

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE
PRACTICES
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

July 22, 2021 MEETING
6:30 – 8:30pm

Conference Room A

Minutes

- I. **Members present:** Bert Cohen, Cliff Lazenby, John Kennedy, Maya McKinnon, Darla Mahoney, Larry Lariviere, Rebecca O'Brien, and Aubrey Gewehr.
Guest: Steve DeTrollio

- II. **The Committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes from June 24, 2021**

- III. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. **Community Power Update:** The work session with the Portsmouth City Council is scheduled for Monday August 9th at 7:00 pm. Burt, Cliff, and Peter did a pre-planning meeting with Public Works Director Peter Rice, City Manager Karen Conard, and Henry Herndon. The Sustainability Committee will lead the work session. The plan is to have about 70% of the session cover community power in Portsmouth, about 30% covering the Community Power Coalition and what that means. The next steps would be to form an energy committee. Burt led an exercise in explaining community power to the committee.

John posed an adjacent idea to consider: a proposal to write to Walmart and suggest they add a solar farm to their parking lot on Lafayette Road location since they have stated sustainability goals. Perhaps then follow with other large parking lot locations in the city.

 2. **Portsmouth Drawdown Update:** Burt updated the committee on expanding Drawdown educational offerings. Drawdown Solutions 101 is six video units of varying lengths available on drawdown.org. He proposed organizing a series of educational events in coordination with SEAREI to watch a video each event and discuss. The idea arose to start in October before the City Council election and invite candidates to participate. Committee will discuss further in August meeting

 3. **Website:** Becca discussed the current City of Portsmouth website with regards to the Sustainability Committee page and information on Portsmouth as an EcoMunicipality. She has additional content to add to the existing page content and will share with the committee for review. Once the committee adopts any changes, the City Manager can arrange for it to be added to the committee page. Rebecca will update the draft for discussion and approval at the August meeting.

4. **Priorities for 2021:** Bert led a discussion about opportunities that could be enacted utilizing some funding from the 12.8 million dollars Portsmouth is slated to receive from the American Rescue Plan. He would like to communicate with City Manager Conard about funding a full-time sustainability officer/department. Uses of the money will require public input and City Council approval. A committee is likely to be formed to weigh proposals to recommend to the council. Burt proposes having a meeting with City Manager Conard and Peter Britz in mid-August to discuss.
5. **Other Business:** Next meeting will be on August 26 at 6:30 pm in Conference Room A. Aubrey Gewehr to lead, Carrie Mayo to take minutes.

IV. ADJOURNMENT at 8:30pm