



# Sustainability Commission

## Regular Meeting

### Minutes

335 South Broadway  
De Pere, WI 54115  
[www.deperewi.gov](http://www.deperewi.gov)

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

5:30 PM

Council Chambers/Virtual

#### I. Call to Order

##### 1. Roll Call

Carmen Van Schyndel called the October 14, 2025 Sustainability Commission meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

**Present:** Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel, Anna Metzler

**Remote:** Casey Nelson

**Absent:**

**Excused:** Emily Henrigillis

Others present:

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer

Betty Marovich, Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary

#### II. Public Comment on Matters not on the Agenda. Comments made during the public comment period shall pertain only to matters under the jurisdiction of the Sustainability Commission. §6-3(f) DPMC

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, thanked Betty Marovich for the six years dedicated to providing excellent service to the City of De Pere residents and the Sustainability Commission and wished her best of luck in her new position. Mr. Kuffel asked Betty to share what she is moving on to. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, shared that she took a position with Columbia County and will be moving to their family land. Mr. Kuffel asked the commission to have patience during the transition.

#### III. Items

##### 1. Approval of the September 9, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Leonard requested amending the minutes to include the link for DIME.

Commissioner Leonard moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Rachel Leonard
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Nicole Slavin
<b>AYES:</b>	Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel
<b>EXCUSED:</b>	Emily Henrigillis

##### 2. Wisconsin Stormwater Week Proclamation

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, shared the Wisconsin Stormwater Week Proclamation from

Common Council on September 16, 2025. Mr. Kuffel shared that the City will plan to make this proclamation annually, as it pairs well with the Adopt-a-Drain program and promoting clean and safe waterways.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

### 3. Current Sustainable Projects

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, shared the current sustainable project of pond dredging the stormwater detention pond located off Daytona Speedway near Southwest Park.

Commissioner Van Schyndel asked how staff determines when a pond needs to be dredged. Mr. Kuffel explained the typical pond depth and storage limits that are used to help staff determine when to dredge out the sediment. Commissioner Lawton asked how long it took to accumulate the level of sediment staff saw at this location. Mr. Kuffel explained it was from 2001 until it was dredged in 2025. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff believes that 20 years will be the typical time frame for dredging. Commissioner Leonard asked if staff has found some ponds that fair better than others. Mr. Kuffel answered using a visual representation of a pond system in aerial view that demonstrated the sediment settling based on how green or clear the water became. Mr. Kuffel further explained that basin size and pond size play into the equation for sediment settling and stated that staff will monitor every pond on a three year rotation to better understand how quickly the sediment is building up. Commissioner Lawton asked if the sediment is tested for hazardous/harmful materials. Mr. Kuffel stated that if a fill application is not available at the time of dredging, the material is disposed of at the landfill. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the goal would be to have a fill application available. Mr. Kuffel stated that is the cheapest and most sustainable way as it avoids extra trucking and fees.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

### 4. Consideration and Possible Action on Adopt-a-Drain Incentive Program

Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, shared that this item was requested to be brought back from an original discussion in November 2024. Ms. Marovich stated that start-up kits had been implemented and quickly mentioned a few other options the Commission could offer including an annual recognition event (during Beer Garden or with the Police Department for their crossing guard volunteers), tiered recognition program, referral program, volunteer spotlight on social media, and volunteer recognition at Common Council. Ms. Marovich shared that staff did not have a recommendation but wanted to present some options that the Commission could choose to move forward with.

Commissioner Van Schyndel mentioned that Commissioner Henrigillis is the lead for the adopt-a-drain program and suggested that she be present for any actions taken. Commissioner Slavin expressed interest in offering a referral program of some sort for the participants that share the message and the program with their neighbors. Commissioner Van Schyndel shared interest in the referral program and also believes the tiered recognition program would promote continued participation for submitting cleaning logs. Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, asked if any of the Commissioners had seen the ad at the movie theater since it began playing October 6. Commissioner Leonard spoke in favor of having a recognition event at Beer Garden. Commissioner Van Schyndel added that it would be a good option, especially if the Commission was going to transition to having a booth at Beer Garden rather than Farmers Market next year. Mr. Kuffel asked Advisor Metzler what her thoughts were for getting high school groups involved and how to be recognized. Advisor Metzler stated that it would work best to get high schoolers involved through a school club. Commissioner Slavin suggested a challenge between businesses. Commissioner Lawton asked if signs were available for residents to place in their yards stating they adopted a drain. Commissioner Van Schnydel stated that the Commission didn't formally act

on creating signs, but it has been part of multiple discussions. Commissioner Van Schyndel suggested tabling this item until the next meeting and asked if Commissioner Panick had ideas from a marketing perspective to get more involvement. Commissioner Panick commented that per the school website there is a Clean and Green Club that could be targeted for participation and supported the business challenge idea. Advisor Metzler suggested discussing the program with teachers who could allow this work to count towards National Honor Society volunteer hours. Mr. Kuffel offered to bring the stormwater model to the school to demonstrate the importance of the program. Commissioner Panick suggested a door hanger at the closest three houses to each drain. Commissioner Leonard suggested handing information out with candy at trick or treating hours. Ms. Marovich shared concerns over sharing during Halloween and trick or treating, as the information will be given primarily to kids and may not get to the target audience to increase participation. Ms. Marovich suggested using a similar idea but having it at Beer Garden or Farmers Market next year. Ms. Marovich suggested silicone bracelets as a level of the tiered recognition program. Commissioner Leonard shared her support of a community or business competition.

