

**CITY OF PLYMOUTH
AGENDA
Regular Environmental Quality Committee
Medicine Lake Room
3400 Plymouth Boulevard, Plymouth, MN
May 13, 2026, 7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 2. PUBLIC FORUM** - Individuals may address the committee about any item not contained on the regular agenda. A maximum of three minutes is allotted per individual with a total of 15 minutes for the forum. If the full 15 minutes are not needed for the forum, the committee will continue with the agenda. The committee will take no official action on items discussed at the forum, with the exception of referral to staff for future report.

3. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 4. APPROVE AGENDA** - Environmental Quality Committee members may add items to the agenda for discussion purposes or staff direction only. The committee will not normally take official action on items added to the agenda.

- 5. CONSENT AGENDA** - These items are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a committee member or individual so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and placed elsewhere on the agenda.

- 5.1** Adopt proposed minutes
1. EQC 04-08-2026

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 6.1** Plymouth Environmental Academy

7. REPORTS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

8. FUTURE MEETINGS -

- 8.1** Future Meetings

9. ADJOURNMENT

Proposed Minutes

Environmental Quality Committee Meeting

April 8, 2026

Acting Chair Vavreck called a Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Environmental Quality Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Medicine Lake Room of City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Boulevard, on April 8, 2026.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee members Blakely, Dmytrenko, Matthiesen, Polzin, and Vavreck.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Chair Tinjum and Committee Member Babcock.

STAFF PRESENT: Engineering Services Manager McKenzie, and City Engineer/Deputy Public Works Director Payne.

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Gregor, Resident Susan Calwell, and Resident Jim Love.

Plymouth Forum

Susan Calwell provided support for the EQC and the organics program. She asked the city to find more ways to promote participation in the organics program, suggesting the use of a large media campaign. She also expressed a desire to choose her own hauler that is environmentally friendly and does not haul refuse to the HERC.

Jim Love, resident of Timberton, did not believe that he had an option for organic recycling because he lives in a multi-family building. He wanted to eliminate the HERC and mentioned that a portion of the material that goes to the HERC is organics. He expressed a desire to expand the organics program to include multi-family communities. He also supported increased communication on the organics program.

Presentations and Public Information Announcements

There were no presentations or public information announcements.

Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by Acting Chair Vavreck and seconded by Committee member Blakely to move item 5.2 from the consent agenda to become item 6.3 to allow additional discussion. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Motion was made by Committee member Blakely and seconded by Committee member Polzin to approve the agenda as amended. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Committee member Polzin and seconded by Committee member Dmytrenko to approve the consent agenda that included the following item:

(5.1) Adopt March 11, 2026, Regular Environmental Quality Committee Minutes

~~(5.2) Metropolitan Council Water Efficiency Grant Program Application~~

With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

General Business

(6.1) Plymouth Environmental Academy

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie noted previous discussion related to potential topics and commented that the ranked topics were included in the packet for review. He asked the committee to discuss the upcoming environmental academy and the proposed topics.

Committee member Dymtrenko stated that she did not love the iPad format for the survey, and the committee agreed that it was a barrier to some people wanting to participate.

The committee discussed the number of sessions that would be offered during one year, whether to spread those out throughout the year or combine multiple topics into one session. It was agreed upon that the topics should mesh with the climate action plan.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie commented that they could stay consistent with the climate action plan while also having these sessions run independently. He explained that while topics could be consistent, he cautioned against making one a prerequisite to another.

Committee member Mathiesen asked for clarification on what was meant by health and safety.

Acting Chair Vavreck stated that her interpretation was a climate resiliency hub.

Committee member Blakely asked how that would be communicated to the public.

Acting Chair Vavreck noted that more details and items of focus were included in the last packet.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie commented that local food seems to be a topic that would be easily understood by residents, and agreed that they would need to be cautious as to how they would market health and safety, as that could have many interpretations. He stated that the session could be renamed for clarification.

Committee member Dymtrenko stated that he was surprised that organics did not rank higher, noting that they could focus more on multi-family housing.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie stated that there was a waste management/solid waste session a few years ago, so that topic has been covered to some degree. He confirmed that organics had begun

earlier in the same year that the session was held. He stated that the next agenda item is related to solid waste, recycling, and organics.

Acting Chair Vavreck brought up the concept of community solar, and members of the committee provided background information on a previous session that focused on solar. She asked if they could have an advocacy group that speaks at the environmental academy sessions.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie confirmed that they would be able to set the agenda for those sessions and could include outside parties.

Committee member Polzin provided additional information on outside partners and advocacy groups that have provided presentations at previous sessions. He believed that staff would like direction on the topics and the number of sessions for the year.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie suggested that they create a framework of main points and ideas, with a champion for each session/topic.

Committee member Polzin suggested that health and safety be retitled to public health. He expressed confusion about who is leading the academy, given the previous discussion, as he believed that staff was going to take the lead rather than the committee.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie stated that it is his understanding that the EQC is still charged with the details of the program, while staff will be providing support.

Committee member Mattheisen stated that he prefers to keep four sessions per year, noting that they could plan ahead to ensure they continue to keep topics on deck. It was agreed that they would have one topic/session per quarter.

