

Boxborough Sustainability Committee

Minutes for February 8, 2023 meeting 6:38-8:55

Attending members: Francie Nolde, Johanna Choo, Suresh Jasrasaria, Kate Davies, Barbara Salzman, Palmer Moore, Richard Garrison, Jay Krishnasamy,

Finance Committee liaison: Priya Sundaram

Guests: Bryon Clemence (Water Resources Committee; Grange Committee), Marjorie Kamp (2040), Mary Sullivan

Voted to accept minutes as written for January

Discussion:

Celebration of “Boxborough Bill”:

Purpose is to bring attention to the Town that this legislation will allow Boxborough to become a Green Community (GC) member, explain what GC is, and alert ATM attendees of warrant article to join the program. Senator Eldridge and Representative Sena have been invited to the celebration because they sponsored this legislation which gives Boxborough a pathway to become GC. BSC has a placeholder for a warrant article which will be written by Alec Wade (Town Planner) and Kelly Brown (Boxborough resident and Green Communities Coordinator for the Central Region). If Boxborough joins, there will be an estimated cost of 29 cents/month for each household (\$3.48 yearly) that will go to MassCEC as Boxborough's contribution to the Renewable Energy Trust fund. These funds are used to allocate grant money to communities for energy efficiency projects. If Boxborough votes to become a Green Community and meets the criteria, we will automatically be eligible to receive approximately \$130,000 to pay for Town energy efficiency projects that comply with program guidelines.

Palmer suggested it would be helpful to provide some analysis of cost/benefit of program-- ie, if we spend \$X on an energy efficiency project, how will that result in less money spent on utility bill, ultimately reducing taxes? Palmer will look into assessing financial impact of specific energy improvement(s).

Richard, Kate and others suggest we need to inventory and prioritize potential projects. We should include energy savings projects that the Town would not ordinarily be willing to pay for out of a typical budget. Francie would like past audit information included when drawing up the list of projects. For the Annual Town Meeting, we will need to put together a list of projects that could be considered for GC funding.

Priya: At the capital planning meeting there was a discussion of replacing police/fire vehicles with hybrid/electric. Interim Police Chief and Fire Chiefs are on board. It is a matter of when their preferred vehicle will be on the market (2024 for both chiefs). The School Committee is looking at electrifying the bus fleet; they have applied for and not received an EPA grant, and will reapply in the future.

Francie and Marjorie have invited a number of Town boards, committees, and groups to participate in this celebration. We plan to have tables available for other town groups to engage with the public about their sustainability initiatives. BCT, Freebee, Acton Boxborough Cultural Council, UCC, and Planning Board plan to take advantage of table availability. We are still waiting to hear from Ag Comm., Grange, Water, Cons. Comm. We are creating a mini-town fair.

Promotion of event:

Richard, Kate, and Francie put together a one page flyer explaining the event and Green Communities. This flyer, along with the invitation, are the source of informing the public and will be sent to all committees/boards, groups, and friends and neighbors in Boxborough. Francie has printed 125 flyers and placed a stack in the library.

Francie's daughter designed the invitation.

Suresh and Jay are working to get URL code linked to registration on Energize Boxborough page to function properly.

Hand out flyers at Transfer Station: See action items below for dates and times.

Post on Facebook Pages and Nextdoor.

Members should email invitations to friends/groups and then reminders the week of Feb. 27, and final reminder March 9.

March 10 Event:

Mistress of Ceremony- Francie

Present warrant article- presenters: Kelly Brown and Kate

Marjorie, Francie, and Barbara will arrive at 4:00 for setup.

Jay will bring laptop or computer to showcase Energize Boxborough

BSC table: Francie will bring educational flyers and the BSC banner. Richard will make a large poster and flyers for Energize Boxborough, plus poster of MA Green Communities Towns. Barbara will monitor our table.

Food:

Sheet Cake-Barbara

Dip and crudites, cheese and crackers- Francie

Hummus- Barbara

Cider- Francie

Tablecloths- Francie

Compostable plates, napkins, forks, cups- Francie

Other topics:

1. Town Meeting

Present warrant article- presentation: Kate and Kelly Brown

Kate is point person for all info (Q&A) regarding Warrant Article, not Kelly

2. Discussions about Earth Day on April 22. The Boxborough Democratic Committee has invited our committee to participate in an Earth Day of Action event. Discussion that this should be a bipartisan event. Perhaps a Town Cleanup Day. Suggest a view to school and energy improvements. Kate has met with Kate Crosby to connect with Environmental Science teachers and to select time for “walk through” of the new elementary school.

3. Discussion of recycling education funds and how best to promote recycling. Richard will speak with Ed Kukkula.

4. Stretch Code update: We will look towards pursuing adoption of Specialized Opt-in Stretch code next year. Boxborough has already adopted the Stretch Code which has been updated as of January 2023.

Action items:

Francie: Talk to Kelly Brown-- Pull together a list of questions for Kelly. What would Boxborough be allowed to spend grant money on in year one? What projects would be acceptable for future grants? For 3/10 and ATM, we need to have a list of acceptable projects to present.

Francie: print more flyers

Francie: find out from Peishan whether Library light bulbs have been changed to LED (a suggestion of Honeywell audit)

Palmer: assess financial impact of sample project and compare paying GC individual fee vs. what we save on energy costs

Richard, Kate, Palmer: will collaborate to identify and prioritize a list of energy efficiency projects for Boxborough that would be acceptable for GC funding.

Richard: Poster of Green Communities map plus Energize Boxborough poster and flyers

Distribute flyers at the Transfer Station:

Wednesday, March 1: Marjorie 11-12; Barbara 12-2:00

Saturday, March 4: Jay and Richard possibly; Kate- 1 hour

Barbara will post about the event on Facebook Pages (BSC, Box. Town Center, Boxborough Living,--anyone want to post on Busy Boxborough Parents or elsewhere?) Barbara will post on Next Door.

Barbara: provide Priya with Stretch Code information

Important Dates:

Submit Warrant Article-(Francie will get submission date)

February 6: COA Buzz: Done.

February 13: Select Board, 7pm, DOER presentation on Green Communities and invitation to March 10th (Kelly Brown and Francie)

February 15: Boxborough Bee article/invitation (sent in)

February 16: Economic Dev. Committee, 7pm, DOER presentation on Green Communities and invitation to March 10th (BSC member—anyone interested?-- and Francie)

February 21: FinCom, 7pm, DOER presentation on Green Communities and invitation to March 10th (Kelly Brown and Francie)

Next meeting: March 8 at 6:30.