



**Energy & Sustainability Committee
Minutes
Thursday, January 19, 2023
7:00 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Attendees: Emily Prince (chair), Bob Dorer, Margot Fleischman, Dan Bostwick, Chris Rabinowitz, Patricia Fabian, Chris Gittins (Planning Board), Ron Scaltreto (Bedford Facilities)

Minutes Taker – Patricia Fabian

1. Public Comment – no comments
2. Energy & Sustainability Manager - Patricia and Emily met with Sarah, suggested changes, EP circulated new description today at 3pm by email. Major changes: reduced experience requirements from 5 to 3 years, reduced scope of work but keep all 3 sectors (municipal, residential and commercial).
 - DB commented it looks more accessible than previous version and includes community activities. Still feels focused on municipal but glad it includes all.
 - EP - Sara indicated job will be posted on Monday, shared far and wide. BD noted the old job description on the website.
 - PF suggested asking for list of places it will be posted, so ESC can help distribute as well.
 - EP – will send to Carrie Sarno for distribution
3. Building Energy Use Disclosure Bylaw
 - DB – town manager was going to talk to stakeholders. No other updates.
 - MF - Warrant will close middle of February, town manager busy getting budget to printers. MF will touch base with town manager to see what expectation is for stakeholder meetings.
4. Status updates:
 - a. Composting & waste reduction.
 - Residential composting. CR reported that Black Earth has given out 346 composting bins. She talked with Liz who has 175 free bins to give away to reach 500 participants. Has given out 20 so far. In survey, 5% respondents indicated they would participate in composting (of 500 surveys answered). She expects 10 times that number based on total population. More numbers from survey: 55% don't compost, 30% even if free wouldn't compost. Need to get the 25% to sign up, MOF will try to find a way to help. Noted that sustainability manager could help.
 - CR- Trash pickup contract is due for renewal (Republic) – she doesn't think they compost but waiting to hear back. Still wants to do the RFP.
 - Recycling – CR updated on rental and commercial properties. Most Bedford rental properties recycle. Commercial properties – individual companies take home paper and cardboard bc no recycling offered. CR will make more call to find out if people are recycling.



- Composting in schools.
 - CR suggested idea from Lexington – hire extra people and offer stipend to compost in schools. JGMS and BHS kitchens compost but not cafeteria. Big problem, worried we can be fined. Need to make it happen and expand to all schools. Challenged by lack of staff.
 - Ron agreed staffing limited, also staff contractual limitations. One custodian in each cafeteria at that time of day 11-2:30 to get through 3-4 lunches, limited time to clear tables for next lunch. 2 teachers, 200 kids. At BHS and JGMS a little easier, at Lane and Davis kids thinking about recess, chaotic.
 - CR asked about pilot program (3 years ago), based on volunteers. Ron reported that Covid disrupted pilot and that schools would welcome volunteers for these types of programs.
- Outreach. MF – asked what kind of outreach anyone has tried to increase composting beyond MOF. Bedford TV PSA? GreenTeam? Lots of passionate youth that are interested. Children lobby parents. Has anyone engaged with other networks? First Parish encouraging composting. Can we do more in our networks on the ease of composting program? Also pointed out that there are already paths to get youth involved – BEST PTO, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Gave example of first woman eagle scout in Melrose who did their project on sustainability and got a lot of attention. PF suggested being strategic about reaching out to community groups rather than ad hoc, green teams, scouts, etc. for different sustainability projects. EP and CR volunteered to make list of local groups organizations and make action plan.
- Challenges. BD – commented on challenges, where to start, how to get institutionalized? School committee? Need Sustainability person to lead. Agree we need to leverage personal networks. One idea – town website for ESC has composting link that goes directly to BlackEarth, needs one for the program. Suggested cleaning up website links.
- JGMS sustainability project. EP reported that JGMS and Lane green teams are working to spread sustainability awareness. Project 1 is an art contest at JGMS. Project 2 could be about composting.
- BD – on positive note, it's easy to sign up for pilot composting at program at town composting center (2/week). Once word gets out, participation will improve.
- MF – composting requires changing people's habits at home. We need to engage state rep to support communities in municipal composting. All communities are struggling with same issues, how to incentivize, how to pay? There are regulations on private industry and private producers now need help for individuals. We should keep engaging with delegation on state action bc all communities in same boat. Reported that nothing was mentioned at MAPC Magic meeting and will look into resources.
- CR reported that MOF had ideas, for example signs about curbside composting, backyard composting. Similar to gas leak campaign.
- b. Community Choice Aggregation. EP reported numbers. Total 21 households for 50% renewables (+2), 137 for 100%. In last months dropped 75 people, not sure why it as it was before rate increase announced. Asked for volunteers for social media campaign for CCA who have signed up for 100%.



