

Climate Change Council

Meeting Minutes: March 10, 2022

Committee Members in Attendance:

Ken Hartlage
Susan Edwards
Jason Veysey
Jessica Veysey Powell
Renee D'Argento
Jim Scarsdale
Elizabeth Faxon
Evelyn Bagley
Bob Cataldo

Members of the Public:

Tony Beatie – Select Board
Deb Fountain – Invasive Species Committee
Mathew Cahill - DCR

Meeting:

Meeting started at 7:00 PM

Tonight's Agenda:

At 7:03 Matt spoke about tree issues, possibly having a tree board and warden. Discussed how other towns had handled it. Possible that someone from the DPW could be the tree warden. There is a qualified tree warden course through Mass.Gov.

General discussion on how to become a Tree City USA town and receive a Recognition Award. There are 4 standards/requirements: 1) Tree Board Department/Warden, 2) MGL Ch 87 – Trees on Public Land, 3) need to spend \$2/capita – association with tree maintenance, and 4) Arbor Day Events – Outreach & Education. For Item 3): need to check on Town Budget to see what the Town is already allocating that can be used for the \$2/capita requirements.

Renee noted that the DPW has a tree warden with a small budget (\$9,000 according to Andrew), however, it's not enough to maintain the health of our street trees. It is the reason she feels we need a tree committee with an appropriate budget to maintain the health of our trees. .

Jessica wanted to know the Challenge Grant timing – there is a Fall letter of intent which we can verify on the website.

Deb discussed Arbor Day and stated that the state does not focus on native plants. The DCR has a Fact Sheet that we should get.

Jim wanted to get a sense of town opposition to setting up a Tree City group. Matt didn't have that information readily available; however, he suspected that there was some opposition.

Tony wanted to know if we had a Climate Coordinator and if that person could also be the Tree Warden. Matt stated that it isn't unusual to have a person filling several roles: especially in a smaller town. Tony also wanted to know if nut tree replanting was supported by the Tree Groups and Matt stated that it was not a focus. Tony asked if a Town could apply for an elm tree grant to help reestablish them and Matt said that it would be part of the overall grant.

At 7:50 the Commission, having a quorum, conducted elections.

Clerk: Susan nominated Jim, which was seconded by Jessica. Jim was elected with a unanimous vote.

Chairperson: Renee nominated Ken, which was seconded by Jason. Ken was re-elected with a unanimous vote.

Review and approval of Minutes:

At 7:55 Jessica made a motion to approve the following minutes, with Susan seconding the motion:

January 13, 2022: Unanimously approved

January 27, 2022: Unanimously approved, except for Elizabeth who was not present during that meeting

February 10, 2022: Unanimously approved

New Business:

8:00 New Business was discussed

Solar: Awarded state grant. 2 companies identified: Cadmus and SEA. The proposals were reviewed, and Cadmus was selected. The schedule is to have them start work in April and finish the business models study by August 2022. Renee asked about methane capture and usage at the landfill. Bob stated that the landfill was not initially set up to efficiently capture methane and that there was probably not a sufficient amount being generated to be worth the costs.

Community Energy: Ken and Renee stated that there would be some additional education required before this can move on to Town meeting.

Community Outreach: Sue stated that there were 6 goals:

- Keep the CCC name
- Define the brand
- Get some key messages

- Improve communications
- Gartner support for specific initiatives at Town meeting
- Offer regular and frequent communications (emails, phone calls, flyers, social media, we postings, blogs, direct mail, TBD) about ways individuals can reduce their carbon footprint

Sue stated that work was ongoing on the website and there were 4 URLs on hold: Green Pepperell.Org, Green Pepperell.Com, Sustain Pepperell.Org and, Sustain Pepperell.Com. The Commission agreed that Green Pepperell. Org was the best choice.

Sue stated that the website needs an administrator in addition to Sue and Jim having access.

Jessica agreed to help out with a logo, but there was some discussion that a logo might not be needed.

Earth Day Event: Bob was going to meeting with Deb about the specifics on tent placement and other items sometimes later that week. Earth Day is planned for April 23, 2022. General discussion about having some type of survey to ask people what their climate concerns were for the Town. There was also some discussion about bringing in some local companies, but it might not be a sufficient draw of people to have a company representative available. Deb will be speaking with the Boy and Girl Scouts, along with other groups.

Other Business:

Jason brought up the vote in Lexington to ban gas-powered leaf blowers. There was general discuss that this might be a good idea; however, it would meet with some resistance. Maybe it would be something we could ask people at the Earth Day event.

Ken discussed needing final comments on the OSRD by-law by next week.

Meeting ended at 8:40: Renee made motion to adjourn, with a second by Bob.