



# City of Northfield

City Hall  
801 Washington Street  
Northfield, MN 55057  
ci.northfield.mn.us

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Environmental Quality Commission

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Wednesday, December 16, 2020

7:00 PM

GoToMeeting

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### Roll Call

*Also Present: Beth Kallestad - Program Coordinator, Lucy Menssen and Nick Boehning - Youth Board Members, Erica Zweifel - Councilmember, Matt Rohn - community member, Eric Molho - Neuger Communications/Fieldstone Research Group, Julia Eagles - Institute for Market Transformation, Cindy Stock - Recording Secretary*

**Present:** 5 - Janet Petri, Carla Hansen, Brian Nowak, Kim Smith and Bruce Anderson

**Absent:** 1 - Mika Turner

### I. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Board Member Novak, seconded by Board Member Petri, to approve the December 16, 2020 EQC Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 5 - Board Member Petri, Board Member Hansen, Board Member Nowak, Smith and Board Member Anderson

### II. Approval of Minutes

1. [20-640](#) November 18, 2020 EQC Minutes

**Attachments:** [1 - 11-18-20 EQC Minutes](#)

A motion was made by Board Member Novak, seconded by Board Member Petri, to approve the November 18, 2020 EQC Minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 5 - Board Member Petri, Board Member Hansen, Board Member Nowak, Smith and Board Member Anderson

### III. Presentations

2. [20-641](#) Organics Recycling Survey Presentation

**Attachments:** [1 - City of Nfld Compost Survey Report\\_120820](#)

*The EQC received a presentation by Eric Molho, Neuger Communications/Fieldstone Research Group, with the results of the Organics Recycling Survey, which was distributed*

to Northfield residents summer/early fall of 2020. This survey is an outgrowth of the Climate Action Plan.

- Carla Hansen served as an intern to assist on this project.
- Survey/project funded by Jan Shoger to the City to support waste reduction, not use tax payers' dollars.
- Mailed to all Northfield residents (6,340 addresses/962 surveys returned = 15.2% return rate).
- The survey asked residents what they know about and what is their interest in recycling, specifically household organic waste.
- Two categories - Household Organics and Yard waste.
- Overall, if the City were to move forward there is more support particularly if optional. The opposed have concern with high costs, and if it will make a meaningful impact (plastic recycling have given people doubt). Large segment in the middle that are "winnable". "Voice management" a group of people opposed - do not want to pay and resist.
- Education and outreach will be important including messaging around how this is important. Partner with NCC.
- Optional vs. mandatory - build up over period of time from optional to mandatory. Mandatory would be a challenge. If implement, people eventually support/take part.

EQC discussion:

- What questions should EQC be asking?
- What is EQC's role to move process along?
- Any missing information?
- How much of survey relates to Climate Action Plan? Per Climate Action Plan, would need 100% organic waste collected by 2025. Need to move on education.
- Local vs. Global - understanding the local connection with global effects. Significant differences to educate community as organics, recycling, composting are all different things.
- Organics and recycling plastics are two separate things - need to educate community.
- Important "consistent language" is used.
- Chair Smith surprised at degree of support for organics.

3. [20-642](#) Presentation regarding Minnesota Cities Coalition response to Xcel Energy Integrated Resource Plan

**Attachments:** [1 - MN Local Government IRP Engagement Coalition summary](#)

The EQC received a presentation regarding Xcel Energy's 2020-2034 proposed Integrated Resource Plan presented by Julia Eagles, Associate Director of Utility & Regulatory Strategy at the Institute for Market Transformation, who is providing support for this Minnesota Cities coalition.

- IRP = Integrated Resource Plan - a plan that sets the long term vision for resource development in a utility's territory.
- Xcel Energy filed their Upper Midwest Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) on July 1, 2019 with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC), covering the 2020-2034 planning period. The plan outlines the utility's resource needs over that 15 year period, and charts a path for achieving its carbon goals of 80% reduction by 2030 and 100% carbon-free by 2050 with proposed plan retirements and new resource additions. As a part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies' American Cities Climate Challenge (ACCC), the technical assistance team are developing joint comments for the City of Minneapolis and also convening a coalition of other high-ambition local governments in Xcel Energy's Minnesota service territory to engage in this proceeding and connect the dots with other utility regulatory filings. The objective with this effort is to increase awareness among

*local governments of utility plans and the impact on their sustainability goals, and to bring local government carbon and energy policies and priorities to the PUC to influence their decision-making.*

*Follow-up Action:*

*- On EQC 2021 Agenda to get more involved. The EQC and Northfield City Council will be asked to endorse a letter to the PUC, along with other cities in early 2021. Would like local commitments/Northfield approval process. Julia supply draft for December meeting.*

#### IV. Old Business Items

4. [20-643](#) Board & Commission Annual Review

*Kallestad stated Board and Commissions Annual Review is in packet and requested questions, feedback or comments before the Annual Review proceeds to press.*

5. [20-644](#) Climate Action Plan work group efforts for 2020

*Reflection on Climate Action Plan Group Efforts in 2020:  
(during COVID19 difficult to be as effective)*

*- Chair Smith pleased with quantity of work and involvement, stating the process can be slow though. Pleased with all the work accomplished.  
- One group felt could be more participation from other group members.  
- One group realizes what a big job it is and how difficult it is to implement the Climate Action Plan.*

6. [20-645](#) Staff Update

**Attachments:** [1 - Expectations-Roles-for-Grow-Solar-Teams](#)  
[Hyperlink](#)

*Grow Solar*

*- Main focus - education about solar.  
- Joint effort between Northfield and Faribault. Open also to residents in Dakota County.  
- Chose Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) - Milwaukee, WI.  
- City will help with communications.  
- Board Member Anderson to be local helper/presentations.*

#### Commissioner Comments and Reports

b) Staff Updates and Reports

c) Comments from the Chair

*Chair Smith thanked Board Member Hansen and Council Liaison Zweifel for their hard work, dedication, contribution and accomplishments to EQC, and wished them farewell.*

*Chair Smith is also stepping down, and the likewise sentiments go to her. We thank her for her years of service.*

#### V. Adjournment

**A motion was made by Board Member Petri, seconded by Board Member Novak, to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 5 - Board Member Petri, Board Member Hansen, Board Member Nowak, Smith and Board Member Anderson