following videoconference or by calling the following telephone number at the scheduled date and time of the meeting:

1. Via Videoconference:

[_https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86794385210?pwd=MjhiMWZMb2tqOG5uYWJWN281d1QxZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86794385210?pwd=MjhiMWZMb2tqOG5uYWJWN281d1QxZz09) **Meeting ID:** 867 9438 5210 **Passcode:** 304639

(Note: Your computer should have a camera and a microphone. However, if you do not have a microphone and camera, you can still view the meeting on your computer and participate in the conversation via a telephone.

2. Via Telephone: 1-312-626-6799 **Meeting ID:** 867 9438 5210 **Passcode:** 304639

MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2021

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call
2. Approve March 22, 2021 Minutes
3. Items for Discussion
 - A. Opportunities to Broaden Participation in Faribault's Environmental Efforts
 - B. Preliminary Discussion regarding an Environmental Commission Webpage
 - C. Update on the Environmental Commission Road Map Document
4. Routine Business
 - A. Announcements and Updates
 - Zoom meeting with the City Attorney scheduled for Wednesday, May 12 at 6:00 pm to discuss the open meeting law, conflicts of interest, and similar legal issues associated with serving on a City

commission

- Update on GROWS' Pollinator Efforts – Emily Nesvold
- Update on Crocker's Creek Restoration and Maintenance Efforts – Dick Huston
- Faribault Fire Department efforts to transition parking lot hillside to native prairie
- City Hall electric lawn mower
- Shortlisted and interviewed to host a GreenCorps member for 11 months starting in September – will hear by May
- The University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership shortlisted our idea brief to promote equity in the City's environmental planning efforts – detailed proposal due May 3
- Participation in Home Energy Squad Challenge with other cities
- The City of Faribault and the City of Northfield suspended its Solar Group Buy Program due to inconsistencies in interconnection fees that could discourage homeowners and small businesses from installing onsite solar – the legislature will begin to review possible solutions
- No response from the state regarding the City's grant application for an electric vehicle charging station at City Hall – public charging stations in a downtown parking lot should be installed in May – discussions about an Hour Car pilot program in Faribault
- The City's Development Review Committee is refining the Natural Landscape Ordinance – Council action expected in May
- The City Council approved the Climate Adaptation Plan

B. Identify Agenda Items for May 23, 2021 Meeting

- Follow-up on May 12 meeting with City Attorney regarding Environmental Commission meeting protocols
- Review and recommend improvements to draft Environmental Commission webpage
- Introduction to tree preservation and replacement ordinances

5. Adjourn

Please contact the Department of Community and Economic Development at 507-334-0100 if you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting.



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 provides that a meeting of a public body may be conducted via telephone or other electronic means if meeting in a public location is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or declared emergency. Due to the declared health pandemic, this meeting of the Environmental Commission held this meeting through electronic means, rather than in-person.

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Vice Chair Behrens called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Wasilowski and Vice Chair Behrens and Chair Steinkamp.

2. Approve February 22, 2021 Minutes.

A motion was made by Nesvold and seconded by Steinkamp on to approve the February 22, 2021 meeting minutes as written.

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, Commissioner Wasilowski and Vice Chair Behrens and Chair Steinkamp.

Nay: None

Motion carried on a 6/0 vote.

3. Items for Discussion

A. Recommend Amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 31 – Tall Grass and Weed Regulations

There has been only one permit issued in Faribault to date. The issue is that the permit is \$150.00. Do we want to continue with the natural landscape permit? A draft ordinance was presented on August 24th; however, were we had difficulty is what defines a “weed”. Should we say that ragweed growing in a yard – what if the homeowner likes ragweed and should there be a defined list of what the weed is. How do we define “rank growth”. Talked about a buffer area but didn’t come to an agreement.

Make a list of prohibited weeds and go beyond the state's noxious weed list. Eliminate the subjective definition of a weed.

Eliminate the requirement to maintain turf grass to a height of no more than eight inches. Instead state that plants cannot overhang the public right of way in manner that creates a hazard or public nuisance. Add language that neighboring properties.

The state had a list of 16 on the Eradicate List and then they have a control list that you should be removing and control so that they do not get out of hand. They also have restricted noxious weeds and specially regulated plants.

Commissioners felt that we need to have a list and could possibly go by the Rice County's and the State's lists and make some positive spins on them.

They discussed the time frame to take care of a potential violation and it was suggested that 10 days would be enough time. Have no requirement for a permit either. Make sure all plantings are off the right-of-way.

Commissioner Wasilowski left at 7:08 p.m.

A motion was made by Huston and seconded by Nesvold on to approve the revised ordinance and recommendation on changing the ordinance.

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call: Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, and Vice Chair Behrens

Nay: Commissioner Steinkamp

Motion carried on a 4/1 vote.

