**Haddam Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

**October 24, 2023, Old Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive**

**Attendance:** Kristin Battistoni, Helen Hastings, Joanne Nesti, Gail Reynolds, Teresa Resnick, Linda Talbott

**Call to Order:** Joanne Nesti called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm

**Motion to amend the agenda:** Joanne explained Kristin had to leave early for another meeting and the agenda needed to be revised. The motion to do this was made by Gail Reynolds and seconded by Helen Hastings and passed. A motion to move the Treasurer’s report, the TREX report and welcome baskets to first on the agenda was made by Helen Hastings and seconded by Gail Reynolds and was passed.

**Motion to accept the minutes of the September 26, 2023, meeting** was made by Teresa Resnick and seconded by Gail Reynolds and was passed.

**Treasurer’s report:** Kristin reported as of July 1,2023 there is $1,209.91 in the compost account. As of this meeting we have not spent any of the $1500 in the Town committee account, however we will be spending money on the recycle flyer and the Tee shirts after today. She emphasized that we need to designate spending items for next year’s Town Budget at the November meeting, so if anyone has a project to move forward, it can be discussed and voted on at that meeting.

**Welcome baskets:** Kristin and Helen will be meeting on this tomorrow and there are at least three interested parties who want to contribute to this. Jeff Sturges is working on a master calendar for the townwide events.

**TREX:** Kristin is setting up a meeting with Bob McGarry and Chris Corsa to discuss the new TREX plan to reach out to communities who might want to have a soft/stretch plastic baler locally. Joanne Nesti is coordinating the volunteers for removal of the soft plastic from the transfer station bin and the transport of it to Stop and Shop. So far Mary and John Nork, Joanne and Linda Talbott have volunteered to do this, however, that bin seems to fill up quickly and more volunteers are needed. People are leaving loose plastic in that bin. Kristin has rolls of larger bags the volunteers can use to put the loose plastic into. Volunteers need to weigh the bags or estimate the weight and email Kristin Battistoni at taxcollect@haddam.org with the weight. We need another 100 lbs of this plastic by the end of October to qualify for another bench. Linda has re-mailed Chris Corsa to ask about the signage he was going to do for the textile bin and the soft plastics bin but hasn’t heard back. Joanne has had contact with a TREX representative who may want to talk to our committee about the baler.

**Old Business:**

* **Food Scrap:** Linda Talbott reported the September food scrap report was 4300lbs which brings the overall total to 85,080lbs or 42.54 tons of food scraps removed from Haddam’s MSW. We are averaging 8 of the 32-gallon bins. There are 24 starter kits left from the last 50 purchased. The Senior Center has a new vendor: Old Saybrook Estuary and it is noted much less food waste is occurring there. Linda will contact Pamela Hensel at the School Superintendent’s office again regarding where the Superintendent stands on initiating a food scrap program in one of the elementary schools at this time. Linda also reported Roslyn Reeps has convinced the Town of Killingworth to begin a similar food scrap recycling program at their transfer station using Blue Earth Compost as the food scrap hauler. It is to start November 1.
* **Textiles:** Teresa Resnick stated the Superintendent’s office hasn’t gotten back to her on how much money the schools have made with their textile bins. The principals may need to reissue an educational announcement about those bins again. The woman from BayState Textiles who covers CT is not responsive. Linda Talbott suggested Rob Albert, the new Operations Director might have some information on that, and she will give Teresa his email address.

