**Haddam Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

**June 27, 2023, 6:30pm, Old Town Hall**

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

**Call to order:**  Joanne Nesti called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Was said by all.

**Motion to accept agenda:**  Motion made by Kristin Battistoni and seconded by Helen Hastings

**Motion to accept meeting minutes May 23, 2023:** Motion made by Helen Hastings and seconded by Kristin Battistoni

**Old Business:**

* **Food Scrap:** Linda Talbott reported 5,175lbs in May, so total from Dec 2021 is 70,130 lbs or 35 Tons of food scraps composted. Linda and Teresa talked to 82 seniors at the annual Haddam Senior Picnic held at St James Parish Hall. Linda reported on the progress the food scrap program has made and also how to do it. Teresa talked about the textile program, and both were well received. There was a significant amount of food left over some of which was taken home by the participants, but Teresa was able to take most of it home and distribute it to her neighbors. Linda contacted Social Services Director Becky Rice who suggested the left over food next year be brought to the Food bank refrigerators and she will line up needy families to get it.
* **TREX plastic recycling:** Kristin reported 100 lbs have been collected since May. 500lbs in 6 months is the goal to get another TREX bench. She will contact Chris Corsa about where he is placing the benches we have. Suggestions were made: Higganum Reservoir, by the Phil Goff stone in Higganum Center, Higganum Cove, on the HES grounds
* **Ballpark recycling:** Joanne Nesti is still willing to work with Park and Rec and Pete’s but no change in outcomes. She noted that the plastic water bottles will increase to 10cents in January 2024 which should be incentives for people to take them to Stop and Shop and other stores to recoup that money. Teresa wants to promote discontinuing single use plastic water bottles and have everyone use multiuse water bottles instead. Joanne states at the Chester Fair they had people stationed at the trash and recycling bins to improve compliance. Focus may need to change to educating the public against single use plastic water bottles.
* **Textiles:** Teresa reportedJohn Mercier was the contact person at Regional District 17 for the installation of the two textile bins, one at the middle school and one at Park and Rec building near the high school. He has resigned and is going to Marlborough. She has another contact and will try to get a report on the poundage the school bins are getting.

**New Business:**

* **Treasurer’s Report:** Kristin reported: Haddam Sustainability Compost Project Donations: $1,487 collected this fiscal year. Out of that $945.09 spent for 50 new starter kits, biobags, stickers for the bins, so the balance left in that account is $541.91 and will roll over to this fiscal year. In the 2022-2023 Sustainability Budget of $1500: money was spent on the Shred it truck, shred it ad and the insert in the 4500 newspapers, so the ending balance is $151. Kristin plans to order more Biobags this week as she is very low on those and will use up the $151 balance. She notes there is again a problem with Shred It, who states they have no invoice for Haddam when we clearly used them.
* **HK Students Community Hours:** Thank you to Joanne Nesti for pursuing this and she spent 2 hours with the 2 students at the Agricultural Day Fair at the Library on June 3, 3 hrs with them at Higganum Cove picking up trash and thank you to Sarah Neal and Emily Milcent who covered the booth at the Farmer’s Market on June 10 where the 2 students were there for 2 more hours. Joanne spoke to their guidance counselors and the girls completed all their required Community Service hours.
* **Sustainability Committee T shirts:** Teresa has a good idea to have members of the committee wear T shirts that promote Sustainability when we are doing events like the Farmers Market, Shred it, speaking before town groups, etc. She discussed having the shirts be green with black lettering with the recycle logo and maybe Haddam is Sustainable on the front of a women’s style scoop neck T shirt. On the back discussion was held as to what to put there. It was proposed to say “We…Compost, Recycle, Repurpose, Educate, Collect Textiles” or “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Compost, Collect Textiles” but there was no consensus and that aspect needs to be further developed. Sarah Neal requested the T shirts be 100% cotton. In order to cover the initial print layout, 8 members would have to buy 2 shirts at $16 each, or 16 people would have to buy 1 shirt each.Teresa proposed selling the shirts for $20 each, but it is unclear if there would be community interest in that and also Gail questioned if a town committee can do that. Teresa will find out what the fabric is made of. Linda will email members with a photo of the T shirt style and price to see if there is interest with the statement that the design is still in the process.
* **Laundry Detergent sheets:** Teresa had proposed we sell laundry detergent sheets at the Farmers market. Sarah Neal has done research on the ones out there at present and the Environmental Working Group (EWG) has analyzed the contents of these products and rated the ingredients. Earth Breeze has a “C” rated which is the highest rating so far. EWG consists of environmentalists and scientists who analyze many products for toxicity and environmental impact. Issues with Earth Breeze brand include: aggravating asthma, respiratory and skin irritation. Sarah listened to a podcast on laundry detergent and since these are the first iteration, they seem to not be as effective as hoped. Blue Land tablets have been EWG certified and are available on Amazon. She notes that liquid plastic containers are smaller now and the liquid detergents are more concentrated, so you have to use less. Teresa strongly feels that the plastic containers have to go and people should try some of these laundry sheets because the packaging is better for the environment. It was suggested we can educate the public at farmers market on these products but not endorse any product until better rated ones come out.
* **Welcome baskets:** Kristin has submitted an article into Haddam Events and will submit it also to HKNow and the paper. The article outlines her personal experience when she first moved here and had a welcome basket of town information. Helen and Kristin will continue to work on this, partnering with the Haddam Congregational Church and the Haddam Women’s Club. This would be another way to get single stream recycling, textile recycling, food scrap composting, environmentally safe cleaning products and any other Sustainability Committee project information out to newcomers to Haddam.
* **Sustainable CT certification:** Linda reported that she, Kristin and Teresa met with 2 Sustainable CT summer interns at the Town Office Building on June 9. They assisted us on how to sign into the site and how to upload information for the actions listed. It was decided we would send them by email any information and they will upload it to the appropriate action plan. We may have another meeting in early August to see how many points we have earned. We also found out that there may be many things such as counting the sidewalks, the installation of a crosswalk at the Senior Center and by the Higganum Post Office/drug store area that can be counted. We need to earn 200 points and do at least 1 action in the 12 categories to earn bronze certification. The goal is to do that maybe by next spring. Linda will be meeting with Lisa Malloy (action 5.5), Becky Rice, Social Services Director(10.4: she has a garden); a Haddam Garden Club member(3.12 pollinator garden at the library). Gail Reynolds said Terry Twigg articles are a great resource and the Library Pollinator garden was designed by a Master Gardener Cindy Tillison.
* **Additional New Business:** Gail Reynolds was asked by Marlborough to come and talk to them about the Master Composter program and talk to them about composting. She will tell them about what Haddam has done. Teresa Resnick attended a sustainability event at the Glastonbury Boat House and met a person who runs a non-profit that uses public data to estimate the annual Town energy use and can educate the town on reducing energy usage. It was suggested after some discussion that more information was needed and perhaps, he should come and talk to the committee. Kristin Battistoni reported that the Congregational Church held an Upcycle Sewing Day, but no one came. This event would have people who sew and can alter garments that may be out of style or out of season into something else. It is a good way to reuse clothing. The committee agreed to support this and Kristen could advertise if they do another one on our website. Sarah Neal said “BuyNothing” is a Haddam/Killingworth site that advocates similar ideas. FreeCycle is another site.

**The next meeting will be September 26,2023 at 6:30 pm at the Old Town Hall. Have a wonderful summer!**

Motion to adjourn was made by Gail Reynolds and seconded by Kristin Battistoni and was adjourned at 7:59 pm by Joanne Nesti.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Talbott