MINUTES

SUSTAINABILITY TEAM MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2024

HYBRID IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL (Committee)

VIA YOUTUBE LIVE (Public)

7:00PM

1. **Call to order**: 7:03PM by Tanya Bourgoin. Present: Tanya Bourgoin, Amalia Shaltiel, Jesse Scott, Amber McDonnell, Terri Garrity, David Oakes, Alan Ponanski, Cynthia Deming, Wade Tomlinson. and member of the public Lauren Masterson
2. **Approval of agenda**: Motion by Ms. Shaltiel, seconded by Mr. Scott. Agenda approved.
3. **Acceptance of minutes**: Motion by Ms. Shaltiel, seconded by Mr. Scott. Ms. Garrity abstained due to absence.
4. **Chair report:** Available dates to host a meal at Harvest House are (all Sundays) 9/8, 11/24, and 12/29. 11/24 was preferred by most members, Ms. Bourgoin will let them know. Menu to be discussed at an upcoming meeting.
5. **Members/Team Structure:** Mr. Matt Shea will resign at the end of the month. Mr. Scott has a hopeful new member, Nora Myers, in mind. Ms. Shaltiel has been unable able to reach Adam Bristol regarding his position with the committee. Ms. Bourgoin states we should consider creating by-laws to prevent such issues (quorum issues, etc.). Mr. Ponanski would entertain alternate status. Ms. Shaltiel mentioned a meeting with other sustainable teams 8/14 1PM at the RiverCOG in Essex. This would be a good time to discuss their by-laws that we may consider.

   Ms. Shaltiel would like to be nominated as co-chair of the Sustainability Team, feels she does more for the committee than the role of Secretary suggests. Ms. Bourgoin hesitates, “cart before the horse”. Mr. Scott suggests we first define the roles and governing structure over the next few weeks. Ms. Garrity agrees but suggests keeping it simple. Ms. Deming and Mr. Oakes agree. Mrs. McDonnell is open to taking on the role of secretary. Mr. Ponanski states that titles are important, as they help the public to know the role each member plays. Ms. Shaltiel suggests we advocate for a printing budget. Mr. Scott may consider the role of treasurer. Ms. Bourgoin will work on structure and defining roles for the next committee meeting.

6. **Unfinished business**:

Ms. Shaltiel – energy campaign: farmers market tomorrow (Wed 7/17), senior center presentation 8/12 1:30PM. Devan Willemson from Eversource sent a sample google form today, Mr. Scott and Ms. Garrity to work on this over the next few weeks. 16 leads thus far (2 completed, 1 scheduled, 4 attempting to schedule, 9 are not proceeding at this time). Mr. Scott and Ms. Shaltiel completed heat pump training with Eversource, materials are available to share with anyone interested. Ms. Shaltiel suggests connecting with East Hampton for their upcoming energy event.

Ms. Bourgoin - equity: meeting with Mark from "2 Wrasslin' Cats Accord" and Together We Rise, will see what they can do together for equity in the town and report back at a later date. Ms. Garrity spoke with Superintendent Dr. DeBrito to find out what the school district is doing, states the goal is to reacclimate and engage with the community on racism, previous administration dropped the ball on this. State and federal agencies have been contacted. She also contacted SustainableCT about the equity coach, Dr. DeBrito is interested in collaborating with the coach. Next step is to all get together and create the ask and send it back to Jessica LeClair, director of SustainableCT. Ms. Garrity is focused on equity within the school system, Ms. Bourgoin is focused on the community at large, both are needed. Mr. Scott inquired for the reason the equity coach is coming from SustainableCT and not the state. Ms. Shaltiel advised it is because it is available for free through SustainableCT. Mr. Scott states there is a new middle school principal, African American woman. Nice to see diversity in the hiring process.

Ms. Garrity - disability support for families: currently waiting on cost estimates for support staff (parent caregiver speaker series). She will research more grants to get this 100% funded.

