

EGREMONT GREEN COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, September 12, 2023, 4:30 PM

Members present: Juliette Haas and Marj Wexler in Town Hall, and Emily Eyre (chair), Bonnie Greenwood, Sharon Waskow, and Richard Allen (came late, left early) by Zoom. Guests Peg McDonough, Barbara Kalish, and Mary McGurn by Zoom.

The chair welcomed all.

The **July 26, 2023, minutes** were accepted unanimously.

Sustainability Report: Juliette reported that the mattress-recycling program at the Transfer Station is going very well. Tough Stuff made a second pick-up. Cost to residents is \$33/mattress.

Susan Waite, MassDEP Municipal Assistance Coordinator for Western Mass, will be putting together a special insert for the Berkshire Eagle on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) for America Recycles Day (Nov. 16). It is to be a mini newspaper devoted to recycling, and it will provide information such as how to recycle various hard-to-recycle items. Susan is looking for volunteers to provide content, editing, and enlisting advertisers.

Susan will be the guest speaker at the Berkshire County BoH Association annual dinner on October 12, at the Pittsfield Country Club. Interested members should let Juliette know.

Juliette's agenda item "Proposed Dept. of Utility 'guideline revisions' for municipal electric aggregation programs" was tabled at her request.

New Business

Peg McDonough briefly described the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant that she applied for and received for the town, and that the Green Committee has agreed to be involved in. Much of the money, which comes from the Commonwealth, will be used for engineering needed by the Water Department (much more will be needed over the next 10 years).

Peg wrote the grant based on the priority actions of the 2022 MVP plan, which lays out the town's intended responses to current and anticipated impacts of climate change. Egremont needs to be well positioned to respond to the effects of climate change (e.g., increased disease from mosquitoes & ticks, reduced food safety and security, freshwater and forest degradation, reduction in housing availability, damage to infrastructure).

The MVP grant includes a total of \$3000 for the EGC to host two public workshops, titled *Bringing Climate Action Home*, dates to be determined but perhaps in January and May 2024. The money will be used to hire experts (e.g., Peg), recruit attendees, and pay speakers. Juliette said we can focus on small, individual actions (e.g., pollinator gardens, recycling), as well as on the bigger picture (which could include town policies and bylaws that would mitigate the effects of climate change).

At noon on Sept 27, Peg will hold a kick-off meeting by Zoom that will set time parameters for the workshops.

Old Business

Barbara Kalish described an Art from Trash project that she hopes will attract the attention of people who toss trash out their car window. For example, trash (e.g., soda bottles) could be compressed into blocks that could be stacked into a shape (perhaps humanoid), which could be mounted on problem roads such as Old Sheffield Rd. The design idea would echo the old Burma Shave ads. The shapes should be mobile so that they can be moved to different Egremont roads. Barbara said that the challenge is to find a simple design with a strong message.

Emily said that in the coming year, our time will be occupied with the MVP project. Barbara said that spring 2025 would be a good time, after snowplowing is over. Bonnie said that the first step (to collect the garbage that will be needed) will be labor intensive (maybe use schoolkids?).

Barbara would like to have 2 EGC people involved in planning, by Jan 2024.

CMRK: Ski equipment accumulates in the Swap Shop. Emily said that Instant Replay in Pittsfield wants only really good skis. Marj said that CMRK says they'll pick up skis from the Swap Shop, but apparently, they choose to ignore the old ones that appear there. However, they will take ski boots if we pack them into a duffle bag or a backpack so as not to dent the walls/floor of the blue bins. Emily asked Marj to promote CMRK's home pickups, which Marj will do the next time CMRK sends her their promo material.

Other Business

The March to End Fossil Fuels will take place in New York City on Sunday, September 17, 2023. EGC members will be there. The committee voted to publicize the march on NeighborNet.

Town newsletter deadline is 9/25.

Sharon asked if there would be a follow-up decarbonization seminar. Juliette said that Green Energy Consumers Alliance was planning to prepare a webinar. She'll let us know if that happens.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, Oct 10, 4:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35.

Respectfully submitted, Marj Wexler