

**Town of Princeton
Environmental Action Committee (EAC)
Meeting Minutes**

December 16, 2021

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm

Committee members present (in person):

Charlie Cary (CC), Philip Gott (PG), Forrest Iwanik (FI), Corey Burnham Howard (CBH)
Chris Samoiloff (CS), Matthew Charpentier (MC), Claire Golding (CG)

Committee members present via remote:

Student Committee members present: Paul Fuchs (PF)

Also present (via remote): Michael Cote, Advisory Committee EAC Liaison

Public in Attendance: Dan Ervin (DE)

Resignation of Anna White from EAC:

- Anna White noted that she did not feel she could give the position the attention it required.
- EAC members noted Anna's interest is what initiated the creation of the Student Committee member position.

Review & Approve Minutes from October 21, 2021 Meeting:

- The minutes were reviewed and forwarded to CBH
- CG Motioned to approve as amended; PG second; All voted in favor

Review & Approve Minutes from November 18, 2021 Meeting:

- The minutes were reviewed, it was noted that the minutes should be shared with CG prior to sharing
- CG motion to approve as amended; PG second; All voted in favor

Annual Report Review

- CBH lead discussion - noted that the annual report is due by January 13th to share summaries of 2021 efforts
- CG noted that nothing is to mention future efforts
- CS provided edits

Action Items:

- CBH requests all edits by January 6th
- CG Motion to authorize CBH and CG to edit and submit the report with edits submitted by January 6th; FI second; All voted in favor

Response to the Ervin's Letter

- CBH inquiry to DE whether the previous meeting response sat well with him

- DE expressed that it was and reiterated that his concern was the potential implication of the wording of the article and expressed his gratitude for the EAC's efforts
- CBH spoke with Attorney Fogel who determined that no further response was required

Updates on Initiatives:

***Prior to the start of the discussion, CBH requested that members provide a brief summary**

Green Communities Designation Application

- CBH lead discussion
- On Dec. 6th Sarah Adams noted there was nothing to report
- The grant has been awarded - although we need official designation of the funds, in part, due to the difficulty of getting vendors to respond
- CBH expressed the need to have someone lead this effort and champion it through as Sherry Patch seems to be quite busy
- PG noted that the PMLD building needs work, specifically that the building's heating system was inefficient
 - o PG noted that Phil Connors stated that the audit of the building was insufficient to inform the work needed
 - o PG asked whether the money could be put toward the PMLD building
 - o PG Stated Sean McKeon has volunteered to lead this initiative
- It was noted that Sherry had stated that investor owned utilities in other communities had shuttled these kind of efforts through
- CG proposed to PG and CBH that monthly meetings with Sherry be re-initiated on the subject

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)

- See Notes from PG
- CG stated we will be eligible for MVP Action Grants this Spring
 - o If we want to move forward we need to fill out Expression of Interest (EOI) forms
 - o Two items were identified as potential targets: IPM and community education
 - o It was noted that the applications must be related to climate change and vulnerable communities
 - o The EOI is due on January 21st, RFP comes out in March and is due in June
- Two Working Groups were formed
 - o IPM: Composed of CS, FI, and MC
 - o Community education: Composed of CBH and CG

Action Item:

- Goal of submitting EOI's for review by no later than January 15th

PMLD

- PG provided update. (See attached notes.)

PFAS

- MC lead discussion and provided a brief update regarding the recent quarterly report
- MC expressed need for assistance with review of a potential summary, FI volunteered to assist

Waste and Recycling

- CG stated there was not a lot to update on as the committee hadn't been meeting
 - o stated that another RFP will not likely be sent out again until the waste situation

stabilizes

- CG spoke with Helen Townsend regarding East Brookfield and their pay as you throw program

Action Item:

- CG to investigate how East Brookfield managed to establish a pay as you throw program

Curbside Composting

- It was noted that a commercial approach was likely not worthwhile
- CS to reach out to Sterling to see how their municipal composting system works
- It was noted that 'How to Compost' may be a potential spring newsletter topic

Native Plant Sales with Wachusett Garden Club

- CS noted that Dot Odgren found some good resources and reached out to MDAR with a request to use the materials in a survey

Action Item:

- MC to meet with Dot next week

Town Draft Snow and Ice Policy

- CBH met with Bet Metcalf and Sherry on November 1st
 - o Their conversation was to discuss what is being done and to suggest edits
 - o After a one-month period of silence, Ben responded and requested that it be brief and noted that the highway department has a lot going on

Tool Lending

- CC Provided the update, he conducted the first heating audit over in East Princeton and postponed the next due to a potential covid exposure
- It was suggested that the service be advertised in the Green News

Light Pollution

- CG and CBH lead the discussion and noted an article that came out in the Redemption Rock News

Noise Bylaw

- CBH lead discussion regarding Planning Board progress
- CBH was tasked to pull together other municipal bylaws
 - o noted there was some discussion whether this should be addressed through the Planning Board or through Zoning
 - o It appears they are going in the direction of an objective bylaw measuring decibels and they have not requested our opinion yet

