

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Town Hall, 40 Center Street

Fairhaven, Massachusetts

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ann Richard at 6:00pm, via Zoom

Present: Chairperson Ann Richard, Leon Correy, Wendy Drumm, Susan Spooner, James Anderson, Deirdre Healy and Sustainability Coordinator Whitney McClees. Karen Gent (late)

Alternates Present: Christin Ritz and Jim Anderson

Guests Present: Troy Werner

MINUTES

Jim Anderson motioned to accept the minutes of the August 18, 2020 meeting Wendy seconded. Vote was unanimous by roll call vote (6-0).

COMMUNITY ELECTRIC AGGREGATION- UPDATE

This did pass and will be moving forward but will not go into effect until January. Both Selectmen want to make sure the public is educated on the program that will increase the baseline renewables to 28% from local renewable resources.

OCTOBER ECOCHALLENGE

The ecochallenge.org runs 3 EcoChallenges per year, the upcoming challenge, The People's EcoChallenge, runs October 7th -28th focusing on creating environmental and social change in the community. Committee members as well as the community can participate. Participation amounts vary depending on how many different organizations get involved. The challenge is nationwide with a local team. Individuals can log in and chose their induvial actions which generates points for their team. Ann will get a press release out and Whitney will get the team set up and share the link.

PELICANOPS

Troy Werner presents Pelican Ops which is a marine contracting and environmental services company operating for 3 months. They are distributors for Seabin, ocean habitats mini reefs systems and fishlight systems. They can skim plastics and debris. They can take trash out of water and put artificial environments for marine creatures to inhabit which brings back life and filters water. Susan provides background that the skimmer project was put on hold and describes the Seabins being \$6,000 which is half the cost of the skimmers. She has introduced Pelican Ops as a possibility for the committee to explore further to reduce the amount of debris collecting at the hurricane barrier. Wendy asks if these products have been through alpha and beta testing. Troy comments the Seabin project has been available since 2014 and has gone through plenty of testing and products have been on the market. Funding remains the largest issue for most groups interested in these products. The PowerPoint for Troy's presentation will be shared with the committee to do further research and learn more about their services and generate questions.

ANTI-RACIST ANTI-BIAS SUBCOMMITTEE

Deidre reports that she and Leon have met and discussed the letter and everyone's feedback and have come to the conclusion to ask the Selectmen to have a formal committee that is separate from the Sustainability Committee. Leon comments to the benefits of not being an official committee will encourage a more open discourse among people and have more interaction in a less formal format on the other side an actual committee would be part of the Town and enable to enact change. An idea would be to use an "unofficial" organization as an advisory to an actual committee and do both. The next steps would be to write a letter to the Selectmen to suggest we create this committee and get their approval. The Sustainability Committee could help advocate for that. The letter will be to suggest this committee to advise the Select Board and the HR Department on matters of racial justice and being anti-bias. Jim comments on the broadness of the committee and how will it be specific enough for people to buy in. Leon answers the focus is on underrepresented groups in the community and to promote awareness and bring a collective voice to the Town. The discussion opens to the size of the committee and what would be optimal to operate and being able to coordinate meetings with a number of people. Whitney states just because there's a voting block doesn't mean there can't be a large number of committee members. Wendy emphasizes in the letter there should be a focus on goals, the challenges and a mission would be helpful.

REUSABLE BAGS

Giving out reusable bags with sustainability committee logo, should we wait until next season, the budget was shared. Jim comments there are a lot of reusable bags on the market and we haven't been able to use them during Covid. Our budget in revolver account is \$1,300 which could cover 200 bags. Jim preference to hold off on spending for now where there is uncertainty with Covid. Leon's view is if it's something we are going to do eventually it could be done now. Susan's preference is to hold off.

2040 MASTER PLAN

Susan will pick some items to discuss for the next agenda. The Master Plan has been posted on the website and shared with committee members.

SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR'S REPORT

We are moving forward with solar on 2 elementary schools and discuss future projects with Solect Energy. MVP action grant application to incorporate climate change resilience language into Town policy was not chosen to be funded but Whitney will reapply. Still in process of completing the MVP planning grant. Green Communities is moving forward, working on annual reporting. There are other grant opportunities available for the future.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Next meeting: October 20th, 2020. There is a special town meeting on the 20th so the date will be changed for the next Sustainability meeting to the 27th and all agreed on changing the time to 6:30pm. Jim brings awareness to the bikeway committee and looking for ways to improve the biking environment and perhaps something we can work on in the future.

ADJORNMENT

Leon motions to adjourn and is seconded by Susan. Vote was unanimous by roll call vote. (6-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Gent