

Somersworth Sustainability Committee
3/16/2017
Executive Conference Room
City Hall, One Government Way
Somersworth, NH

In Attendance: Mike Bobinsky Public Works Director, Scott Orzechowski, Doug Watson, Sarah McGraw, David Crossan (Community Garden), Wendy Berkeley (Somersworth Farm to School).

1. Approve Minutes of February 15, 2017

Mike Bobinsky moved to approve the minutes of February 17, 2017, second by Sarah McGraw.

VOTE: Unanimous

2. Wendy Berkeley- Somersworth Farm to School Program

Wendy is the coordinator for the NH Farm to School Program. She was hired to expand the program in November. Idlehurst Elementary School is interested in more gardens. They already have raised beds. Discussion ensued over the path between Maple Wood and the High School and a similar erosion control project at the Mast Point Dam. A TAP grant was approved for the path between the schools. The New Hampshire Forestry Nursery may have cheaper plants for the path project. David Crossan asked what would happen to the school gardens in the summer. Wendy Berkeley said that a master gardener who runs school programs, suggested planting spring and fall gardens.

Scott Orzechowski invited the Farm to School group to the Earth Day flag raising ceremony on April 14. Wendy Berkeley said that the FTS group is planning a garden kick off on April 21. They would like volunteers to build and maintain the garden beds. FTS will also have a presence at some of the Goodwin Community Health farmer's markets.

Scott Orzechowski discussed the list of achievements he was compiling including the new green infrastructure laws for stormwater discharge, the solar field project which will be discussed at the City Council meeting on March 20. Mike Bobinsky discussed in detail about the LED Street Lighting Project. The proposal is for the conversion of 749 street lights to LED. The cost of the project will be \$181,882. The City applied for an Eversource grant of \$73,725. The company building and installing the lights is Affinity LED Lighting, a local company out of Dover employing veterans. Pay back for the project is about two years.

a) Rain Barrels

Wendy had mentioned that STEM students might be constructing rain barrels at the high school.

b) House Hold Hazardous Waste

The discussion related to how to make disposing of HHW easier for the residents of Somersworth.

There is a one day collection in May but nothing offered outside of that day. Scott Orzechowski said he would talk with NHDES about other ways to dispose of HHW. In the meantime notices could go out with the water bills and public notices for the current HHW collection day at the Rochester Turnkey landfill.

c) Increasing Membership

Mike Bobinsky said he had talked with a representative from Velcro and the response was that they are interested but need approval from the corporate offices. Names of Velcro contacts Paul Bloechl Facilities and Maintenance Manager, and Brian Ramsey solar array project leader.

d) Tree Ordinance

Mike Bobinsky stated the he had presented the information to DWP. There were reservations about creating another board but there was also positive feedback on the ordinance. Sarah McGraw suggested putting the Tree City committee under the umbrella of the Sustainability Committee and/or Conservation Commission. It was decided the Tree City Committee may be best served under the Conservation Commission.

e) Community Garden

Dave Crossan lead organizer for the newly citizen formed Somersworth Community Garden in conjunction with the City. Dave said that the steering subgroup created a revised set of rules. Future ideas include expanding the garden and building a tool shed. The next meeting of the steering committee is March 22 to go over the rules.

f) Other Business

Spirit up day- May 6

Adopt-a-spot – program is slow to roll out. Locations still need to be decided on. Edible plants was also discussed.

Doug Watson had attended a maple syrup breakfast where climate change was the main topic.

Mike Bobinsky moved to adjourn, Second by Doug Watson. VOTE: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Minutes taken by Sarah McGraw; respectfully submitted by Scott Orzechowski, Chair

Sarah McGraw