

October 23rd Sustainability Committee Meeting

Attendance:

Members: Bert Cohen, Kate Homet, Sully Otis (PHS), Jessica Blasko, Bill Lyons, Rhianne Tallarico (Zoom), Torey Brooks, Fred Calcinari, Josh Denton

Guests: Annette Davies (Zoom), Stacey Gibson, Tyler Garzo

Excused Absence: Effie Malley, Colleen Spear, Nancy Clayburgh

- Sept. '25 minutes accepted: Fred 1st, Jess 2nd
- Jess spoke to shared draft of member resources being created to help onboard new members
 - Intended to be internal and a living document
 - Rhianne suggested we add contact information on point people on certain initiatives
 - Torey applauded effort and suggested we add partner community groups and spell out the typical timeline for proposing agenda items , the group decided “at least a week before.”
 - Bill to add formal connections, like the Energy Advisory and Conservation Committee.
- EV School Bus Presentation by STA
 - Effie to send thank you with any additional questions from the committee
 - Fred clarified that other school purchases have only happened through grants, and asked for follow-up on the 50k price tag for level 2 chargers. pointing to cheaper residential prices
 - Jess brought up questions on the contract mechanism- the school gets the grants ‘pays’ but STA then owns the bus? Proposal to ask for more details on contract mechanism and get contact information for weare/hannover school contacts
 - Sully pointed to initial cost be too high without a grant and clarified questions from group on parking at the high school= \$150/ year (more at Greek Church down road)
 - Clarification that we currently use STA, not First Student so it would require a new contract- Fred suggests we add “electric school bus availability” to the future RFP
 - Torey proposed that any members bringing in speakers that are businesses the member can make a quick statement in the name of “business transparency” so the focus can be on the content

- Community Climate Conversations
 - Community conversation will be on a radio talk show (WSCA) Nov. 19th- an interview with SeacoastCAN (Seacoast Climate Action Now)
 - Next steps to implement Cap topic proposed after CIP and November process
 - Explore a topic on the masterplan?
- Effie looking for volunteer to refresh the city website page
 - Fred asked about adding onboarding resource- Torey and Bill pointed to the internal nature of the document and Jess commented she used much of the website content to build the resource
 - Process is to draft changes- vote on them in committee- and kate updates site
 - Conversation around the navigation to sustainability committee being challenging- proposed we move to under the “boards” tab
 - Proposal to leverage slide from city council presentation w/ updates
 - Fred wondering if Colleen may be a good person to help with this?
- CAP: Committee Action Spreadsheet
 - Jess asked committee if this is still helpful- Bill and other emphasized that’s it’s a great way to stay organized and prioritize actions including the four CIP proposals.
 - Clarified this cant be a shared doc (quorum issues) so you must reach out to Kate, Effie or Jess to update
 - Decided to keep it as a standing item to review in meetings
- Capital Meeting:
 - Torey & Bill gave a review of the process and general response to speaking to CIP items proposed
 - Bill shared that the microtransit item was on last year but not budgeted, and that he spoke to this, and it seems to have been accepted.
 - Torey spoke to GHG Inventory and said that it had been deemed a “non-CIP” item, but emphasized that it would be good to have additional resources to improve the quality of the inventory. Also mentioned that in many cases, these are a prerequisite for climate grants.
 - Torey also spoke to the solar arrays with a response that the city had already done a review of municipal buildings, but the committee encouraged that non-building city property also be studied.
 - Torey spoke about a study on municipal EVs, and it seemed to be accepted
 - Conversation about following meeting opportunities to speak in support of CIP items

- Masterplan
 - Jess called to engage via the online portal or the poster boards in the city hall.
 - Jess also shared the timeline of a draft at some point near EOY- open question on timing.
- Energy Advisory
 - Landfill PV feasibility study being presented Nov. 5th on methodology and process.
 - Clarified that municipal building energy is not purchased through Portsmouth power because it is purchased in large purchase agreements- Josh has clarified that he has advocated for the city to buy EACs in past.
- NH CAP
 - Bill shared that the NH CAP is accepting final comments. It explicitly avoids calling for policy changes and new funding programs.
 - Also, there is a concern that it does not seem to be shared or adopted into the department plans.
 - Ask the group to review the NH CAP recommendations.
- CAP Implementation
 - The Committee discussed the action of conducting research to support CAP implementation and including that as part of the Committee's official mission.
- Next Meeting set for Nov. 20th: Torey to facilitate, Bill to do minutes