



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS  
**SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

Town Hall · 40 Center Street · Fairhaven, MA 02719

**Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 4:00 pm**  
**Town Hall, 40 Center Street**

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ann Richard at 4:00 pm, via Zoom.

Present: Chairperson Ann Richard, Deirdre Healy, Susan Spooner, Wendy Drumm, Karen Gent, Anne O'Brien

Not present: Leon Correy, Lois Callahan

Guests present: Laura Gardner, Jean Lawlor, Fred Jones, Erick Sa

It was advised that the meeting was being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of COVID-19. The Governor's Order suspends the requirement of Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location.

For this meeting, the Sustainability Committee convened by telephone and video conference via Zoom as posted on the Town's website identifying how the public may join. The meeting was recorded and televised live, and all attendees participated by phone and video conference.

**MINUTES**

Ms. Healy motioned to accept the minutes of the April 15, 2020 meeting. Ms. Drumm seconded. Vote was unanimous. (6-0).

**RENEWABLE ENERGY**

At the request of Ms. Gardner and Ms. Lawlor, the issue of energy aggregation was placed on the agenda. Ms. Gardner introduced herself as the chairperson of the Climate Reality Project Massachusetts SouthCoast chapter.

Ms. Gardner said that the Climate Reality SouthCoast chapter was working to promote a clean energy aggregate initiative. She asked the Sustainability Committee to use its outreach to increase participation in existing clean energy aggregation program, which runs through June 30, 2021. A newly negotiated contract would help the Town increase its baseline requirement for clean energy for all participants from the State minimum to an increase of 10 percent, specifically from local sources. This would increase the demand for renewable energy overall in the SouthCoast area. There are different opt-in costs depending on various factors, such as residential versus commercial. This existing program is an automatic renewal for all community members, unless they opt-out.

Ms. Lawlor spoke to the issue of outreach. An integral part of that outreach would include residents contacting the selectmen in the next month to say that they want to see the renewal include an emphasis on clean energy. She asked if the Climate Reality SouthCoast chapter could use the Sustainability Committee's email listing, and possibly the Town's website to increase outreach. She also asked the Committee to consider endorsing the project via a formal letter to the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Richard asked Ms. Lawlor and Ms. Gardner to forward a scripted letter to the Committee for its review, and consideration of individualized alterations. She said that she supported the clean energy increase, but felt that the increase associated with it should be known. Users could opt-out of the additional fee, if they wanted.

Ms. O'Brien motioned to send a letter of support from the Sustainability Committee to the Board of Selectmen for the clean energy aggregate increase. Ms. Spooner seconded the motion. Roll call vote: all in favor. Vote was unanimous. (6-0).

### **SUSTAINABILITY CAFÉ**

The Huttleston Marketplace is still scheduled for a Saturday Farmer's Market for mainly food items. Ms. McClees said that she had received communication from the market organizer, Christopher Richard, that he needs final dates for participation for the summer 2020 season. Ms. Richard will notify Mr. Richard that the group will not be engaging in the June 6 farmer's market. The Committee will consider participation at a later date.

### **SUNDAY FARMER'S MARKET**

Similar to the Huttleston Marketplace, Ms. Richard said that the Committee would take a wait-and-see approach with any kind of participation of the Sustainability Committee in the Sunday Farmer's Market, including plans to provide reusable market bags.

### **EARTH DAY ECOCHALLENGE**

Ms. McClees summarized the impact of the SouthCoast EcoChallenge. Team SouthCoast finished 13th out of 818 groups, and Laura Gardner was the top participant. Ms. Richard will write a press release summarizing the success of the EcoChallenge.

### **GREEN TIPS COLUMN**

Ms. Richard will be writing a green tips column this month on gardening tips.

### **2040 MASTER PLAN**

Ms. McClees has previously distributed the implementation component of the Sustainability Committee for the 2040 Master Plan. Ms. McClees invited the group, including the public, to provide any feedback to the Sustainability Committee on what they might focus on in accordance with the 2040 Master Plan.

### **SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR'S REPORT**

Ms. McClees updated the Committee to the MVP resilience grant, and encouraged participation in the public participation component, including review of the MVP webinar and completion of the survey. Ms. Richard encouraged Ms. McClees to distribute the survey to the Sustainability Committee email list. Ms. Richard motioned to distribute the survey to the Sustainability Committee email listing. Ms. O'Brien seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor. Vote was unanimous. (6-0).

Ms. McClees is working on another grant for the purposes of MVP implementation.

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS/PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Ms. O'Brien motioned to authorize signing of bills digitally, with the Chairperson serving as the signing authority if the digital votes cannot be obtained, but only with a Committee vote in favor. Ms. Richard seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor, except Ms. Spooner, who abstained. Vote carried. (5-0).

Ms. Richard motioned to approve the purchase of the trimmer for the Community Gardens, to be purchased out of the gift account, which is built up through Community Garden activities. Ms. O'Brien seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor, except Ms. Spooner, who abstained. Vote carried. (5-0).

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Town Meeting has been postponed to Saturday, June 27, and it will be held virtually. The Selectmen have requested the petitioner to postpone the plastic bag ban article until the Fall Town Meeting.

Mr. Jones said he would wait until he gets a call from the Town Administrator and will consider postponing the petition.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Sustainability Committee will be announced at a later date.

Ms. Drumm motioned to adjourn at 5:14 pm. Ms. Healy seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor. Vote was unanimous. (6-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Anne O'Brien

Minutes accepted 7/21/2020