



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Meeting Minutes - Draft Environmental Quality Commission

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Provancha called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: 8 - Chair Michael Provancha, Commissioner Bruce Anderson, Commissioner Janet Petri, Commissioner George Kinney, Commissioner Susannah Shmurak, Vice Chair Rob Hanson, Commissioner Ava Podracky and Commissioner Kimberly Haroldson

Also present: Erica Zweifel, Mayor of the City of Northfield; Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator; Risi Karim, Assistant to the City Administrator; Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate; Alex Halverson, Youth Representative (non-voting)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Petri, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Kinney, Commissioner Shmurak, Vice Chair Hanson, Commissioner Podracky and Commissioner Haroldson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [26-077](#) January 21, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Shmurak, seconded by Commissioner Petri, to approve the January 21, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Kinney, Commissioner Shmurak, Vice Chair Hanson, Commissioner Podracky and Commissioner Haroldson

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Petri asked about interest among Commissioners in tabling during Riverwalk during the 2026 season. Petri also informed the Commission about an upcoming presentation on Sunday, February 22 at noon at 512 Washington Street regarding climate change and food choices; about the most recent Citizens Climate Lobby chapter meeting at which Beth Kallestad of MnDOT spoke on building out the

electric vehicle network in the state; and about a recent article on Canary News Network concerning Xcel's bid to reinvent the virtual power plant.

- Commissioner Anderson reported on the lack of updates from the Minnesota Department of Commerce on the Save Energy Minnesota rebate and incentive program rollout, noting that they are still awaiting final approval from the U.S. Department of Energy. Anderson also reported on a recent news article saying that 24 states, including Minnesota, have legislation in the works to allow residential installation of small, plug-in solar. Anderson also reported that his term as Commissioner will end in April.

- Chair Provancha requested an update from staff on the possibility of citywide organics composting.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [26-078](#) Sustainable Building Policy

Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich delivered a presentation on the limitations of City's current Sustainable Building Policy that prevent any new building projects receiving financial assistance from the City to be able to comply with the policy. The EQC discussed the limitations, and Pabich responded to questions and comments from the EQC.

3. [26-079](#) 2026-2027 Work Plan

The EQC discussed the initiatives proposed for the 2026-27 Work Plan with Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich. Members of the Commission volunteered to work on each initiative.

1. Energy Efficiency Education for Residents: Commissioners Petri and Podracky
2. Electric Vehicle Community Showcase: Vice Chair Hanson and Youth Representative Halverson
3. Active Transportation Awareness Campaign: Chair Provancha, Vice Chair Hanson, and Youth Representative Podracky
4. Landscaping & Native Planting Research: Commissioners Petri, Shmurak, and Halverson
5. Waste Reduction Library Research: Chair Provancha, Commissioners Shmurak and Haroldson
6. Zero Waste: Recycling and Compost Education Toolkit: Commissioner Haroldson

A motion was made by Commissioner Kinney, seconded by Commissioner Shmurak, to approve the adoption of the six 2026-2027 EQC Work Plan initiatives as discussed. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chair Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Kinney, Commissioner Shmurak, Vice Chair Hanson, Commissioner Podracky and Commissioner Haroldson

4. [26-081](#) Consider Motion of Support for Resolution Proclaiming April 24, 2026 as Arbor Day in Northfield.

Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich proposed that the EQC consider a Motion of Support for Resolution Proclaiming April 24, 2026 as Arbor Day in Northfield.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Kinney, to approve a Motion of Support for Resolution Proclaiming April 24, 2026 as Arbor Day in Northfield. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Yes:** 8 - Chair Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Kinney, Commissioner Shmurak, Vice Chair Hanson, Commissioner Podracky and Commissioner Haroldson

STAFF UPDATES

5. [26-080](#) Staff Update

Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich presented updates from City staff. Pabich and Mayor Zweifel responded to questions and comments from the EQC.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Kinney, seconded by Commissioner Shmurak, to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Yes:** 8 - Chair Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Kinney, Commissioner Shmurak, Vice Chair Hanson, Commissioner Podracky and Commissioner Haroldson