Environmental Speaker Series

- CBH lead - noted that last week's presentation went very well
- There was a discussion to improve awareness of the series
 - CG suggested broadcasting to relevant committees
 - PG noted other committees may be able to provide speakers

Action Items:

- CBH, PG, CS to reach out to chairs of other committees

- All EAC members to think of ideas for future speakers
- asfda

PMLD

- PG provided update (see attached)

Public Safety Building (PSB)

- PG provided update (see attached)

New EAC Initiatives

CBH to discuss with Sherry Patch what the guidelines are for engaging members of the public in subcommittees

Cannabis Cultivation

- Applicant withdrew
- Planning Board working on a Bylaw to regulate commercial Cannabis cultivation in town

Communications/Newsletter/Webpages

- CS provided updates.
- CS suggested shifting to bimonthly newsletters
 - o Noted that David Pratt agreed to do an article on electric lawn and garden equipment for the newsletter
 - o CC to provide a summary detailing the availability of the infrared camera service he is providing
- Speaker series to be included as a blurb in the sidebar
- March newsletter tentatively focused on wildflowers, the plant sale, and vernal pools
- March or April newsletter to detail composting
- June to detail the Mosquito opt out

Agenda Items for Next Meeting (December 16, 2021 at 7p)

- Public Comment
- Review and Approve Minutes of December 16, 2021
- Updates on On-Going Initiatives: Green Communities; MVP; PMLD (including energy savings tool lending library); PSB; PFAS; Waste & Recycling Committee; Curbside Composting; Native Plant Sales; Snow & Ice Policy; Light Pollution; Noise Bylaw; Environmental Speaker Series
- New Initiatives: EOI Updates
- Management Policy
- Communications/Newsletter/Webpage Updates and Needs
- Agenda items for Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

CBH **MOTION** to adjourn; CS Second; All voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Charpentier

Meeting Report

PMLD Board of Commissioners November 10, 2021

This report provides a summary of This PMLD meeting on points relevant to the Princeton EAC.

EV charging: Sean is going to explore the possibility of putting one or more level 2 chargers at the Wachusett Mountain State Park parking area. This must be approved at the State level. Local staff appear “unofficially” favorable.

Electric Lawn and Garden equipment: David Pratt thought PMLD ought to be promoting the use of electric lawn and garden equipment. We discussed the idea of rebates for the purchase of large power equipment such as lawn mowers. Rebates on smaller equipment such as chain saws were thought to be financially unsound from a PMLD ratepayer point of view. Sean to explore this with MMWEC. (Subsequent to the meeting, MMWEC does have a rebate program for lawn and garden equipment. To be discussed at the next meeting.)

Commercial Heat Pumps will receive a rebate of 10% of the system cost, up to \$500 per meter. The commercial heat pump program will have a cap of \$20,000 per year.

Sustainability.

- PMLD Strategic Plan to be expanded to have four objectives: Safe, Reliable, Competitively Priced and Sustainable electric power. Sustainable being added.
- Continued discussions about how to meet or exceed the 2030 and beyond requirements. Exploration of community solar at the old landfill site will begin. There was some discussion about trying to expand that into the adjacent abandoned sand and gravel pit now owned by DEP.
- It was noted that the Town will have to put out an RFP for a community solar program as the Town owns the land. PMLD will do the interconnect and buy some or all of the power. PMLD will not want to own and/or operate the facility at this time.
- Peaking Shaving: The generator and voluntary power cuts backs saved a net \$142,650 for the year in Power, Transmission and Capacity charges All peaks were shaved in May, June, July and August. We will likely do this again next year. Long term we would prefer to have a battery storage system to accomplish this.
- There was discussion of net and time of day metering and solar policy. The Groton system and their findings on net savings with a 4-40 rate were discussed. In a trial program, about 1/3 of customers saved money, 1/3 stayed the same, 1/3 of consumers had their power costs increase, the last because they made no changes in the times they used power. See attached notes from the MMWEC conference for details. Conversion over to such metering is costly as both new meters and communications systems must be installed.
- Discussions with Nextera continue. It was noted that our fixed-rate for power may be beneficial this winter as local market prices for power may exceed what we pay Nextera (potentially making our rates lower than the Winter rates of the IOUs).

Respectfully submitted by Philip Gott

DISCLAIMER;

These notes have not been reviewed by any other attendee. Any differences between these notes and the actual minutes of PMLD are unintentional and my mistake. In the event of discrepancies, the actual minutes should be referenced and considered accurate.

Items of potential interest to the EAC

There are four avenues for costs savings:

- Cut facility size by moving fitness area to a mezzanine, eliminating false dormers
- Alternative construction methods
 - Modular building and/or interior
 - Pre Fab (Ashburnham)
 - Integrated Concrete and Foam (ICF) (Farmington)
- Reuse some interior furnishings and equipment
- Creating funding

The first three avenues will be submitted to our architect for redesign and cost estimation. A subcommittee is exploring creative funding.

Target date is to present findings for another town vote at the next annual town meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Philip Gott: Note that these notes reflect only his understanding of the meeting and have not been reviewed by other commissioners. Any discrepancy between these notes and the official approved minutes of the PMLD meeting is unintentional, and the official notes should prevail.