

# BEMIDJI SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, March 12, 2026

City Hall – 317 4th Street NW  
3:30 PM



**1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

a) February 12, 2026

**4) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Please state your name and address; please use appropriate language and no derogatory comments towards any individuals; please keep your comments limited to 3 minutes or less; and the chair may limit speakers and times accordingly.

**5) OLD BUSINESS**

b) Comprehensive Planning Updates

**6) NEW BUSINESS**

c) Earth Day Event Planning

a. Sanford Health Earth Day Event

b. AI & Data Center Info Session

d) McKinstry Partnership for Energy Efficiency

e) Reports

f) Upcoming Events or Grant Opportunities

**7) ADJOURN**

## **City of Bemidji Sustainability Commission,**

February 12, 2026 starting at 3:30PM at the Bemidji City Hall

Minutes

Commissioners attending: Jordan Lutz, Charles Biberg, Lisa Weiskopt, Linda Kingery

Commissioners Absent: Jo Li

Guests: Erika Bailey Johnson, Andrew Miller, Sami Holm, Kathryn Burke

Liaisons attending: Audrey, Melissa

Call to Order at 3:33

Introductions

Approval of Agenda M/S by Charles/Lisa to approve, carried.

Approval of Minutes M/S by Charles/Linda to approve, carried.

Public Comment

Erika Bailey Johnson, 8636 Cranberry Court Bemidji MN

- There will be a meeting at NWICDC on 19th 5:30 to 7:30 about the future of the new wellness center. Perhaps the Sustainability Commission could have been represented.
- Earth Day - consider a panel about AI and data centers.

### **Old Business**

Anticipate two positions to be appointed by the City Council on Feb 17th.

On-boarding of new members will take place at the March meeting.

### **Goal setting for 2026**

Review of past goals and Best Practice Accomplishments

- **Native Landscaping** - DNR Grant Update
  - ReLeaf grant awarded but with reduced amount - planning tree preservation
  - [Great River Greening](#) donating 400 trees, some of the trees are planted by the city in parks and boulevards.
  - [Let's Plant Trees](#) - order trees online pick up on May 16 and 17th.
    - Charles will follow up with Shroeder to ensure that education and tree care is part of the program.
  - Also looked at native plants, mowing height.
    - Strategies into Comp Plan, details in Code
  - Birds Bees Butterflies - Erika volunteered to be liaison
- **NEW GOAL FireWise Bemidji**
  - Linda shared about her meeting with Fire Chief Justin Sherwood and his interest in focusing on reducing fire risk in the aftermath of the blowdown event. This could be a goal for Sustainability Commission for next couple years.
  - Kathryn Shared Program Materials from DNR website
  - This would be another good topic for Earth Day events
- **Waste and Recycling (no time to address)**

- **Energy Efficiency (no time to address)**

### **Comprehensive Planning Update**

Sami Holm from HRDC provided update from HRCD

Community-wide survey is available through the end of February.

Sector meetings to start in spring.

Audrey noted the need for specific outreach to Indigenous Community, she will provide contacts to Melissa so she can follow up.

### **New Business**

Reports - Melissa shared a planning case

Chipotle property - Jordan and Lisa to develop comments.

- Landscaping - native plant, design as rain garden, native trees
- Multi-modal transportation

Transportation Electrification Survey - please take the survey and share with your networks.

Link provided by email.

Another grant is possible - to provide EV chargers. Need initial interest form completed by the end of February. 80% cost covered by grant for planning.

### **Upcoming Events and Grant Opportunities**

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M/S by Lisa/Charles to adjourn, motion carried.