It was decided to have the topics of building and energy, public health, local food, and waste management.

The committee had additional discussion on the building and energy topic, noting that efficiency could be a focus for both homes and commercial buildings. It was agreed upon that a presentation could focus on efforts the city has made, and what others could do to save money and reduce energy use.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie noted successes that could be gained through a targeted marketing approach, working with churches and nonprofits to reduce energy usage.

Committee member Polzin stated that perhaps if engineering is going to have an intern, they could handle some of that targeted outreach.

Committee member Dymtrenko suggested that they do targeted outreach to one or two individuals from each organization and give them an outline of the information that would be presented, focusing on the environmental benefits and cost savings. She stated that the session could focus on a plan of action that could be implemented in buildings.

Committee member Polzin suggested having a roundtable format for the nonprofits/businesses, as that may be a more attractive format and information-sharing viewpoint than the city just telling them what they should do. He stated that the available resources could also be included in that format.

Committee member Mattheisen used the example of asking a building manager five things they have done over the past five years to reduce their energy usage, and that could bring forward some different ideas.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie confirmed the consensus for four sessions per year, held quarterly, recognizing that they have already passed the first quarter of 2026. Sessions will be planned ahead on a rolling basis to ensure they can continue to promote the next topic at a session. It was agreed that people could sign up for events independently. He confirmed the following session topics: building and energy home, building and energy nonprofits, public health, local food, and waste management.

Committee member Polzin stated that public health could include topics ranging from the reduction of mosquitoes in people's yards to how to manage toxic items that are often stored in garages. It was acknowledged that the topic will need to be narrowed in scope.

Committee member Blakely stated that public health could focus on hazardous materials and offered to champion that topic.

Committee member Dymtrenko volunteered for the residential element of building and energy.

Acting Chair Vavreck volunteered for the nonprofit element of building and energy, along with local food. It was decided that local food would be held in the first quarter of 2027. It was noted that waste management would be held in the second quarter of 2027.

The committee agreed that both the building and energy sessions could occur in the third quarter of 2026. It was agreed that public health could take place in the fourth quarter of 2026.

Committee members Polzin and Mattheisen agreed to assist with the public health topic.

(6.2) Solid Waste and Recycling Overview

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie provided a presentation on advancing solid waste and recycling in Minnesota.

Acting Chair Vavreck commented that she would prefer an opportunity to choose every other week pickup as well as an option to use a hauler that offers payment per the disposal amount.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie spoke about the logistical challenges of an every other week pickup option. He was not aware of any haulers that offer service charged based on disposal amounts.

Acting Chair Vavreck asked if the city could require haulers to offer a bigger discount for residents who choose smaller containers.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie replied that the city could not dictate how a business operates in that manner. He provided additional information on the HERC versus a landfill and the goal for Hennepin County to be zero waste within the county itself, not to haul its trash somewhere else. Additional information was also provided on the permitting for the HERC. He presented additional information on recycling and the MERF.

6.3 Metropolitan Council Water Efficiency Grant Program Application

Acting Chair Vavreck had some questions.

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie recommended that Acting Chair Vavreck reach out to Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich with her questions.

Motion was made by Committee member Polzin and seconded by Committee member Vavreck to approve submission of the Metropolitan Council water efficiency grant program application. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Reports and Staff Recommendations

There were no reports and staff recommendations.

Future Meetings

Engineering Services Manager McKenzie requested that members provide their availability to Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich for drop-off day. There were some questions related to the community listening sessions, and it was noted that dates may be revised based on prior participation.

Adjournment

Acting Chair Vavreck adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.



To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: MK Anderson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Reviewed by: Michael Payne, City Engineer/Deputy Public Works Director

Item: **Plymouth Environmental Academy**

1. Action Requested:

Discuss the 2026 Plymouth Environmental Academy

2. Background:

The Environmental Quality Committee 2026 Work Plan includes a continuation of the Plymouth Environmental Academy (PEA) set to begin in the third quarter of 2026. At the first four meetings of 2026, Committee members had lengthy discussions on the future of the Academy. The discussion included, but was not limited to, the potential options for the restructuring and rebranding of the Academy.

At the April 2026 meeting, the Committee determined that the 2026 Academy will hold approximately one topic per calendar quarter. Topics identified are Building and Energy for commercial and non-profit buildings, Building and Energy for single-family homes, Public Health, Locally Grown Food, and Organics. The committee will discuss these topics further, including proposed dates and refining the topics.

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments:



To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: Ben Scharenbroich, Water Resources Supervisor

Reviewed by: Ben Scharenbroich, Water Resources Supervisor

Item: **Future Meetings**

1. Action Requested:

N/A

2. Background:

Regular Planning Commission Meeting – June 3, 2026 – 7:00pm – Plymouth City Hall (3400 Plymouth Boulevard)
Resilient Yard & Shoreline Restoration Workshop – June 4, 2026 – 6:00pm – Plymouth Community Center (14800 34th Avenue North)
Regular Environmental Quality Committee Meeting – June 10, 2026 – 7:00pm – Plymouth City Hall (3400 Plymouth Boulevard)
Music in Plymouth – July 8, 2026 – 5:00pm – Hilde Performance Center (3500 Plymouth Boulevard)

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments: