

ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

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DON BLEASDALE
JERRY STERN
CO-CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

July 9, 2018

Co-Chairman Don Bleasdale called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

The following members were present: Don Bleasdale, Jason Crawford, Jane Harsha, Frank Maricic, Rick Warren and Chris Zaberto.

Jerry Stern, Stacie Vourakis, and Marialisa Zywochenko were absent.

Residents Nadia Balkaran and Jessica Silverstein were also present. They are both recent college graduates and are interested in helping the Committee.

Minutes – A motion was made by Mr. Bleasdale and seconded by Mr. Zaberto to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2018 meeting as submitted. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

NYSERDA Clean Energies Communities 2018 GRANT Program Update – The NYSERDA Clean Energies Communities 2018 GRANT Program to purchase two electric vehicles was submitted in May. The amount of the grant is \$50,000. A decision should be made in mid-July.

Energy Audit of Town Buildings and Facilities RFP Update – RFP's for an Energy Audit of Town buildings and facilities were sent to Con Edison Solutions, Honeywell and Johnson Controls. Only Honeywell and Johnson Controls returned proposals. Mr. Bleasdale, Mr. Maricic, and Mr. Stern reviewed the RFP's and gave an overview, as well as a comparison of each. A recommendation was made to the Town Board at the end of June. There has not been an update.

Suggested Speaker Topics Update – A lengthy discussion took place about

sponsoring a Forum with speakers and topics that would be interesting to the residents and easy for them to connect with. Mrs. Harsha will reach out to Grassroots for some guidance and Mr. Warren will contact Dan Welsh for ideas.

NYSEG Task Force Update – This morning, Mr. Zaberto attended a NYSEG Task Force meeting. A concerted effort is being made to work on resolving the issues that have occurred during the recent storms resulting in power outages. 62% of the outages experienced are from trees falling on power lines. As part of the resolve, the Town would like the Energy Environment Committee to co-sponsor a community education series to teach the residents how to identify rouge trees and vegetation around power lines, as well as pole related issues. NYSEG will provide a tree removal representative as well as one that deals with infrastructure. The Town is also asking the Committee for sustainability of infrastructure ideas. It was also suggested that the Town solicit RFP's for tree work in an effort to help defray the cost of tree removal for the residents.

Trails in Somers Update – The Environmental Protection Fund Grant Program for Parks, Preservation and Heritage has \$19.5 million in matching grants available for projects such as trail blazing. The deadline for submissions is July 27th. Mr. Warren hopes that next year the Committee will submit an application for this grant.

Green Building Code Update – Building Inspector Efreem Citarella and Mr. Bleasdale met last month to discuss adopting Green Building Codes in the Town of Somers similar to those in Hastings on Hudson. Mr. Citarella reached out to their Building Inspector to get some feedback as to how that endeavor is going. As the International Code Council has been focusing on updating energy codes as of late, having the Green Building Codes has really not made much of a difference.

Smart Climate Communities Certification Update – Mr. Maricic will follow up with Somers High School physics teacher Chris Pietris regarding mentoring needs for their sustainable energy projects.

Sustainable Westchester Update – Mr. Stern had asked Mr. Oringel if he would make arrangements to meet with Sustainable Westchester's Executive Director Bob Elliott to coordinate projects and funding for such with other communities. In addition, he would like support from them to sponsor three or four meetings yearly with other Towns that have committees that specifically deal with energy, the environment and sustainability. These meetings have yet to be scheduled.

Community Composting and Recycling Facility Update

Ms. Vourakis is particularly interested in a Town composting station, using the one the Town of Bedford has as a model. She will report back at the next meeting with some additional information.

In addition, Ms. Vourakis feels that it is important that the children in the community have exposure to the concept of composting early on so as they grow up it becomes a habit. This can be done through contests, etc. It was also suggested that the thrust be

on teaching them how to compost. Mr. Stern sent an email to the SIS PTA President last week, but there has been no response to date.

NEW BUSINESS

Septic Upgrade Money Available – Mr. Warren has learned that there is money available for septic upgrades. It was suggested that he follow up with Syrette Dym, who is the Town grant liaison to see if she has any information about this.

2018 Westchester Eco Award – The Town has received the 2018 Westchester Eco Award for being designated a Climate Smart Community by New York State, demonstrating a commitment to sustainability from County Executive George Latimer. It will be formally presented at the July 12th Town Board meeting at which Mr. Bleasdale, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Maricic, Mr. Warren and Mr. Zaberto will be at.

Somers Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Somers Event – On September 22nd, the Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Somers event will take place. A discussion ensued and all agreed that the Committee will pass on attending this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, August 13th at 7:30 p.m. at the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Energy Environment Committee

cc: Energy Environment Committee
Town Board
Town Clerk
Open Space Committee