

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE
PRACTICES

October 26, 2017 MEETING

DATE: October 26, 2017
TIME: 6:30 – 8:30 PM
PLACE: CITY MANAGER’S CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM September 28, 2017

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Committee Status

- i. Patrick in VT for conference on composting in cities. Awaiting his update! Confirm Josh’s intention if he doesn’t get on the Council – remain on committee?**

2. Committee Vision and Priorities

- i. Mayor has asked for periodic reports to City Council. Last one approx. Sept. of 2016. Looking @ cities as system, what is our vision/priority today? Best mean of reaching our goals, leverage points. Conversation to happen when more committee members are in attendance. Eric – ways to reduce plastic bag use in the city. Banning not possible (Home Rule state), but other tools exist. Events = no plastic bags. Impose a fee on plastic bags? City staff needs horsepower in getting**

actionable ideas within the city to reduce plastic bag use.

Ask: What are other creative ways to reduce their use?

Promoting reusable bags; each time a person refuses a plastic bag, a dime goes into a glass jar (visible) and once a certain amount is saved up, there's an exciting event. Newspaper articles highlighting children's progress in schools saving up. Leverage point: make it cool to have your beverage without a straw. What is patrick's input on rate of degradation on compostable utensils/bags?

UNH has EV fleet cars – can committee help educate city staff on EVs? 1)Get the administration comfortable with the idea, 2)Get the word out, encourages others to move in this direction, 3)Depending on how the city charges, its an opportunity to grow city infrastructure. What are steps with City Council to move EV forward? Put in Capital Plan for fleet? Public Works director needs to outline a plan. Josh Denton, at Council Meeting in December – “Can city manager look into getting an electric vehicle for fleet use to get ball rolling. Excel (XL?) hybrid pickup trucks – install electric motore and battery system.

3. Portsmouth Listens Housing Dialogue

- i. Rebecca has an amendment to the City (being voted on Nov. 20 – 2nd reading) regarding zoning code. Here's where we can work for influence to promote housing diversity. We have lots of high end and subsidized but not enough in the middle. 55% of people who work in the city can't afford to live here.**

4. Facilitation Schedules

- i. Josh facilitating November, Larry taking minutes**
- ii. Lindsay facilitating December, matt taking minutes**
- iii. Matt facilitates in January...**

5. Impact Symposium

- i. Nov. 4th in Library from 9-1 2nd Annual Impact Symposium – joint pre between library and sustainability alliance. Greg Noris will be there (creator of the Handprint. Jim Merkel (?) making a film called “100 year plan”, looking at lifestyles in existence around the world living sustainably. Local organizations will also be in attendance and showing what they're working**

on in the area. Bert will be doing systems mapping to determine where we have the greatest leverage in our own lives. More info on library website.

6. Emails to committee

- i. Bert checked in with committee on using committee email accounts to alert members to sustainability events and other related things that may be congruent with our mission. Approved.

7. Presentation to the City Council

- i. See above. Larry says when we had Blalock here last year. Are we dropping the ball by not putting one together now? Bert thinks the ball is in our court, Perhaps a 20 min report could be useful to help us focus. We each work on our areas of interest. (Bert = Hodgden, Brook, etc.). Let's bring this up at the next meeting to set a date for report completion. John Bohenko said he's make a point to educate any new city council members on our eco-municipality status. We'd like to be involved in that.

8. Evaluation

- i.

9. Eco-municipality

- i. Sara James, author of The Natural Step. 50% of ecomunicipalities are not calling themselves such anymore but are still committed to sustainable practices. 8 yrs ago the EU had a "Green City award". Stockholm won 1st year. Invited 3 US cities (one was Portsmouth, one from Boulder, CO and one west coast). Learned that we have a lot of work to do! Is it useful to continue using this term? Yes, useful as a framework.

Agenda for next week: how do we get a positive spin on straws or bags to get us feeling good rather than feeling deprived?

IV. ADJOURNMENT 7:35pm