

Haddam Sustainability Committee –Special Meeting Minutes (Approved)

December 8, 2021

Attendance: Daniel Ardila, Jeff Lord, Heather Minetti, Sarah Neal, Joanne Nesti, John Nork, Mary Nork, Teresa Resnick, Linda Talbott

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Linda Talbott. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all. Approval of the Agenda and October meeting minutes passed unanimously after motions made by Joanne Nesti and seconded by Jeff Lord.

Linda Talbott reported on the **Food Scrap Program** which kicked off today.

- Startup Costs and Blue Earth fees for the first 7 months are being paid for by the Public Works budget, but we need to fundraise to pay that back. If the program is successful, it will be put into next year's Public Works' budget.
- Sam King from Blue Earth designed the brochure and postcard. The First Selectman's office is printing brochures for us in color. Members were given a copy of the brochure.
- 3,666 postcards went out at cost of \$1,094.21. The Norks did not receive one!
- 100 Starter Kits are at the Town Office building. The cost was \$1532.67 and included 9 cases of compostable bags, 100 counter top bins and 100 transport bins. Donation of \$25 gets a person 1 countertop bin, 1 roll of 25 compostable bags, a brochure and 1 transport bin. About 116 extra rolls for \$5 each are also available at the Town Office Building. The Higganum Village Market has agreed to carry these compostable bags also.
- So far we have raised \$1100 as of 12/6/21 which is about 40 kits.
- Brochures have been placed around town at Brainerd Library, Town and Country Nurseries, River Valley Provisions, Higganum Village Market, Higganum Hardware and Red Barn Hardware. Steve Bayley is in charge of restocking those.
- Town printed up green Food Scrap Only Transfer Station passes free to those who have private haulers. Cost was \$410.
- General budget is about \$4,842, so we have to fund raise about \$2421. Kristin is still working on the budget and working with Sustainable CT to get the fundraising up on the web site.
- Linda has talked to the Haddam Historical Society, a member of which asked if a bin could be placed at the Haddam Neck Firehouse. Chris Corsa didn't think they would fill a bin in one week; however, he would reconsider it if the program takes off on the Haddam side. 30 brochures went to the Garden Club and Linda will talk to them January 12. Linda spoke to the Haddam Jr Women's Club and needs a contact person for the Lions Club.
- Articles have gone into the Middletown press, H-K Now and Haddam Killingworth Newspaper. A photo was taken today at the Food Scrap site and will be published in HK Now on line as well as the paper version with a blurb underneath.
- The post card and brochure will be placed on the RSD 17 web site under Community Events
- Chris Corsa has indicated several times, he doesn't feel committee volunteers are necessary to monitor the site. Linda is there on Wednesdays and some Saturdays for a couple of hours with the starter kits and Sarah Neal has helped out on Saturdays when she is free.

Swap Shack issues were discussed. Jeff Lord suggested maybe a room at HES could be used for furniture that is brought to the Swap Shack, which might involve transfer station staff or other volunteers to move it there. Jeff explained he met with Chris to discuss parking issues at the Swap Shack and Chris indicated that he will be putting in parking lines on a slant by the food bin project. Jeff

can talk to Bob McGarry and Chris about the furniture issue.

Old Business:

- Sustainable CT has a certification program for towns to achieve Bronze or Silver Certification. Haddam is registered with them and uploading to the certification program was begun 2 years ago before Covid hit. There are deadlines to be met. Kristin had interns this past summer to try to begin this, but more help is needed. Linda Talbott volunteered to meet with her and the town planner to try to work through this process as there are several categories to look at. Anyone interested in helping with this should email Kristin Battistoni. Linda will contact the point person for Haddam at Sustainable CT.
- Dan Ardile explained the Green Book concept which would include lists of companies, vendors, contractors that provide green services and/or use green products. He feels the news on this topic is too scattered and to have it all in a Sustainability/Green Booklet would be a great resource. He would like it to be printed using renewable resources as well. The Food Scrap brochures could be printed on recycled paper which is sold at Staples. Committee agreed this is an excellent idea.
- Community Garden at Annex: Linda is to talk to the Garden club January 12 and can ask them if they are interested in taking this on as a project. Teresa Resnick asked Linda to contact Parmelee Farm Community Garden organizers to see how that is going as it seems to have been downsized.
- Kristin needs someone to manage Facebook, Instagram and website accounts

New Business:

- Mural at Town Hall and organization of Recycling Corner. A resident came in and offered to create a better space. Kristin has contacted the school to see if a student wants community service hours.
- A new mini library has been set up in the Town Office Building. Mostly children's books at this point
- Discovery Books has a large white bin for hard and soft cover books which they recycle, sell and donate located at the parking lot by Fireworks on Bridge Street just before the East Haddam bridge.
- Teresa Resnick wants to contact Bay State Textiles to see if they would allow us to put a magnetized sign that better explains what to put into the bins. There is some confusion by town residents as to what to donate to the Community Closet and what to put in the textile bins located at the Transfer Station and at the Annex parking lot.
- Clearer signage for the battery recycling, light bulb and single stream recycling at the transfer station is needed.
- Teresa suggested in the spring we have a Transfer Station Educational Fair with Committee volunteers at various sites around the TS to explain to resident's things like: what goes in to single stream and what doesn't, how to recycle batteries, light bulbs, the cardboard only recycling, electronics and food scrap. Maybe handouts could be given out or a business card to tell those that don't want the paper handout, where to look. Linda said the Transfer station website has all of that posted there.
- H-K Now could publish a monthly recurring article on recycling: what goes where, what not to put in. One of us would have to write it.

- Teresa wants a report to go out to the Community on the Food Scrap program: “Mother Earth talking to Haddam” but also other environmental issues could be brought up. Linda reported that Blue Earth Compost will send Chris Corsa and to her the monthly reports on the food scrap diversion poundage removed, so that could go into an article.
- Dan Ardile and Jeff Lord discussed solar power initiatives. One AMAZING FACT: FOR 1 HOUR THAT THE SUN SHINES ON THE EARTH, YOU CAN GET ALL THE ENERGY HUMANS NEED FOR 1 YEAR! Dan explained the different ways electricity is generated; coal, nuclear, natural gas, fossil fuels and solar. He explained most of those sources are limited resources however; the sun is a free and recurring resource.
- Electricity prices in CT are in the top 5 highest in the country. Demand is higher than what we generate. Hawaii is moving to all solar because they are isolated and it is way too costly to bring in power with the other sources. Simple things like turning off the lights when you leave the house can save electricity. Solar power can add value to your home and electricity rates can be locked in.
- Jeff Lord agreed. Solar Be Free Company that came to Haddam a few years ago has gone out of business. He works for Conn Energy Clean Energy and has done solar projects all over the world.
- He set up the only Community Shared Solar project in Bloomfield which was very, very difficult to do in our state.
- Jeff suggested we get 2 or 3 reputable companies and reach out to other neighboring communities to set up an informational session on Solar Energy. People can learn if they want to buy their own solar system, lease (which could end up with liens on your home), or start another solarize campaign. He further explained the electricity sources besides the ones previously mentioned by Dan to include hydropower, wind and solar as the three renewables. Hydropower negatively affects ecosystems as does wind. Solar farms require cutting down trees. Solar and wind are least impactful and the future may require a mixture of natural gas, wind, solar. Solar panel efficiency has evolved over the years as well.

The next Sustainability Committee meeting will be Wednesday January 26, 2022 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Talbott, Secretary

Addendum: Many thanks to Mary and John Nork for driving to Newtown to help pick up the Starter kits!