- B. **Preliminary Discussion regarding an Environmental Commission Webpage** – Kari Casper (verbal update – no written report), not discussed.
- C. **Update on GROWS' Pollinator Efforts** – Emily Nesvold (verbal update – no written report), Wanberg asked if there are any deadlines? Commissioner Nesvold stated she is working with Paul Peanasky and are hoping that the City Council will proclaim May "Pollinator Month".
- D. **Update on the Environmental Commission Road Map Document – Chair Steinkamp (verbal update – no written report)**, Commissioner Steinkamp and Commissioner Wasilowski sent in several ideas and will incorporate them in the Roadmap as well. Considers it a living document.

4. Routine Business

A. Announcements and Updates

- The University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership shortlisted our idea brief to promote equity in the City's environmental planning efforts – detailed proposal due May 3.
- Submitted an application to host a GreenCorps member for 11 months starting in September – will hear by May.
- No response yet from the state regarding the City's grant application for an electric vehicle charging station at City Hall – public charging stations in a downtown parking lot should be installed soon.
- RFPs sent to solar installation contractors regarding the Faribault/Northfield/Rice County Solar Group Buy Program – next steps will be to select a contractor, then promote the program to the public.
- City Planner will schedule review and approval of the Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Joint Environmental Commission/City Council work session will likely not occur until after the Governor lifts the emergency order related to the pandemic.

B. Identify Agenda Items for April 26, 2021 Meeting

- Review and recommend improvements to draft Environmental Commission webpage
- Review and recommend status of Green Step Cities actions
- Legal opinion on communication between Commission members
- Youth involvement in the Environmental Commission efforts and meetings

5. Adjourn

A motion was made by Steinkamp and seconded by Huston to adjourn at 7:23.

Roll Call: Commissioner Behrens, Commissioner Diessner, Commissioner Huston, Commissioner Nesvold, and Chair Steinkamp.

Motion carried on a 5/0 vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 22, 2021

By: _____
Kari Casper, Recording Secretary



Environmental Commission Memorandum

TO: Environmental Commission

THROUGH: Deanna Kuennen, Community & Economic Development Director

FROM: David Wanberg, City Planner

MEETING DATE: April 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Opportunities to Broaden Participation in Faribault's Environmental Efforts

The Environmental Commission has expressed an interest in broadening participation in Faribault's environmental efforts. The following outlines key opportunities to raise awareness and understanding (and ultimately participation) in Faribault's environmental efforts.

1. **Environmental Commission.** The Environmental Commission wishes to have youth involvement in Commission meetings and activities. The ordinance that created the City's Environmental Commission does not prohibit, nor does it require youth participation. The Commission can request an ordinance change to have a dedicated youth position on the Commission. Alternatively, the Commission can promote youth involvement in the public discussion parts of Commission meetings.

All Environmental Commission meetings are open to the public. The Commission should discuss opportunities to solicit input from youth on environmental issues during the meetings. The Commission should also discuss ways to encourage collaboration between the City and schools on environmental efforts. For example, the City and schools could collaborate on the state's Greenstep efforts.

The Faribault Youth on Boards program can help recruit and coordinate youth involvement in the Environmental Commission. Chair Steinkamp has also coordinated with youth representatives from area schools.

2. **Pilot Program.** The City is coordinating with four other southeast Minnesota communities to request assistance from the University of Minnesota to strengthen our outreach to all in the community –

especially those who are typically not involved in city government. Regardless of whether the City is awarded assistance from the University of Minnesota, the Environmental Commission can serve as a model for involving the community in environmental efforts.

3. **Service Projects.** Several organizations are doing amazing environmental work (pollinator gardens, creek restorations, etc.). The Commission may be able to promote and build on these efforts. For example, the Commission could help promote community involvement in shoreland restoration projects, prairie plantings at the fire station, etc. Paul Peanasky, Director of Parks and Recreation, will discuss with the Environmental Commission ongoing collaborative efforts in the city and possible future projects the Commission could help promote.
4. **Environmental Awareness Campaigns.** The Commission can promote environmental awareness through the City's website, forums, social media, special events, and celebrations.

The purpose of this agenda item is to continue the Commission's discussions about broadening awareness and understanding of the environmental issues and opportunities. The Commission is not expected to make decisions about specific opportunities at this meeting.



Environmental Commission Memorandum

TO: Environmental Commission
THROUGH: Deanna Kuennen, Community & Economic Development Director
FROM: David Wanberg, City Planner
MEETING DATE: April 26, 2021
SUBJECT: Preliminary Discussion regarding the Environmental Commission Webpage

Every City commission has a general webpage on the City's website that lists the purpose and membership of the commission. However, the Environmental Commission website can be used for much more. For example, we can use the website to promote upcoming GreenStep Cities events, Partners in Energy events, and other events. This agenda item aims to identify items that Environmental Commission would like to see on the webpage. However, the City will ultimately decide on what to include on the webpage. Possible items include the following:

1. Upcoming events
2. Past events (recordings, etc.)
3. GreenStep Cities
4. Partners in Energy
5. Resources (pollinator guides, electric vehicle guides, etc.)
6. City plans and documents (Environmental Commission's Road Map, Natural Resources Plan, etc.)
7. In the news (news article regarding Faribault's environmental efforts)

The Environmental Commission should comment on the above items and other possible items to include on the Environmental Commission webpage.