**New Business:**

* **Recycle flyer:** Linda Talbott reported at the last meeting the content of the front of the flyer was voted on. She and Dustin from ABCO printing worked on the back of the flyer which was emailed to committee members for their comments. Sarah Neal raised an important point that someone not familiar with single stream recycling might think the items pictured on the back could go into single stream. She suggested this be added to the back: “These items can be recycled in separate containers. Ask an attendant if you need help.” This was agreed upon by the committee members present. Linda hopes to have the flyer in the local paper the week of November 13. The cost is $290 to print and $250 to insert into 4500 papers.
* **Tee shirt project:** Teresa Resnick showed the committee a mockup of the front and back of the shirts. She suggested Be Sustainable with the recycle logo on the front left pocket. Discussion was held about putting Haddam is Sustainable there instead. It was decided since we are buying 25 shirts for now, some of which committee members want to buy and the rest we will try to sell at Farmer’s Market and other town events, that the Haddam is Sustainable be printed in the first round. If we decide to buy more, it might be changed to Be Sustainable, which would have a broader appeal. The back mockup read: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Compost, Textile Collection, Educate. It was decided to have all verbs and change Textile Collection to Collect Textiles. The color is olive green. Teresa will place the order. The vendor will send the invoice to Town of Haddam, Sustainability Committee, 30 Field Park Drive Haddam, CT 06438. Joanne Nesti has volunteered to reimburse our account for the purchase of 25 shirts plus the $25 start-up fee. Several committee members have also donated the cost of their shirts and Kristin has those funds.
* **Tour of Quantum Biopower:** Joanne Nesti, Sarah Neal, Gail Reynolds and Linda Talbott toured this facility on October 13. Gail uploaded photos and videos of the facility. There are 2 companies there: Supreme Forest Products which are various mulches, topsoils and windrows of compost and Quantum Biopower which is the anaerobic digester that takes Haddam’s food scraps. Gail explained the many pallets of boxes of packaged foods which are sent there are pre-consumer use and the contents will be recycled. Linda explained that Quantum was built in 2016 in response to a state law passed in 2014 that said if a private or commercial business generated 2 Ton of food waste /week and is located within 20 miles of an anaerobic digester, they had to recycle their food waste. However, Quantum had a hard time initially with getting enough food scraps in the beginning so they turned to recycling the unused prepackaged food that distribution companies and grocery stores would send them. These were items that were at or beyond their expiration dates. Machines removed the boxes, emptied the cans or bottles of food and liquids and recycled the cardboard, the pallet shrink wrap and other containers. About 90% of that goes on in one section of the Quantum business and the rest is pumped over to the food scrap section for further work, digestion which then is 99% food waste and then mixed with post-consumer food scraps. We viewed a food scrap pit that was at least 10 feet deep that works to remove any contaminants like plastic bags. The bin can hold 50,000 gallons of food waste. The day we were there 18,000 gallons of milk and milk by products was being dumped into the pit. The methane byproduct is contained in the building and is used to create Biogas which creates electricity for the Town of Southington. There is some CO2, however, that is released into the air in this process. Quantum processes 40,000 tons of food waste/year. Gail explained the scrubbing towers where multiple filters of bacteria that eat the H2S(high sulfur content). Quantum adds sawdust and leaves to the end compost product. They now have huge windrows of compost that towns or other businesses can buy and take away in trucks.
* Gail took her Master Composter class to another facility in Bridgeport and photos and videos of that were viewed by those present at this meeting after the meeting adjourned.
* **Upcoming tour of Covanta Trash to Energy Plant:** Haddam’s trash goes to this plant. The tour is 1:30 in Preston on November 17. Committee members going: John and Mary Nork, Kristin Battistoni, Sarah Neal, Teresa Resnick, Helen Hastings, Gail Reynolds, Joanne Nesti and Linda Talbott. Joanne has offered to drive. One other driver is needed.
* **Sustainable CT progress:** Linda Talbott and Helen Hastings will be meeting with Dorothy Piczszek from Sustainable CT at 11 am on November 13 at the Town Office Building to continue work on this project. Dorothy estimates we have about 90 points so far. Dorothy will review what we have uploaded since the last meeting and will assess where we are with points. She is not an official reviewer. Helen passed around the printout of the Equity worksheet that had 5 questions we need to answer to earn equity points. This area is mandatory for all towns. Helen and Linda chose the June 8 meeting at HES where Town officials received and wanted feedback from town residents about what to do with HES. Teresa Resnick also volunteered to help.
* **Other:** Linda Talbott reported Jeff Lord mentioned a need to separate out the LED, CFL and regular light bulbs as well as lithium batteries from alkaline batteries at the Transfer Station. Linda contacted Kim O’Rourke, Middletown’s Recycling Coordinator and Chris Corsa to ask about this. Both said no it wasn’t necessary and Take 2 separates them out at their end. Joanne will contact Take 2 also about this.
* Teresa Resnick was contacted by a student at HK to see if she could come and talk to their class and was having difficulty reaching the teacher involved. Linda also told her Andree Pias, who is the teacher in the HKIS who runs the Green Team, wants committee members to speak to that group.
* **The next committee meeting is Tuesday November 28 at 6:30 pm.** Since December’s meeting falls on December 26, it was cancelled.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Talbott, Secretary