- BD reported that COA included CCA information in February newsletter and he will present on Feb 22, at 10am. Several providers (e.g. Clean Energy) send flyers. Dyna Energy is our provider. Confusing for people, maybe switches are due to that. Rate never as good as ours.
 - General discussion about including a regular article in Bedford Citizen with highlights from ESC meeting as a way to inform general community about active programs. Bedford TV also suggested, potentially through PSA. PF will look into Citizen articles, BD will investigate with Bedford TV managing director.
 - c. Multi-Town Gas Leaks. CR – not meeting this month. Feb 16 next meeting. Postponed because National Grid not ready to share about pilots for going geothermal. Expecting updates about National Grid fixing leaks, bills in legislature.
 - d. DOER Stretch Code & Legislative Updates. EP is working on this, need language to draft by-law. EP, PF & MF will look for examples from other cities (e.g., Brookline & Winchester) and MAPC MAGIC. CR pointed out Bedford was a town, versus how decisions are made in cities.
 - e. Town Buildings. Ron reported that projects are moving along nicely. Library starting next week. Charging stations at DPW – plan agreed on, waiting on Eversouce and installer Maverick on when start. Charging stations at Police station – starting April. No plan to publicize because the purpose is to increase accessibility for town employees as well as build EV charging infrastructure for when municipal transportation fleet is electrified. Several ESC members commended foresight in building EV infrastructure.
 - f. Anti-Idling School Collaboration. EP reported Green Team leader at JGMS really engaged. Anti-idling campaign starting soon with project soliciting posters from students, winners announced in early March.
 - g. Heat Smart. CR reported on webinar for Lexington residents by Abode Energy from Concord. Excellent responding to Qs. Hired company who has trained volunteers to answer questions for residents about how they put heat pumps into homes. BD also at meeting. CR called Abode for personal (oil and forced hot air). Start with home energy assessments. Block grant program for towns – if you have less than 35K population. Go to Lexington’s webpage – Abode energy, heat pumps. Website has a place to participate in Lexington program to compare 3 different contracts.
 - BD thought webinar was good for people who didn’t know anything about heat pumps. For those who know not clear on cold weather performance. How well do they work below 40F? Biggest takeaway, offer moral support for people who want to investigate, have experts who can help. Wished they picked a well vetted contractor like Solarize Bedford, they give a list. Interesting time – many debating different things, need electric circuit, need electrician which is hard to find. Rebates also not easy to find, whether MassSave and EnergySave at Federal level. If you have hot water heat, only alternative are mini-splits.
 - CG shared that they’ve had air source heat pump and mini-splits for 4.5 years. Sweet spot when outside temp 30-35 degrees. At low temp put out hot air but consume a lot of energy. Ground source heat pumps something to consider. Not immediately obvious what the right one is.
5. Webpage Review. Several members made suggestion to update information, remove obsolete items.



- BD – web page showing electric use and natural gas use. Charts showing consumption up to 2009-2017, bunch of numbers. What are there for? Valuable to keep? DB – goes back to when Bedford becoming a Green community. 6 years out of date. Suggestion to convert to 2 bullet points instead of numbers. NetZero tool not working anymore. Add link to NetZero report.
 - DB will make website changes
 - EP - Link to EV map (ChargePoint). DB – ChargePoint has not way to start zoomed into Bedford, it links to a general map. Where did charging infographic came from? Answer: Suzie Enos made from Bedford data.
6. Approve December Meeting Minutes. EP thanked BD for detailed minutes. Small grammar edits suggested, incorporated questions posed to Senator Barret. Minutes and amendments accepted. Approved 6-0-0
 7. Appoint 2023 Chair. Bob Dorer elected chair. 6-0-0. BD thanked EP for 2+ years as chair. Meetings will continue to be on zoom. Even if policy changes, call-in option will continue.
 8. Future meetings 3rd Thursday of the month. Need to check with John. Next meeting: Thursday February 16th. MF indicated occasional potential conflict on Thursdays.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM by BD after a roll call vote of 6-0-0.