



Wauwatosa, WI

Sustainability Committee

Meeting Minutes - Final

7725 W. North Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

6:30 PM

Zoom Only:
<https://servetosa.zoom.us/j/81245734808>,
Meeting ID: 812 4573 4808

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present 9 Member, Chair Michael Arney
Member Heather Deaton
Member Seth Flanders
Member John Horkey
Member Jill McClellan
Member Steven Ostrenga
Member Katherine Riebe
Member Ian Schmitt-Ernst
Member Rob Zimmerman

Excused 2 Member Zoe Hastert
Aldersperson Liaison Melissa Dolan

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes of the June 4, 2025 regular meeting [25-1289](#)
RESULT: APPROVED
MOVER: Steven Ostrenga
SECONDER: Michael Arney
Aye: 9 Arney, Deaton, Flanders, Horkey, McClellan, Ostrenga, Riebe, Schmitt-Ernst, and Zimmerman
Excused: 1 Hastert, and Dolan

NEW BUSINESS

1. Announcements and upcoming activities/events [25-1280](#)
Mr. Zimmerman noted that the Green Schools Summit is Tuesday, August 12 at Boerner Botanical Gardens. The cost to attend is \$60. Others have attended and found it to be a good event. Committee is encouraged to send out to school contacts. [2025 Green & Healthy Schools Conference - Green Schools Consortium of Milwaukee](#)
Ms Riebe shared upcoming events by the Milwaukee Urban Demonstration Farm Network (MUD) (led by UW Extension) related to sustainability. Thurs, Aug 7 is a potluck brunch and learning session at Firefly Ridge Community Garden in Wauwatosa. Cover Cropping for Urban Growers workshop is Friday Aug 8

*from 8:30 -noon. Both events are at Firefly Ridge Community Garden.
<https://foodsystems.extension.wisc.edu/milwaukee-urban-demonstration-farm-network/>*

Mr. Schmitt-Ernst noted that the state budget that passed included \$738M for water projects and restoration. He considers this a big win as the Wisconsin Conservation Voters had lobbied for \$1 B.

2. City Sustainability Manager update [25-1281](#)

Ms. Conway reviewed her monthly report focusing on some highlights: The OBBBA still allows for the mechanism of direct pay through the IRA but the credits will be impacted. Solar residential tax advantages end in 2025.

Short term sustainability goals (3-5 year timeframe) are being worked on. Ms Conway will bring a draft to the committee in October.

The Grow Solar event was positively received; the city held an EV event for City employees to highlight the new fleet vehicles.

Ms Conway will work with the city communications team and her internal department on communication plans and strategies. She will keep the committee informed.

For wetlands restoration, Ms Riebe suggested they look at NRCS.

3. National Wildlife Federation proclamation [25-1282](#)

Guest speaker - Frankie Garr - National Wildlife Federation Ms Garr shared the group's goal of having 250 certified gardens in Wauwatosa to become nationally certified as a Community Wildlife Habitat. The group is at 143. Many committee members are already certified while most others expressed interest. Mr. Ostrenga suggested the committee write a letter of support to assist in promotion. The mayor has named May 2026 to be the Garden for Wildlife month.

4. Yard waste/mulching [25-1283](#)

Guest speaker - Maggie Anderson - senior civil engineer for City of Wauwatosa Ms Anderson and Ms Conway shared their ideas for promoting leaf mulching in yards/grass (instead of leaf pickup) as part of their larger organic waste reduction initiative. This improves storm water conditions and provides nutrients to the grass and also contributes to the city's responsibility to reduce waste as part of a 5-year permit with the DNR. They asked for the committee's support in promoting and by using committee budget \$ to pay for yard signs. The committee was largely supportive of leaf mulching, there was mixed feedback on the use of yard signs. Ms Anderson and Ms Conway will go back to their team to work on a communication plan with the communication staff.

*Mr. Arney provided this link after the meeting -
<https://www.usgs.gov/index.php/centers/upper-midwest-water-science-center/science/using-leaf-collection-and-street-cleaning-reduce>*

5. Annual report presentation recap [25-1284](#)

Mr. Zimmerman shared that the feedback and questions from the council were very positive and showed support and interest in the efforts of the committee and the City.

6. Outreach recap, plans for upcoming months [25-1285](#)

Mr. Zimmerman shared they spoke to about 30-40 families at the farmers market on July 5.

Mr. Schmitt-Ernst and Ms Deaton shared they spoke to about 30-40 families at Tosa Night Out on July 9. Topics included communication, interest in volunteering, composting and recycling resources.

Mr. Arney and Ms Deaton hosted the table on August 6 at Tosa Night Out before joining the meeting, and spoke to about 25-30 families.

The light bulb giveaway was fairly popular at each of these events.

Tosa Green Summit is planned for Sat, Sept 13 for hazardous waste collection and Set, Sept 20 for the exhibitors. Mr Zimmerman and Ms Riebe plan to be host the table with others interested.

Additional resources requested are laminated sheets for the HOMES rebate offerings.

7. Wauwatosa School District updates [25-1286](#)

E2S2 - Ms. Deaton shared that the subcommittee has agreed to proceed with a solar estimate from Arch or Current. The goals of the subcommittee continue to solidify with each meeting.

Green Teams - No update.

8. Joint Housing Coalition update [25-1287](#)

Mr. Horky shared that there is an upcoming meeting and that Ms Conway will be invited to the September meeting to discuss collaboration across goals.

9. MKE Grow Solar public outreach recap [25-1288](#)

Arch is completely full through the end of 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 P.M.