**Haddam Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

**September 26, 2023, 6:30pm-8pm**

**Old Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive**

**Attendance:** Kristin Battistoni, Helen Hastings, Sarah Neal, Joanne Nesti, Neal Perron, Teresa Resnick, Gail Reynolds, Linda Talbott, Paige Woodruff, Steven Woodruff

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:33pm by Joanne Nesti

**Motion to accept the agenda:** Made by Gail Reynolds and seconded by Helen Hastings and passed unanimously.

**Motion to accept June 27,2023 minutes:** Made by Gail Reynolds and seconded by Sarah Neal and passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

* **Food Scrap:** Linda Talbott reported the food scrap poundage for June, July and August, bringing the total removed since December 2021: 80,780 lbs or 40.39 Tons. Town of Haddam is now paying $116/ton for Municipal Solid Waste(MSW ) as of July 1 to go to the Preston Trash to Energy plant. There is no fee for recyclables. Gail Reynolds asked if any other towns were doing active composting in town. Linda reported Old Saybrook has windrows of leaves mixed with their collected food scraps located at a former transfer station in town. We looked at that concept before signing with Blue Earth Compost, but there is no room at the transfer station (TS) to do that. Gail also reports the Peels on Wheels, which collected food scraps at people’s homes by bicycle riders pulling a cart, has lost its composting site in New Haven which has stalled that program. Linda contacted Pamela Hensel, assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, regarding where the school system was regarding initiating a food scrap recycling program. Ms Hensel passed the request on to Sharon Shettleworth, however there was no reply. There are still openings for custodians and Jeff Wihbey was adamant not to start this program unless they were fully staffed. Roslyn Reeps notified Linda that the Town of Killingworth has signed a contract with Blue Earth Compost to do a similar program at their transfer station and Linda has given her information on where to obtain starter kits if they want them. Linda thanked Joanne Nesti, Sarah Neal, Emily Milcent and Helen Hastings for covering the Sustainability Committee booth at the Farmer’s Market this year.
* **Trex Plastic:** Kristin Battistoni reported the collection has slowed down some. The shed that was behind the Town Office building (TOB) was removed when the parking lot was paved. A new shed has been installed at the TS right near the entrance just before the trash bins. Linda stated Chris Corsa agreed to have his sign person make a sign or sticker to identify that shed, but no one from the TS will be transporting the plastic to Stop and Shop. Kristin and Joanne stated we will need to work out a volunteer program to continue this. Kris reported the Town now has 4 Trex benches: 1 installed by the TOB, one on rte. 81 near the Barber shop. Public Works needs to decide where to put the other two. Kristen still intends to accept soft plastic inside the TOB for those people who don’t have a TS pass.
* **Textiles:** Linda reported that Teresa had picked up 8 bags of textiles someone left on the ground by the Baystate textile bin in the TS and she brought them to the Annex building bin. This bin has been filled to overflowing also one time before. Linda discussed this with Chris Corsa and he said his sign person would make a sticker or sign telling people not to leave textiles on the ground, but to take them to annex, or HKIS or HKHS bins if the TS bin is full. Joanne suggested Teresa can write a letter to the editor about doing just that.

