



Jan. 5, 2026

Citizens Environmental Quality Committee
Winona, Minnesota 55987

Dear Committee Members:

The next meeting of the Citizens Environmental Quality Committee meeting will be held on **Thursday, Jan. 8th, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.** in the **Misato Room** at City Hall.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Dec. Minutes**
3. **Resident Concerns update (5 minutes)**
4. **Prairie Island Park Habitat Management Plan Outreach (30 minutes)**
5. **Winona County Hazard Mitigation Plan (5 Minutes)**
6. **CEQC Priority Topics Discussion (10 minutes)**
7. **Other Business**
8. **Adjournment**

Sincerely,

John Howard

Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Thursday Dec. 4, 2025

TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT: Paul Schmitt, Sadie Neuman.

GUESTS:

STAFF: John Howard

1. **Call to Order:** Call to order at 4:31 PM by Chair Sadie Neuman.
2. **November Minutes:** Paul moved for approval, Sadie seconded. All in favor.
3. **Resident Concerns Update:** The CEQC discussed the Winona Post article about noise.
4. **Prairie Island Park Habitat Management Plan Update:** John shared that the contractor has exhausted the planning funds, and staff are determining the best way to proceed with finalizing the draft. City staff will need to do the outreach events, and likely would aim for early January after the holiday season.

CEQC members suggested having a couple breakout tables at the public input sessions for attendees to provide more specialized input. Maybe start with a presentation with some boards and then go to the in room breakouts for attendees. Maybe have Anne Conway of PI campground and Bird club present at stations.

Potential for WSU engagement. CEQC is glad to help.

5. Winona County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:

Paul felt the references to plans are somewhat vague. Ideally more connection to how those influence responses.

Sadie was surprised that the plan is mostly natural hazard focused rather than all hazards. John said the City has all hazards team, which Sadie appreciates. Sadie would like to see more emphasis on personal preparedness.

Based on discussion, the CEQC suggested the following comments be forwarded to the plan coordinator:

- Suggest clarity on whether the plan is an all hazards mitigation plan or a natural hazards mitigation plan. The plan should be structured to maximize the ability to receive FEMA funding.
- The more ways the plan can be tied into existing plans, such as the City's comprehensive plan, the better.
- Support for personal preparedness and resilience education actions to help residents keep themselves safe.

6. CEQC Priority Topics:

Sadie shared about the prescribed fire council meeting occurring in about a month at WSU. Discounted rates for students.

Sadie discussed that data centers are a major topic, and there are steps communities can take to be able to be better prepared when proposals come in. RSDP is offering a training on data centers focused on SE MN.

7. **Other Business:** None
8. **Adjournment:** Moved by Paul, second by Sadie. All approved at 5:53 PM.

Notes prepared by John Howard.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 4. Prairie Island Habitat Management Plan Outreach

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Jan. 8, 2026

Staff hopes to schedule days for public input on the Prairie Island Habitat Management Plan for later in January. The consultant will be making the edits suggested by staff and the CEQC and then have the plan ready for public viewing.

Staff would like to spend time planning out how the engagement sessions will be structured, and how CEQC members will be involved.

Requested action: Consider strategies to engage attendees at in person outreach events.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 5. Winona County Hazard Mitigation Plan

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Jan. 8, 2026

Winona County has completed a draft of the County Wide hazard mitigation plan and is in the process of having participating entities approve the plan. The City of Winona had adoption on the Jan. 5th City Council agenda.

The CEQC discussion of the plan was passed on to the plan coordinator in early December. That correspondence is included for CEQC benefit below:

“Thank you for sharing the Citizens Environmental Quality Committee’s feedback it’s very helpful, and we appreciate their engagement with the Hazard Mitigation Plan. We shared it with the planning team.

Clarification on “All Hazards” vs. “Natural Hazards”

The Winona County HMP is a *natural* hazard mitigation plan, consistent with FEMA’s requirements under the Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs. While FEMA’s broader mission and some funding streams address “all hazards,” the HMP specifically focuses on natural hazards as defined by FEMA. We’ll clarify this more explicitly on the website and in future materials to avoid any confusion.

Alignment with Existing City Plans

We agree that integrating the HMP with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and other existing planning efforts strengthens both community resilience and plan implementation. We will look for opportunities to highlight those linkages more clearly, especially where mitigation actions directly support city goals around land use, infrastructure, and environmental stewardship.

Support for Personal Preparedness and Resilience Education

We appreciate the committee’s emphasis on resident preparedness. The HMP already includes several strategies related to outreach and education, and we will ensure these connections are clearly represented. We’re also happy to coordinate with the City on any ongoing or future efforts that promote personal preparedness and resilience for Winona residents.

Please let me know if the committee has any additional comments or if further clarification would be helpful. We value their input and look forward to continued collaboration.

Thanks,

Ben Klinger

Emergency Management Director"

Requested action: None, informational