

Minutes Green Marblehead Committee/Net Zero Planning October 6, 2022

Approved as amended at 10/26/2022 meeting

Present: Brooks Winner, Becky Curran Cutting, Alexa Singer Thatcher Kezer, Lisa Wolf, Joe Kowalik, Andrew Petty, John Livermore, John Buckey, Eileen Mathieu, Kurt James, Will Dowd

Updates

Meeting with department heads discussed at September 8 meeting was postponed pending further revisions to the draft of the roadmap

Discussion of Sustainability Manager:

Becky suggested that the recommendation to “Hire a Sustainability Manager” should be in the beginning of the list of actions.

Eileen outlined the reasons that having a Sustainability Manager would be helpful:

Existing Town Staff are already stretched too thin, so having one person in charge who can keep track of initiatives and make sure the Town and the citizens keep making progress towards the net zero by 2040 goal, is essential.

Public Education will be needed to get people to change their heating systems and cars they drive, and a Sustainability Manager could do this.

A Sustainability Manager can coordinate between Town departments, which will be necessary

Having a Sustainability Manager to write grants for the money that will be offered from Fed and State due to recent legislation, will be critical to obtain this funding.

Brooks pointed out that Sustainability Managers bring in money from Fed and State through applying for grants

Becky pointed out that Marblehead doesn't qualify for a certain type of Federal Grant that Brooks was suggesting we apply for.

Alexa pointed out that budget season will start in November for the Select Board

John Livermore pointed out that just like we need a School Superintendent, we need someone in charge of coordinating Sustainability issues throughout the Town

Thatcher pointed out that we need to build the case showing that actual new costs on tax levy of town vs all the potential grant money a Sustainability Manager might attract, what cost does the Town actually bear, suggested looking at significant grants do they go to administration and overhead or just for equipment. He asked for concrete info. He pointed out that the town has been generous on purchasing equipment but has not increased its operating costs over many years, so personnel are working very hard and the town needs an HR person for example.

Alexa said that we need data for how much each grant will go to the salary.

Alexa also pointed out that there are costs to wait, to let climate change and its effects damage the town and cost us more money in the future; she suggested to somehow quantify what we save as a Town by taking the opportunity to move early on significantly reducing emissions by hiring a Sustainability Manager.

Thatcher said his desire is a grant that will cover the cost of a Sustainability Manager.

Alexa and Thatcher agreed that it is a difficult conversation: balancing long-term planning and long term savings, in contrast to every day needs/every day emergencies that constantly distract and demand solutions

Joe K said that the cost/benefit to MMLD for a Sustainability Manager are clear: more green heat and cooling technology adoption means more sales for MMLD, so that having a Sustainability Manager who helps in creating outreach to the community to promote adoption of mini-splits and ASHP dryers and hot water heaters, and EV's, who helps find Federal funding, who helps remove obstacles to green technologies for homeowners through simplified permitting, all will help MMLD progress

Brooks observed that having an MMLD Sustainability Manager and a Town Sustainability Manager would be complementary

Lisa observed that every ton of carbon emitted has a social cost of \$150, so savings from cost avoidance by reducing emissions could be calculated

It was decided that Becky and Eileen and Thatcher would work together to gather information and do research to help build the case of how much a Sustainability Manager might bring in to the town, to help Thatcher and the Select Board figure out how to put the position in the budget.

Comments on the Draft Net Zero Documents:

Eileen and John have sent in specific edits

Lisa suggested that we look at Wellesley's Climate Action Plan

She feels that who is doing what is much clearer, in their governance and implementation section

Brooks wants to be more specific as to which town department might have responsibilities for a given action

Becky suggested several comments on Housing and will send to Brooks

Brooks encouraged others to send written comments to him

Next meeting: doodle poll will be sent, to find a time for next meeting, which will be in mid/late October, then another meeting on November 3 as routinely scheduled.

Goal: November we can bring the draft document to the Town.

Steps: Thatcher suggested that we bring to Select Board first for approval and feedback on draft, then to Town Departments then to townspeople. Will need a public session for feedback, a Listening Session as part of the rollout.