Minutes for Sustainability Team Meeting of January 3rd 2023

Meeting called to order at 7:02 by Amalia Shaltiel

Present: Kayle Lopez, Theresa Govert, Adam Bristol, George Willauer and Amalia Shaltiel – Team members. David Oakes joined mid session. Also present Jesse Scott – Volunteer and Cynthia Deming, liaison to East Haddam Land Trust.

Approval of Agenda – motion to approve- Kayle Lopez, seconded by Theresa Govert. Amalia added to the agenda a report from Cynthia Deming about the East Haddam Land Trust\. Unanimous acceptance of the agenda as changed.

Approval of minutes of December 6th 2022 meeting – Motion to approve the minutes brought forward by Theresa Govert seconded by Adam Bristol. Unanimous approval of minutes as recorded.

Unfinished Business:

Troop 22 Recycling fund raiser for community grant from Sustainable CT. Ms. Shaltiel reported that the fund raiser was a success and that Troop 22 reached their goal of raising close to $4500 from the community in order to qualify for the matching funds from Sustainable CT. $2000 were raised from people and businesses in town. The town contributed $1500 from the Nip fund. This was initiated by Theresa Govert and Ms. Shaltiel thanked her. Darcy Allen, the troop leader approached First Selectwoman Irene Haines and received the funds directly from her. Ms. Govert explained that the Nip fund is 5 cents that the town gets for every Nip sold as they are non-recyclable. This turns out to be about $12000 a year that the town gets that should be targeted towards activities related to recycling and environmental cleanup. The Troop also got $800 from the Moodus Sportsman Club, where troop 22 meets. Ms. Shaltiel explained that for the SustainableCT action the team has to help the troop till they complete the project. We helped them raise the money and Ms. Allen was grateful for our expertise but our involvement will continue, and we will report upon it. Ms. Govert explained that any large doner or municipality could only contribute 35% of the crowd funding amount to a single campaign. This is something to know moving forward.

Climate Leader: Adam Bristol reported as the team viewed the climate leader worksheet. Mr. Bristol explained that although we only have 10 points registered with Sustainable CT, the town has done a lot of the actions and they just need to be recorded. Ms. Shaltiel asked if we could start on action 3.4 which relates to Open Space. Adam agreed to start working on that with Ms. Shaltiel and Mr. Ventres.

Ms. Govert will look into more information about cooling centers and our trash per capita during the budget season in mid February. Ms. Govert suggested talking with Mr. Ventres who has documented our open space and might already have an open space plan. Mr. Shaltiel agreed but said that the Sustainable CT worksheet required more information about every open space area. Ms. Deming asked if Ms. Govert knew there was one place where all the open space of the town and the Land Trust were gathered. Ms. Shaltiel asked if she could share the Sustainable CT worksheet with Ms. Deming and if she could help with gathering that information. She will share that with Mr. Bristol and Ms. Deming.

Mr. Scott will help with Street Lighting and energy Audits. Ms. Shaltiel will introduce Mr. Scott to Linda Zeimeiniski so he can move ahead with this action.

Sustainable Team Page on Municipal Website – Ms. Shaltiel sent the information to Ms. Zeimeiniski after Ms. Govert checked it. Ms. Shaltiel also asked about the possibility of alternates on the team as we do not have a tenth non-Democrat member and a couple of our members are recovering from health issues and Mr. Ventres has many other obligations and so does not usually show up. This sometimes leads to difficulty in reaching a quorum. Ms. Govert responded that it would be needed to be taken on by the Board of Selectmen and would be an arduous process. Volunteers can participate as they do now, and it might be easier if members stepped down temporarily if they are unavailable and step back when they are available. Ms. Shaltiel said she would broach the subject with Ms. Trentham and ask her opinion. Mr. Scott is willing to step into a Team member role. Ms Govert explained that there is a process of resignation and approval that will need to be followed.

Team Reports:

Kayle Lopez: Nothing new to report. Ms. Shaltiel suggested that Ms. Lopez connect to the composting point person in the Chester Sustainability Team. They are working on composting in schools which we would like to do and at the same time are not composting in their transfer station. We could mentor them or be mentored by them. We could also connect for the festivals as they work with Blue Diamond at the Chester Fair while we do the Airport Festival. This might work as a regional involvement action.