Ms. Bourgoin – recycling: Researched different programs for plastic recycling (TerraCycle, Trex (can take the most stuff, grocery bags, stretch film, ziplock bags) and is waiting on a callback from their rep to find out what is most cost effective. The town of East Haddam website has a section under "transfer station" that describes the items which can and cannot be recycled at the transfer station. She suggests promoting this page more widely, it can be hard to find. Ms. Shaltiel suggests highlighting it on the Sustainability Team Facebook page. Mr. Tomlinson suggests making a QR code sign by the composting area at the Transfer Station that links to that page. Ms. Shaltiel and Mrs. McDonnell are interested in visiting the recycling center. Mr. Ponanski encourages East Haddam to do more with recycling plastic. Ms. Bourgoin states an obstacle is finding a place for the volume of that recyclable plastic to go. Trex will provide a trailer, but they want everything baled and they

don't provide a baler. Mr. Ponanski suggests having a speaker from a company who does this to show the benefits to the environment and the townspeople.

Ms. Shaltiel - repair café: the Grange is booked for 8/25, Reboot Eco from Middletown will send experts at no cost, as well as Bernie Gillis from town, looking for more "fixers". Mr. Scott is concerned about attendance due to end of summer/back to school rush but this is when Ms. Shaltiel is available, wants to get back in the swing of doing this every 6 months. Mr. Ponanski suggests having a portion of the café to show people how to use YouTube as a resource. Ms. Bourgoin suggests adding a toy swap, plant swap, and school supply collection to the repair café. Mr. Scott asked if there is any liability with us touching people's electronics; Ms. Shaltiel said no.

Ms. Shaltiel – scavenger hunt and collage: Looking for suggestions on how to finish the town scavenger hunt. Awards? Prizes? Collage moved from the grange to the East Haddam Art League who added more, now at 2 Wrasslin' Cats. Goal is to have the collage finished by end of summer. Climate leader certification update: deadline is 8/20, she is working to document Energy Campaign (6 events, 3 for each) and benchmarking.

7. **Team Reports**: Mr. Oakes as Bristol Sustainability Team leader reached out to Eversource, got $6K per building through Eversource (Valentine Jimenez), they bring a consultant to help improve buildings. He feels that many people don't know about this program. He will contact Mr. Angersola about this. Ms. Bourgoin thinks we should make it a point to keep track of this.
8. **Volunteer/Liaison reports**: Ms. Deming reminds members of Musical Bridges Concert on 8/12 6PM at the Goodspeed Theater lawn. Proceeds benefit the Land Trust. Mr. Ponanski mentions the current battle against invasive plants (ex.: Japanese Knotweed) which are destroying the ecosystem and have no benefit to anyone. The Conservation Commission is working to educate the public on eradication efforts; Mrs. Masterson suggested getting Best Buddies involved to assist. Consider a public workshop to identify invasive plant species and discuss methods of eradication. Will we include chemical means of control?
9. **New Business:** Member of the public Lauren Masterson, a teacher at NHRMS, presented ideas for how to promote sustainability within our schools. (Powerpoint slide deck shared with members upon request.) She has spoken with Dr. DeBrito who is on board. Is there a way to collect school's compost and deliver to the transfer station? Ms. Shaltiel has spoken with Dr. DeBrito about composting in the schools in other towns She shared a video with Dr. Debrito about a green team that does the composting which serves at the model for how to do this, Best Buddies would be a great group to do it. Is the school willing to finance? Could Ms. Lopez

transport compost from the schools to the transfer station? Ms. Garrity asked if Mrs. Masterson has spoken with the board about this idea; they will have a meeting with Dr. DeBrito this Friday. Ms. Deming suggests composting at the school so children can understand how it works, while Ms. Bourgoin suggests doing both (cooked food, meat, etc. goes to transfer station, smaller stuff can stay at school). Mr. Oakes has a coworker with similar ideas and offered to connect Mrs. Masterson with her to discuss. The idea of reusable trays was discussed instead of Styrofoam but do we have the ability to wash them? Mr. Ponanski asked if parents are involved in these ideas, suggests a parents night to educate them. Mrs. Masterson may consider folding Best Buddies into this.

10. **Audience of citizens**: N/A
11. Announcements: N/A
12. Next meeting: August 20, 2024, at 7:00PM.
13. Adjournment: motion by Mr. Scott, seconded by Ms. Garrity. Meeting adjourned 8:37PM.