

MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

JULY 19, 2018- 6:00 P.M.

Committee members present: Scott Orzechowski, Chair, City Councilor Ed Levasseur, Sarah McGraw, and Michael Bobinsky. Doug Watson was absent from the meeting.

1.APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES. Minutes of the June, 2018 meeting was considered. Sarah discovered a typo with the word Sync when describing a future transportation grant the City received for upgrading the traffic control equipment on High Street while improving the synchronization of the signals with Dover. The Chair agreed to make the correction noted in the minutes. Ed Levasseur moved and Mike Bobinsky seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting. Motion was approved with the typo correction.

2.Correspondence/Updates

Sarah mentioned that she had been contacted by Robin Comstock, City Economic Development Manager, who shared with her current downtown roundtable talks about a possible flower basket program for downtown storefronts. Sarah also mentioned there could be a link with the Community Garden program and the flower basket program. There may be other links to sustainable practices with this program as well.

Mike Bobinsky indicated that there is a resident of Somersworth who has several bee hives at their property and abutting neighbors are complaining. City Code Officers are working with the property owner on a possible transfer of the hives to the Malley Farm Community Garden program. Details are still being considered and no final decision has been made if the Garden site is appropriate. Community Garden volunteers were polled on the possibility of bee hives at the Gardens and all seem in favor of the possibility. Will report on status in future meetings.

3.Unfinished Business

-Member Handbook

Sarah gave an update on the work progress to date. Her draft handbook for existing and new Committee members is intended to serve as an orientation of the work of the Committee; its mission, methods for public education and information sharing guidelines, social media citation and procedures to access social media for Committee updates; and a project checklist to help with uniform methods of tracking projects. Sarah indicated that a completed working draft should be ready for presentation at the August meeting. Mike offered to provide the Committee with 3 ring binders to help with assembling the handbook. Scott asked where hardcopies of documents that the committee is involved with be stored. Mike indicated he would get back to the Committee on options.

-Outline for working with other Committees

Doug Watson is working on this element and committee member felt the communication guidelines shared by Doug at the last meeting will serve as a solid beginning. Committee members asked Scott to have Doug resend the email again with the communication guidelines template for use and consideration in adopting guidelines for how the committee members communicate to outside groups and or committees.

-EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager access

Scott reminded all Committee members to get signed up on the Energy Start portfolio website for future education and knowledge about local energy saving tips and programs.

-Objectives and methods for public communication

Scott led the discussion about options for how the Committee communicates out projects or sustainable tips to the public. Committee understands to coordinate all outside communication through the City Manager's office. Methods include use of the City Managers newsletter, updates to social media. Websites, email blasts, development of a standard template for minute taking, and for project update reporting. It was suggested that the Committee develop monthly sustainable tips for the City Manager newsletter. The Committee chair will craft a sustainability tip for the August newsletter, other Committee member will take this task on as well, while coordinating with Scott as the Chair and working through the City Managers office.

4.New Business

Date for tree planting workshop with the Tree Board was set for Wednesday August 8, 2018 before the Conservation Commission meeting. Mike mentioned that City staff will be taking a walking tour of downtown trees on Monday July 30 with the seacoast region urban forester. Purpose is view downtown trees and selected trees outside of downtown where staff would like an opinion of condition. Sarah mentioned she heard of a new group called Sustainable Seacoast which wants to eliminate all single use plastic items such as grocery bags and straws, in retail throughout the region. She also alerted the Committee that food waste composting rules may be changing making it easier for people to compost food waste.

Mike made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Sarah M seconded the motion. Meeting ended at 7:20pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday August 16, 2018 at 6pm.**

Submitted and prepared by:

Michael J. Bobinsky