

## MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Town Hall, 40 Center Street

Fairhaven, Massachusetts

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK  
RGUD 2023 FEB 20 PM 6:40

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ann Richard at 6:30pm, via Zoom

Present: Chairperson Ann Richard, Karen Gent, Susan Spooner, Laura Gardner, Wendy Drumm, Christin Ritz, Tim Garcia, John Pond, Bruce Webb

Guests from Public : Mona, Eileen Brennan

Bruce Webb is the new Sustainability Coordinator and joins us at Town Hall- his first day was Feb 6th.

## CHAIR PERSON'S WELCOME AND MEDIA NOTIFICATION

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT read by Ann Richard

## MINUTES

Minutes from the last meeting will be reviewed next meeting.

## CORRESPONDENCE BILL- COMMUNITY GARDEN

Bill came in, Lisa Elliot bought some lumber for the community garden at Delano Sawmill where the Town has an account, so as a vendor the bill only needs to be approved by Ann and the conservation agent. This is an FYI that it is getting paid.

## THE MAGIC OF AGGREGATION

Laura Gardner presents and shares her screen about community energy aggregation. Fairhaven has been a member since 2016. MA has made a commitment to reach 70% renewable energy by 2030. The aggregation includes 25 towns across the Southcoast and beyond purchase energy with a 3 year contract. The aggregation means savings because the towns buy energy in bulk. The default is Local Green 10% and we are the only community to do this and hope more communities will join this or higher default. Everyone needs to check their bill to make sure they are opted in to the program to save money.

John Pond has solar panels but comments concerns about the detrimental effects of certain renewables such as offshore wind and we need a balanced approach and other considerations.

Laura adds that if you opt-in to 50 or 100% renewables you can write off that cost on your taxes. Even if you already have solar opting-in to 100% renewable will show support for the program.

Bruce comments the cape is cooperating as a region based on the aggregation maps and is interested in learning more about how they are working together.

Ann wants to make sure that anyone without a computer or internet can go online to access the website to opt-in. Laura will contact the library to make sure they are aware to be able to help people.

Mona asked Laura how many towns are in the current aggregation. Laura answers 25. Question for Ann-Fairhaven is one dot, what is the town's publicity on this program? Ann answers in 2020 we printed out postcards at the library and put in checked out books and had an ad in Neighborhood News. Laura is doing a PSA with Fairhaven TV later this month.

Susan asks, do you have any sense on how many businesses in town have signed up for this program? Laura answers we don't but with her other organization they do give out stickers for those who have opted in to 100% renewables.

#### BOH MEETING RESULTS- SURVEY AND BYLAW

Christin has really good news, she went on Feb 15th to the Board of Health and gave a presentation on the human health hazard of styrofoam and micro plastics and presented a draft of the bylaw that Ann helped to write and they agreed and will cosponsor to vote on in May. She brought handouts and they were really on board and supportive.

Wendy wants to sponsor an ad before Town Meeting to get people to vote on this.

Susan and Ann compliment Christins presentation.

Ann shared the information for draft bylaws, the BOH did vote on it and to be official we need to vote on it as well. Ann shares her screen showing the bylaws. If it gets approved at our Town Meeting it still has to get approved at the state level.

Christin reminds us about the survey and the low participation from businesses and how that impacted what we included in the bylaws such as making utensils only available on request.

Christin makes a motion to approve and seconded by Laura and passes by roll call vote (6-0)

By-law to ban plastic nip bottles- its been passed in Wareham and Mattapoisett. It would prohibit sales of nip bottles <100ml and would start Jan 1st next year. We did not go to BOH to ask on the meeting because it wasn't included in part of the survey. This will be endorsed by the Sustainability Committee. Laura comments she feels strongly about this as a huge problem with waste as well as safety.

Bruce comments as a field scientist that switching to aluminum would be even more harmful to the environment. The language can always be changed, right now it only bans plastic nip bottles but if a different material starts being used that is a problem we can propose a change.

John asks if there have been any results from Wareham with the ban. Ann responds that it's been in effect for a year- there was opposition from the large liquor stores and claimed they lost. We can ask BOH and DPW, DPW will likely support it because of all the trouble they cause with the drains.

Laura makes a motion that we vote in favor of the article to ban nip bottles, seconded by John. Roll call vote passes (7-0).

#### SEED DONATION/ SEED LIBRARY/ SEEDS FOR SENIORS

Ann is working on the seeds for seniors (plastic free this year!) with compostable containers. Christin announces that the farm she works for is donating a big box of seeds for both these programs. Martha

Reed is director of the senior center and they will deliver through meals on wheels. Press release in Neighborhood News.

#### COMMITTEE COMMENTS

There is a beach clean up on March 11th 1-3:30 at Fort Phoenix if anyone is interested.

#### SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR

Bruce would like to add CEA to the conservation website as well as the nip issue and to reach out to the highway dept if he would be willing to support the ban as the bottles interfere with infrastructure and drainage. Both electric charging stations are up and running.

Next Meeting March 21st (back to being 3rd Tuesday)

Kill Your Lawn in April. Crystal from Star Garden Studios is in mind.

Town Meeting is not until May.

Wendy, the article on electric buses needs advocacy towns will be saving money. Senior center owns the vans. Christin us being a green community do vehicles need to be replaced with EVs? Ann responds they have to be "fuel efficient".

Any other ideas please let Ann know over the next few weeks.

Motion to adjourn called by Ann.