Commissioner Van Schyndel moved to table until next meeting and combine with adopt-a-drain discussion for action, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Carmen Van Schyndel
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Nicole Slavin
<b>AYES:</b>	Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel
<b>EXCUSED:</b>	Emily Henrigillis

##### 5. Discussion on Sustainability Commission Work Plan

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the rest of the agenda items can be kicked off by the lead commissioner for each topic.

Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if there were any formal updates to include for the work plan portions on Clean Energy or Clean Air. Commissioner Leonard shared that the current administration has removed cumulative and direct effects from the analysis which caused a slight hurdle in review and she is waiting for approval to share her findings with the group. Commissioner Leonard shared that she reached out to Green Bay and received a contact for requesting WPS data but is not listed as an administrator on the account and may not receive the information requested for Green Tier. Mr. Kuffel shared that staff met to discuss Green Tier participation with the plan to have an update submitted by end of 2026. Mr. Kuffel added that it may be best for him to be the point of contact for energy information and shared that staff will be investigating options for how to get the submission completed and bringing these options back to the Commission for consideration. Commissioner Leonard shared that she may shift her focus to better correlate the energy work plan to Green Tier once it is updated. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if content should be added to the Sustainability Commission Work Plan for this topic. Mr. Kuffel stated that it will mostly be a staff item until the Green Tier submission is completed, but once it is, that information can be used to outline the clean/green energy work plan. Commissioner Lawton clarified what actions the City is taking for Green Tier currently. Mr. Kuffel explained De Pere is a legacy community but has not submitted an annual report recently and that is what staff will be working to complete by end of 2026. Commissioner Lawton commented that the Commissioners should be knowledgeable about the work being done for the submission to assist where possible. Commissioner Panick stated she did not have any action items to add to the clean air portion of the work plan at this point.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

6. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Adopt-a-Drain

Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if there was additional discussion on the Adopt-a-Drain program.

Commissioner Slavin volunteered to lead this initiative along side Commissioner Henrigillis. Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, asked if there were any new adopters. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, stated she believed the number in the memo was correct. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the ad was live at De Pere Cinema. Ms. Marovich stated it was supposed to start showing on October 6. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if there was an update on the Reid Street banner. Mr. Kuffel apologized since he had moved the item to the next meeting for discussion. Commissioner Leonard asked if the commission needed to brainstorm ideas and sayings for the banner. Mr. Kuffel stated that staff had drafted a banner using the Grinch saying for salt use. Ms. Marovich shared the available dates from the Parks Department for a Reid Street banner.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

7. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Composting

Commissioner Van Schyndel stated she had begun researching alternatives to the current composting reimbursement program including through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin, and at-home composting contacts for community presentations.

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that staff believes they will use approximately \$5,000 of the composting reimbursement budget in 2025.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

8. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Clean Air Initiative

No additional update on Clean Air past the discussion during the Work Plan.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

9. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, shared with the Commission that the Urban Orchard Committee met recently and decided to disband with no plan to expand or create new orchards and the Parks Department will maintain the existing urban orchards. Mr. Kuffel stated that the Sustainability Commission will retain approval for planting pollinator gardens at the urban orchards and the Commission will need to determine how to accomplish that if it was still of interest.

Commissioner Leonard shared that she knew some residents that would be interested in volunteering to work on the pollinator gardens at the urban orchards but would need firmer details to follow up with them. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if the letters had started being sent to residents to gauge interest in the planned natural landscape digital walking tour. Mr. Kuffel stated that they have and staff had received a couple positive responses for participation. Mr. Kuffel added that staff has not taken time to complete a windshield survey or site visits. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked for clarification on what a windshield survey would be. Mr. Kuffel explained that a windshield survey would be a drive-by tool to visually identify locations with potential planned natural landscapes to contact. Betty Marovich, Recording Secretary, added that Commissioner Henrigilis had reached out to the Master Gardeners and Wild Ones contacts for them to contact her if they were interested in participating and she had been

sending those names and locations to staff to send out letters. Commissioner Leonard stated she would send staff the contacts she had for interested residents.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

#### 10. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Green Energy

Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if there was additional discussion on the Green Energy initiative.

No additional update on Green Energy past the discussion during the Work Plan.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

#### IV. Future Agenda Items

Aldersperson Nelson requested adding a discussion regarding recommendations and incentives for planting beneficial plants for pollinators. Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated he would reach out to Aldersperson Nelson to get the formal wording he would like to see on the agenda and suggested Aldersperson Nelson write a memo to be included.

Mr. Kuffel stated he would be bringing back a composting program update, Reid Street banner, Educational series in 2026, and composting presentation.

#### V. Adjournment

Commissioner Lawton moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 PM, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Marovich