**New Business:**

* **Treasurer’s report:** Kristin Battistoni reported that she had taken in $500 since July 1 with the donations for food scrap kits and the compostable bags. The Shred It event costs have gone up to $1000 now so that leaves us with only $500 left on the $1500 Town budget.
* **Budget discussion:** **Tee shirts**: Linda reported 10 people responded on the survey for wording on the tee shirts and version #2 was preferred that would say the following: Haddam is Sustainable with the recycle logo over the left front chest area. On the back WE…Reuse, Recycle, Compost, Collect Textiles, Educate. Sarah Neal requested Reduce be added before Reuse as Reduce, Reuse, Recycle are key words used by the EPA Nationally. $25 set up fee, shirts are $10ea if we order 50 and $11 if we order 25. Cost (with tax/set up): 25 shirts: $319.05; 50 shirts: $558.38. After some discussion, Teresa said she would buy and sell the shirts herself. Joanne Nesti offered to buy the shirts as a donation to the budget. The committee accepted Joanne’s donation and the project will move forward. **Recycle flyer:** Linda passed around two versions of 8.5 x 11 in Recycle CT flyers that we are able to download and have Haddam’s logo put on. The front was in English and the back was in Spanish. She had statistics from RSD 17 that there are about 8 Spanish speaking families in the school system. Cost from ABCO printing to print in color front and back for 4500 $290. The cost to insert the flyer into 4500 Haddam newspapers is $250 so the total cost is $540. After much discussion, it was decided to have the front be in English, using the flyer with more specific wording, and on the back to list other things that are recycled at the transfer station like mattresses, textiles, electronics, light bulbs, batteries, etc. Linda will work on this. Joanne Nesti made a motion to approve doing this type of flyer at a cost up to $550. Kristin Battistoni seconded it and it passed. Neil Perron suggested Bob Norton at All Waste may have some graphics to share on those TS recycling items.
* **Tour of Murphy Road Recycling Berlin Plant**: Joanne Nesti and Linda Talbott were invited by Kim O’Rourke, the Middletown Recycling Co-ordinator, to tour this plant on August 23, 2023. This is a state-of-the-art facility, and we were told that people come from all over the world to buy their end products of recyclables because there is very little contamination due to their advanced sorting processes. They take in 800 tons of recyclable material daily but can handle up to 1200 ton. Videos of the conveyor belts and still photos of the facility were shown to the committee. Berlin staff told us that the USA has a very robust recycling market. Plastics stay domestic in the US; lower grade materials are shipped to Vietnam and Malaysia. The three most lucrative recycled materials are aluminum cans, HDP milk jugs and cardboard. CT based companies do take a lot of their recycled materials. Glass goes from Berlin to Strategic Materials in South Windsor. Strategic can sort by color, cleanliness and remove any further contaminants. Urban Mining is another company in Ct that can use glass to make a concrete product. Plastic bottles are in the top 5 recyclable items in the country. Hopefully the new bottle bill increasing the redeemables to 10c will take more of them out of the trash. Joanne Nesti has talked to Cub Scouts about this as well as the Park and Rec about proper recycling at the ballfields. Gail Reynolds has been taking photos of different trash and recycle bins at events she attends. The Berlin staff stated three things to tell the public: **Don’t put recyclables in a plastic bag; No WishCycling(don’t put things in recycle clearly not recyclable); USE the RECYCLE CT app!!**
* **Sustainability Committee Outreach:** Haddam Farmer’s Market: Linda thanked Joanne Nesti, Sarah Neal, Emily Milcent, Helen Hastings, for volunteering this year; Senior Groups: Teresa and Linda have talked to seniors at the Senior Picnic, Teresa has talked to Haddam Seniors, Guilford Senior Center and plans to go to Old Lyme Senior Center on November 2. She is also working with an HKHS teacher and student for an educational event on Sustainability.
* **Welcome Baskets:** Kristin reported the United Congregational Church of Haddam and the Methodist Church are interested in putting info into welcome baskets. The Congregational Church indicated they could bake bread for a newcomer family also. The Haddam Jr Women’s club indicated in the past they are interested. Neal Perron who lives on the river in Haddam Neck would like some information regarding the Connecticut River Gateway Rules and Regulations for those people moving into town near the river. Several neighbors of his have been cited for regulations they were not aware of which can cost them very high fees. He suggested Kristen and Helen contact Greg at the Connecticut River Gateway Commission / River COG to see if they can do a 1 page flyer on these rules/regs. Gail Reynolds also suggested connecting with Haddam Inland Wetlands Commission. Additional suggested elements for the Welcome basket: Haddam Land Trust, Restaurant coupons or menus, business info, Transfer Station brochure, Food Scrap brochure. Neil also suggested they contact Molly Danaher from the Ladies Axillary who is involved in the Haddam Neck community as he believes they may have a welcome basket over there.
* **Tours of Quantum Biopower and Covanta Preston Trash to Energy Plant coming up in October and November:** Thank you to Joanne Nesti for arranging these. Carpooling will be figured out.
* **HK Environmental Class students:** Linda reportedEmily Milcent wants her students to attend our meetings so one or two may be showing up in the future.
* **Sustainable CT progress:** Linda Talbott has worked with the interns over the summer and now with Dorothy Piszczek from Sustainable CT uploading Haddam information to their website in order to earn points toward bronze certification. According to Dorothy we have 90 possible points so far. There are 13 possible action plans to cover, and Dorothy has reviewed information of about 8. Town planner Bill Warner has been helpful in sending Linda information. The goal is not to have town employees to have to do the uploading, just to tell her where to find info or to email info to her. Hoping for spring 2024 certification period.

**Motion to adjourn:** Sarah Neal made the motion and Gail Reynolds seconded it and the meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

**Note: next meeting is October 24, 2023, 6:30pm at the Old Town Hall,**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Talbott, Secretary