Adam Bristol: Education Community event at Library for UConn. Will follow up with them for spring with Pollinator Pathways or Invasive Species lecture either in East Haddam or surrounding towns. Ms. Shaltiel again mentioned the Chester Sustainability Team who have workshops with Deep River and Essex which we might be able to coordinate with. Also, the possibility of connecting to the Lyme Sustainability Team through Mr. Willauer's Mother. Mr. Bristol will lock down a date.

George Willauer: did not have anything new. There is a new concern about COVID. Ms. Shaltiel was wondering about his involvement with the Makers Café workshops. She also hoped that he would pursue the connection in Lyme for regional work.

Theresa Govert: Followed up about email of Grant to Friends of Machimoodus that got a $15000 grant to combat invasives which she sent to Mr. Bristol and Ms. Shaltiel. They would be a good group for community engagement as they are also involved in creating pollinator pathways and planting native plants. That grant was mentioned in the BOS meeting and can be found in the minutes. Ms. Shaltiel asked if that information can be put on the municipal website in current events.

David Oakes: Is working on Bristol Gold Certification. He confirmed with Sustainable CT that for regional work we can work with any town, whether it is a Sustainable Town or not. He met with Fellow Anicka from Wesleyan University. Mr. Oakes asked for us to think if there is anything we can ask her to do for East Haddam.

Ms. Shaltiel asked about conducting a Community Resilience Workshop in East Haddam in conjunction with Bristol. Mr. Oakes explained that it would involve by-in by different departments and municipal operations and suggested Ms. Govert check if there was any interest. Ms. Shaltiel asked about involvement of the Conservation Commission. Mr Oakes will make the introduction to connect to the Nature Conservancy in charge of the workshop in Bristol and Ms. Shaltiel and Ms. Govert could take it from there. The workshop takes about 3 and a half hours.

Amalia Shaltiel: Roported on the fund raising for Troop 22 and the connection to the Chester Sustainability Team with an interest to be able to do regional projects and share ideas. Chester and Deep River have more experience than East Haddam. David Oakes asked for more information about Troop 22 and thought it might work for a community equity action.

Volunteers:

Jesse Scott is willing to help in any action. Is also interested in getting to Town Hall and audit exterior and interior lighting as he is a certified energy auditor and can do that with little disruption. Ms. Govert will connect Mr. Scott to the First Selectwoman and Executive Manager.

East Haddam Land Trust Liaison

Cynthia Deming – Is in her first meeting and getting to know the Team. Ms. Shaltiel explained the mission of the Sustainability Team is to help all organizations in town be more Sustainable and that the cooperation between the Land Trust and the Town be acknowledged officially.

Ms. Deming explained that the East Haddam Land Trust continues it mission, searching for land that can be preserved, raising money to purchase such land and continuously working to clean, upgrade and mark the trails. A sub committee is working on invasive removal. There are work parties every month. Ms Demingsaid that the EHLT also does educational programs and suggested we also get involved with the East Haddam Garden Club, who also did a seminar on eliminating invasives. Ms. Shaltiel suggested gathering the information from Friends of Machimoodus, the EHLT and the East Haddam Garden Club and the Sustainability Team to document the work done on invasives by all the groups, doing a workshop or putting out the information to the public in some way or other or advertise it to all the different organizations. Mr. Bristol agreed to connect with Ms. Deming. Mr Oakes suggested we document what we have from all these organizations to get points as is. Ms Govert mentioned money that was given to the Conservation Commission for planting to combat invasives and Ms. Shaltiel mentioned a work crew form last year which she documented in photos.

New Business:

Kayle Lopez will look for contacts about composting in Chester Sustainability Team and reach out to them. Ms. Lopez was surprised and delighted about the composting article written by Linda Zeimeinski. She will thank her and also will reach out for a meeting with First Selectwoman Haines.

Ms. Shaltiel apologized for not getting an article in the Winter Events Magazine. She put much effort in the article in the East Haddam News.

No public comment

Ms. Shaltiel wished everyone a Happy New Year and continuous good work on Sustainability issues.

Motion to Adjorn by David Oakes. Seconded by Kayle Lopez. Meeting Adjourned at 7:52

Next meeting set for February 7, 2023.