

Town of Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC)

Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2020

Meeting called to order at 6:06pm

Committee members present (via remote):

Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Claire Golding (GC), Phil Gott (PG), Chris Samoiloff (CS)

Committee members absent:

Phoebe Moore (PM) (on leave of absence from EAC)

Public Comment: None.

Review & Approve Minutes from July 15, 2020 Meeting:

- **MOTION** to accept as written
Motion: CG; 2d: CS; PG: Abstain; Vote: 3-0

Green Communities Designation Application

- CBH provided update.
 - Municipal Energy Technical Assistance (META) fund grant application period starts 8/20. Sherry Patch (SP) is handling application and will pursue.
 - CG noted that the Advisory Committee (AC) has concerns about META funds being used for energy audits at the Thomas Prince School. AC wants to know how the process works and has concerns about the possibility of only being able to claim a percentage of any TPS-increased energy efficiency.
 - **ACTION:** CBH to reach out to AC in writing
 - PMLD engaged MMWEC in mid-July to coordinate municipal building energy audit (part of Green Community-required Energy Reduction Plan); CBH uncertain of audit start date but expects sometime in next 8-10 weeks maximum
 - **ACTION:** CBH to inquire as to audit start date
 - **ACTION:** CBH (or Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)) will need to draft Fuel Efficiency Policy for Selectboard approval.
 - Related: Town needs to conduct vehicle inventory.
 - PG inquired as to whether trailers with engine driven pumps will need to be included in this inventory.
 - **ACTION:** CBH to inquire with Sherry Patch/CMRPC.

Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) Program

- PG provided update.
 - No new information or updates. Next meeting is September 14, 2020, where committee will decide how to move ahead.

Princeton Municipal Light Department (PMLD)

- PG provided update.
 - Next Light Commissioners Meeting is 8/12, and PG plans to attend.
 - Light Commissioners hired an interim manager for PMLD- Gary Harrington.
 - PMLD appointed a Selection Committee—to help in the process of choosing the next

PMLD manager. Selection Committee includes PG and Helga Lyons of AC. Advertisements for PMLD Manager position have gone out. Selection Committee will meet in September to evaluate candidates.

Waste/Recycling

- CG provided update.
 - o There are no updates and have been no Waste and Recycling Committee meetings.

Communications and EAC Webpage Updates

- CS provided updates.
 - o The July issue of the EAC Newsletter: “The Green News” was published.
 - **ACTION:** CS to draft blurb for Town News with information on how to sign up for EAC Newsletter.
 - **ACTION:** EAC members to subscribe to EAC Newsletter.
 - o CS presented next draft Newsletter, and EAC members discussed and shared comments and feedback.
 - CS interested in adding info on Climate Resources. CG suggests a link to *The Human Element*, a documentary about climate change.
 - **ACTION:** CG to look for link to documentary, *The Human Element*
 - **ACTION:** EAC members to consider ideas for other climate change resources
 - Members discuss September Newsletter topic of Integrated Pest Management, including detailing new bill/law H.4751- An Act to Mitigate Arbovirus in the Commonwealth.
 - EAC members agreed this topic sounded good.
 - EAC members agreed to clearly identify “arbovirus” as EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis) in all EAC communications with the public.
 - o CS reminded members to draft updates for webpages on their assigned content.
 - **ACTION:** All EAC members to look at webpages related to their assigned topics and send updates to CS.
- PG had analyzed “suggested reading” links on EAC webpage, and found some that don’t work. He shared details of that information.
 - o **ACTION:** PG to resend corrected links to CS; CS to make corrections.
- Helga Lyons had previously suggested Town webpage needs a better search button feature and better way to find information.
 - o **ACTION:** CS to look at this issue but thinks it will require Town Clerk action.
- CS suggested adding call for new members to next newsletter, as well as listing suggested skill sets.
 - o **ACTION:** CG to suggest skill set list and send to CS, to appear in newsletter.

(CBH left the meeting at 7:00p.)

H.4650/H.4751-An Act to Mitigate Arbovirus in the Commonwealth

- CS provided updates.
 - o The bill was signed into law.
 - o CS noted that the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) drafted a summary on the new law.

- CS understood that the organization Beyond Pesticides was drafting a summary of municipality plans with regard to pesticide application.
- CBH and CS noted that new law allows for municipalities to opt out of spraying if they have their own alternative mosquito management plan approved by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. EAC members discussed possibly pursuing this with Selectboard in the future.

Other Business

- WPI Professor Dominic Golding has inquired whether EAC might suggest project ideas for WPI juniors working on their Interactive Qualifying Projects. Projects must include both social and technical components. An EAC member or members would act as a sponsor, working with a small group of students (3 to 4) for 14 weeks to help guide their research and obtain the desired outcomes of the project. Projects would begin in January 2021.
 - CS, PG, and CG discussed possible project ideas—including research and actions that could result in Town noise bylaw, or analysis of scenarios that could increase PMLD revenue from wind power. EAC members agreed that a further discussion with the full EAC present would be necessary, and should be on next EAC agenda.
- PG proposed, starting in September 2020, that EAC meeting schedule change to once per month rather than current twice per month. EAC members discussed. PG suggested PM (currently on leave of absence from EAC for summer) join EAC for vote on meeting schedule a next EAC meeting on 8/19.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting (August 5, 2020 at 7p via online forum)

- Public Comment
- Review and Approve Minutes of August 5, 2020
- Green Communities Designation Application Updates
- PMLD Updates
- Waste and Recycling Updates
- Communications Updates
- EAC Town Webpage Updates
- WPI Project Ideas
- EAC Meeting Schedule Change
- Agenda items for Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

MOTION to adjourn.

Motion: CG; 2d: PG; Vote: 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corey Burnham-Howard