

The July 12, 2016, meeting opened at 4:04.

Present were Marj Wexler (Chair), Richard Allen, Robin Goldberg, Juliette Haas, and Pat Konecky.

Minutes of the 5/17/16 meeting were approved.

Welcome Buckets: Robin will distribute 3, and Pat will distribute 5, when Marj gets the already-prepared buckets to them.

Recycle Shed (aka Swap Shop): We need more volunteers to keep an eye on the Shed and occasionally straighten it up.

Sustainability Coordinator: At the Transfer Station, collecting the returnables became too onerous for Heidi Zorn and her 4H group. Summer is hard! We'll be looking for someone else who can do it.

The bulky rigid plastics dumpster is here, thanks to a MassDEP grant covering it and the postcards Juliette sent out announcing its arrival. It is presently on the side of the parking area near the solar panels. An option had been to set it below grade where other bins are, but this would (1) be more expensive, and (2) make it difficult or impossible to rearrange the items for efficient use of space. Perhaps it can stay where it is?

Juliette reported on the status of the \$138,000 Green Communities grant. Seven Town buildings have concluded weatherization and lighting upgrades. Next: convert furnaces at the North Fire Station and the Library from oil to 98%-efficient propane. Finally, improvements to HVAC systems at Town Hall (the worst).

At the end of the fiscal year, after 3 years of decreasing amounts of solid waste, we were up by 15 tons (i.e., 3%). The total haul for the FY was 418 tons. Possible reason: We've been giving out more TS stickers, uptick in the economy. Could this account for it? (Is it all really Egremont trash?) The paper tonnage was up, but the number of hauls were down, thanks to good management by our operator, William Wood. The weight of recyclables was also up, perhaps reflecting the loss of people collecting bottles & cans. Richard suggested that the BoS put out an RFP that includes a waiver of liability.

Other: A resident suggested that perhaps good wood could be recovered from the C&D bin to make bat houses (or other things). First, we'd need someone who would use the wood. Then, we'd need to have a safe and efficient way to recover the wood. Needs further thought.

A Newsletter article might ask the community if anyone is interested in using good wood from the C&D. Also, we could ask if anyone belongs to a charitable institution that wants to collect bottles & cans. Richard said such a person/group could sign a waiver of liability. Juliette will ask the BoS (7/25) if they would consider allowing/finding someone new to collect bottles & cans.

Might Green Committee members be willing to spend some time at the TS, talking to residents about recycling? This idea morphed into the plan for holding our next meeting at the Recycling Shed (see last line of minutes).

Pat is researching locally controlled energy aggregation – e.g., a solar farm – and mentioned exploring electricity aggregation. Juliette said that the Town is working with Colonial Power, who is applying on our behalf. This power would be produced elsewhere and provided to us at a lower cost than NatGrid's. However, we don't know if (and doubt that) it's all renewable energy.

Pat reminded us the 350.org meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the UU church in Pittsfield.

Meeting adjourned 5:10 pm. Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 30, from 8 to 9 AM at the Recycling Shed (aka Swap Shop).

Submitted by Marj Wexler.