

City of Falcon Heights
Joint Meeting
Environment Commission
Parks & Recreation Commission

City Hall
2077 Larpenteur Avenue West

Minutes

Monday, February 2, 2026
6:30 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL:

Adam Keester (Chair) <u>_X_</u>	David Smith <u>_X_</u>
John Pellegrini (Vice-Chair) <u>_X_</u>	Beth Mercer-Taylor <u>_X_</u>
Nuz Sanidad (Secretary) <u>_X_</u>	Erica Bjelland <u>_X_</u>
Monika Chandler <u>_A_</u>	
Eric Brenton (Chair) <u>_X_</u>	Robert Haight <u>_X_</u>
Tom Faust (Vice-Chair) <u>_A_</u>	Jerry Buckridge <u>_X_</u>
Joe Morseth (Secretary) <u>_X_</u>	Naomi Loud Heinsch <u>_X_</u>
Staff Liaison Lynch <u>_X_</u>	
Staff Liaison Nelson <u>_X_</u>	
Council Liaison May <u>_X_</u>	
Council Liaison Gustafson <u>_X_</u>	

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Moved to item D, after joint meeting.*

1. January 12, 2026

This item was tabled to the March meeting due to it being accidentally omitted from the packet.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. In Common Commission Goals

Staff Liaison Nelson explained the goal of this joint meeting is to foster partnership and discuss common goals between the two commissions, namely the potential for expanding community garden plots. She explained that currently there are 38 garden plots, with 20 gardened by Falcon Heights residents, 16 gardened by non-residents, and two are currently open. Previously a wait list was used for open plots, but this year the City will be moving to a lottery system that will open on February 4.

Commissioners discussed the cost to support the current plots, the cost of adding a water line to Curtiss Field (currently budgeted at \$10,000, specifically for a water fountain), the potential of adding plots at City Hall, and ensuring those without yard space have access to plots. Issues were brought up around Curtiss Field flooding and the potential of taking away from the existing recreational area.

Staff Liaison Lynch explained the Climate Action Plan has as one of its goals, to "Increase production of local food, particularly serving low-income and food-insecure individuals." Two action items for this goal include, "Identify and map potential sites for community gardens or farms, prioritizing underserved populations and food-insecure areas. Include parks and public lands, and collaborate with partners to implement garden locations," and "Establish a 'Grow Falcon Heights' program to expand community garden plots and create a market garden that offers youth training and internships."

The Commissions discussed forming a subcommittee to focus on the location, need, and goals for additional plots, pending the results of how many lottery submissions are received.

2. Weatherization Workshop / Sustainability Fair Update

Staff Liaison Lynch explained the Environment Commission has previously discussed holding a Weatherization Workshop at City Hall as a standalone event. She spoke with Partners in Energy who would be assisting with this event, and they mentioned having difficulty with attendance due to today's political climate within the Twin Cities. Due to this, it has been suggested to move the Weatherization Workshop to the Sustainability Fair on April 18 as one of the "talks" during the Fair. Partners in Energy and the Citizens Utility Board will also be tabling organizations.

Commissioners discussed ideas for more events/tablers during the Sustainability Fair. Commissioner Mercer-Taylor offered to table as a Master Naturalist to discuss the "Invasive Plant of the Year," creeping bellflower. University students in attendance also discussed having a table for an art project allowing residents to draw out their ideas and feelings for the future of the City of Falcon Heights, possibly focusing on the Les Bolstad Golf Course.

Other ideas for the Sustainability Fair included several Commissioners bringing their electric vehicles for attendants to view, having a boulevard tree sign-up at the Falcon Heights Environment Commission table, having sign-ups for the Lawn and Garden Tours event in the summer, and compost buckets.

E. INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1. Staff Liaison Report – None.**
- 2. Council Liaison Report –** *Council Liaison May explained she is "learning the ropes" as far as being a new Council Liaison. Commissioner Mercer-Taylor asked for an update on the Les Bolstad Golf Course. Staff Liaison Lynch explained the University is in the process of reviewing submissions to their RFP and has pushed out interviews by a couple of weeks. She stated the Board of Regents would not be reviewing these at their February meeting, and it would likely be the April meeting or a meeting during the summer.*

F. Adjourn

Chair Keester made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned by consent at 8:27 PM.

Next meeting date: March 9, 2026 – Joint with City of Lauderdale Environment Commission