

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Town Hall, 40 Center Street

Fairhaven, Massachusetts

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ann Richard at 6:30pm, via Zoom

Present: Chairperson Ann Richard, Tim Garcia, Bruce Webb, Laura Gardner, and Karen Gent and Christin Ritz joins

CHAIR PERSON'S WELCOME AND MEDIA NOTIFICATION

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT read by Ann Richard

Minutes Past Meeting

March 21 & April 18th of 2023, Tim Garcia motions to approve, seconded by Laura Garder (4-0). Ann Richards asks the committee if there is someone else who can step up to take over the minutes and she will message those not in attendance about it as well.

Bills- Community Garden

The community garden is in need of supplies for a total of \$361.34. Laura motions to approve, seconded by Tim. (4-0)

Town Meeting articles- Share the news- Christin

Ann shares the news that our articles that town meeting passed so what happens next is the town meeting articles go to the state to get approved. If we had a charter in our town we wouldn't have to do that. Those acts won't start until January of next year. As soon as it gets approved by the state legislature then we get notified and then we will take the next steps to notify the businesses and then it actually does get reinforced by the Board of Health.

Eco-Challenge- recap and news - Laura

Laura recaps that Climate Reality Massachusetts Southcoast sponsored the Eco-challenge. We didn't have a huge amount of participation but the 11 people that did took tons of actions and Tim was the winner. He won a \$25 gift certificate to start at the bottom which is a store in Kilburn Mill. Then Mary Lou won second place and then Mark Lavalley got third place. All together we did really great and we had over 5,000 points. Tim really enjoyed participating in the Challenge. There will be a plastic free Challenge coming up in July.

Clothing Swap with Belonging Committee- May 20th- Recreation Center

Coming up on Saturday May 20th at 11am at the Rec Center, there is a non-profit called Walt's out of Fairhaven that is organizing this. There is also a textile recycling bin at the Rec Center.

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Plant Swap- Seedlings and perennials Millicent Library May 24- 6-7pm

A week from tonight Ann will be at the library with seedlings, people can bring seedlings or perennials to swap. The two other programs we've had at the library one on plants and then one on native plants have been very successful so hopefully people who attend those will enjoy this as well.

No Mow May- Signs for next year?

Some people in town are doing "No Mow May" and they're not mowing their lawn for the pollinators so Laura's idea was to have a small little circular sign that said, "we're doing no mow may for the pollinators" or similar for people to post so neighbors know their intention. Is it possible to get the Town in on it as well and delay some public mowing? Bruce Webb comments it would save the Town money and will reach out to DPW.

Open Meeting Law Mtg for all committees- June 13th from 6-8pm

This is required of all committee members in Town to learn about open meeting law. Ann asks Bruce if this could be counted as our June meeting? He answers he is still waiting on a firm answer. If you cannot attend, notify Amy at Town Hall and there will be a recording with another date to watch the meeting.

Green Business Spotlight- Karen Gent

Karen speaks about an idea on ways we can promote our sustainability committee and any businesses in town that have taken action sustainability wise. This could be a business that has gone solar, opted in to 100% renewable energy through the CEA, stopped using styrofoam etc. Ann mentions we have a student volunteer who is a graphic designer and they could do a logo for it. The logo could be used for a Facebook post.

New initiative ideas..... Leaf Blowers?

Laura opens the conversation about gas powered leaf blowers and how operating one for an hour creates as much smog as a car driving 1100 miles in addition to the noise. She is wondering if there's incentives to move towards electric leaf blowers, does our Town's DPW use gas powered? Since our town has electric cars now is there any movement towards electrifying any lawn equipment? Bruce will ask Josh at DPW.

Sustainability Coordinator updates- Bruce Webb

Bruce is looking for volunteers for the Conservation Commission as the Chairperson has stepped down and other members have opted to not renew their position for the next term so anyone with interest

can reach out to him and he will get you the link or go to the town website to apply for the volunteer position online.

Going back to the plastic bag ban, Bruce describes a recent trip to Stop & Shop where he was charged to use paper bags but not plastic which seemed backwards. Is this something he should reach out to Stop & Shop about? Tim comments he was told they are going to leave the plastic bags available until they run out and then will never be there again so perhaps they are just trying to get rid of the plastic bags first.

Committee comments/questions

Tim asks if someone wanted to donate funds to the Sustainability Committee how would they go about doing that. Bruce answers to go see him at the Conservation/Sustainability office and he would take it down to Ann at finance to deposit. We have a gift account as well as a revolving account.

Ann will find out if we need a June meeting or not with the open law meeting on the 13th.

Otherwise, Next meeting: *Tuesday, June 20, 2023*

Christin Ritz joins and shares about the positive reception of her talk at Town Meeting on the nip bottle ban, there seemed to be no opposition. (Great work Christin!) Someone from the Board of Health mentioned maybe the next bill should be on plastic bottles.

Tim motions to adjourn the meeting and Laura seconds (5-0).