



CITY OF OREM

ADVISORY BOARD/COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

This meeting may be held electronically to allow a board/commission member to participate.

PUBLIC BODY: Natural Resources Advisory Commission (NRAC)

DATE: 05/07/2026

ROOM: Council Conference Room

TIME: 5:00 PM

ADDRESS: 56 N State St, Orem, UT 84057

Commission Members in Attendance: Hilary Hungerford, Sarah Bateman, Bob McFadden

Commission Members Absent: Paul Dunn, Tara Bishop,

City Council: Jenn Gale

City Staff: Kaitlin Marsh, Bradley Day, Melissa Mullins

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Greenhouse Presentation (25 Minutes)

Bryce Merrill, the Community Services Director, introduced the presentation group, including Tyler Peay (Parks and Recreation Director), Laura (Parks Department), and Meghan Flinders-Peay (Programming Librarian), who discussed the nearly completed greenhouse project. The first official program in the greenhouse is scheduled for Saturday, and the team shared that they incorporated feedback, including adding a second phase to create more space for the "dirty portion of gardening."

The presentation team leveraged shared ideas and partnered with the Central Utah Water Conservancy District for a series of water wise and landscaping classes, which were completely filled, demonstrating community enthusiasm for the project's educational goals. Laura was recognized for her "incredible craftsmanship" in horticulture and design, specifically for the planting areas at Nielsen's Grove, the city center campus, and outside the rec center. In the future, practice beds may be provided so the community can practice "getting their hands dirty".

Meg, the Programming Librarian, shared that the library focuses heavily on programming to provide access to materials, viewing the greenhouse programming as a natural extension of their work in building community events. The team has surveyed library staff and is creating PSA videos to gather resident feedback on how the new greenhouse space should be used.

They are open to an NRAC-hosted event in the space or NRAC participating in other library or parks and recreation events.

Laura proposed creating a survey for the committee to determine what they would like to see in the space and how to involve other organizations. They expressed interest in having a presence at events focused on natural resources and sustainability, such as potentially having a table at the upcoming plant swap scheduled for June 23rd at 7 PM in the courtyard space. A seed swap may be part of a future program where patrons could come to the library to get seeds.

The library generally plans programs seven to twelve months in advance, which is necessary for calendaring spaces across the city, though they can "sneak things in" for the new greenhouse space as the calendar is more open. Current calendared events include the plant swap in June and a flower pressing class in September, in addition to non-traditional book clubs held in the new space. They requested that contacts for potential classes be directed to Meg and Laura to ensure proper scheduling and marketing lead time.

The team provided an update on the upper gardens project, noting that pending budget approval, \$125,000 has been set aside to fence in the green space along State and First; NW Corner. This area will include garden and growing boxes intended for structured programming, such as salsa canning or square-foot gardening, rather than traditional row gardening.

NRAC pointed out one of their goals this year was to educate people on xeriscaping and how beautiful it can be. The city also has a water conservation focus which includes addressing underutilized turf and median design.

NRAC expressed their interest in having a table at events to promote NRAC; its priorities and purpose. This exposure may provide the opportunity to obtain email addresses for advertising future events. The library mentioned having a mailing list that could assist in that function as well.

As a final note, the library mentioned there are events planned for spring 2027 that include STEM Like a Girl and Bug Bash.

2. NRAC Awards (10 Minutes)

A. Votes for the NRAC stewardship awards are in, and both nominated recipients will win, with the awards presentation scheduled for the May 26th City Council meeting. Hilary Hungerford volunteered to reach out to the winners to inform them and confirm their attendance for the presentation. Members of NRAC will be in attendance to give the award to the recipients.

A question arose regarding giving an annual report on NRAC activities to the City Council. Hilary was willing to provide the report with assistance from Commission members.

Action Item: Bradley will check to see if an annual report from the NRAC Committee can be accommodated at the May 26th City Council meeting.

3. Communication Updates

A new NRAC flyer was created with a QR code linking to the NRAC landing page, which now includes a sign-up feature for a newsletter. The commission decided to produce the newsletter quarterly, aligning with the seasons, with potential content including a summary of recent meetings, alignment with organizational values, and a regular column from the Sustainability Officer.

Social media engagement has been positive, especially for content related to sustainability, such as the "Fish for Garbage" cleanup event, which saw high community involvement. The team discussed featuring more commission members and staff like the City Forester, Josh Story, in social media content to increase public recognition of NRAC and its mission.

Action Item: Kaitlyn will create a draft of the first newsletter and send a sample to the Committee for review.

4. Tree Initiative (Handout)

The city's tree planting goal has been modified from 107 trees to a "stretch goal" of 250 trees, aligning with the USA turning 250 years old. NRAC is encouraged to assist in reaching this goal by reaching out to private individuals, organizations, or businesses to secure pledges or commitments to plant trees.

City Council members have reviewed the tree initiative outline and are supportive of moving forward, confirming that NRAC will have input and ownership in activities. While NRAC members are encouraged to take lead roles, collaboration with and deference to city staff, such as the City Arborist, will be necessary for tasks like selecting trees and planting sites on city property due to their expertise.

Bradley advised the commission that the city's strategy and innovation team has submitted an application for a \$30,000 tree planting grant from Union Pacific.

Discussion focused on how to assist private individuals and businesses with tree selection and planting, since the City Arborist cannot consult on every private property. Ideas included creating social media posts featuring the Arborist's expertise on suitable trees for different locations and creating a simplified menu of pre-selected trees (flowering, shade, drought-tolerant) to ease decision-making for those new to gardening.

The group discussed anticipated questions regarding planting trees during a season of potential water scarcity, which could be addressed by promoting water-wise strategies like using drip irrigation and highlighting the Central Utah Water Conservancy District's incentive programs.

Bob McFadden agreed to be a source of information for social media posts discussing topics such as drip irrigation and tree planting techniques.

5. Strategic Planning Next Steps (Handout) - Postponed to meeting on 6/4/2026

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes 1/8/2026 (5 Minutes)

- a. Motion given by Bob McFadden to approve minutes
- b. Motion seconded by Sarah Bateman
- c. Voting Members: Hilary Hungerford, Bob McFadden, and Sarah Bateman all voted yes; none opposed.
- d. Motion to approve NRAC meeting minutes from 1/8/2026 passes

7. Approval of Meeting Minutes 4/2/2026 (5 Minutes)

- a. Motion given by Bob McFadden to approve minutes
- b. Motion seconded by Sarah Bateman
- c. Voting Members: Hilary Hungerford, Bob McFadden, and Sarah Bateman all voted yes; none opposed.
- d. Motion to approve NRAC meeting minutes from 4/2/2026 passes

8. Adjourn

- a. Motion given by Sarah Bateman to adjourn meeting
- b. Motion seconded by Bob McFadden
- c. Voting Members: Hilary Hungerford, Bob McFadden, and Sarah Bateman all voted yes; none opposed.
- d. Motion to adjourn passes
 - i. Side note: Tara Bishop and Hilary Hungerford will be out of town for the June 4th meeting. There is a possibility they may be able to attend virtually.

Meeting minutes approved 06/04/2026

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL CITY MEETINGS.

If you need special accommodation to participate in Advisory Commission meetings please contact us on the City's website at orem.org or call (801) 229-7000 at least 3 working days prior to the meeting. This agenda is available on the Utah Public Notice website at utah.gov/pmn.