

# Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee of Woodbridge, CT

## Draft Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 6:00pm

### Woodbridge Town Hall - Central Meeting Room

**Present: Members:** Hillary Drumm – Co-Chair, Tom Kenefick – Co-Chair, Nita Lathia- Co-Secretary, Kelly Aviles- Co-Secretary, Lor Ferrante Fernandes & Leslie Lyons.

**Members of Public:** Diane McCarthy – Bercury and Beej Ahern.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm
2. **May 24<sup>th</sup> Minutes:** Tom Kenefick motioned to approve minutes; Lor Ferrante Fernandes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
  - a. **Vote: Yes** - Lor Ferrante Fernandes, Hillary Drumm, Tom Kenefick, Nita Lathia, Leslie Lyons, Kelly Aviles.
3. **Introductions:** Tom Kenefick was unable to join previous meeting. At this meeting he formally introduced himself and provided a brief background.
4. **PACE Presentation:** Mark Scully and Bernard Pelletier from People’s Action for Clean Energy (PACE) provided information on their organization and presented an energy usage study they conducted for the Town of Woodbridge. Data in presentation was pulled from census data, motor vehicle data, tax assessor data, etc. The presentation broke down the estimated town’s energy usage by commercial, residential, motor vehicle, etc. The presentation noted that Woodbridge’s estimated annual cost of energy is approximately \$42.7M overall and \$4,834 per resident. Of the \$42.7M in energy cost the top 3 categories were: fuel for cars at \$14.9M, oil heat at \$11.3M, and electricity usage at \$10.6M. Presenters provided ideas for potential energy cost savings and poited to their website (<https://www.pacecleanenergy.org/>) for more ideas and resources. Under ‘resourses’ on their website can be found more information on PACE 100PercentCT Project and ideas on how individual towns can try to get to 100% renewable energy.
5. **Potential Campaigns:** Following the presentation the members discussed ideas for potential campaigns for the ad hoc committee to pursue. Ideas consisted of the following: help the town with the vehicle replacement schedule looking at cost and availability of electric or hybrid cars; solar campaign to educate and see where there is a potential for solar energy in the town, heat pump campaign again to educate and understand the energy efficiency of heat pumps; and building management review and outreach to help

see if any energy efficiency discussions or projects can be included in the building maintenance schedule.

6. **Grants:** Discussion was held about looking into potential grants that may be available to the town for conversion to the renewal energy in public builds/spaces. Diane McCarthy – Bercury mentioned the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations may have a grant the town could potential apply for energy improvements in rural or remote areas. Member will need to investigate this grant further.
  
7. **Other Towns:** Members discussed reaching out to other towns deemed similar to Woodbridge in size to see what sustainability programs they may have. Kelly Aviles to reach out to Easton to see what they do for sustainability.
  
8. **Solar Assessment:** Members discussed need for town to participate in a solar assessment of the municipal builds and other public buildings. Potential vendors include Titan Energy and CT Green Bank.
  
9. **School Buses:** Discussion was had to potentially reach out to bus vendors and express request for when buses are replaced for the vendor to review EV and hybrid bus options.
  
10. **Ad Hoc Committee Charge:** The members reviewed previous charge wording and updated the charge to the following: The Sustainability Ad Hoc Committee is advisory to the Board of Selectmen, charged with guiding Town Boards, Commissions, and Departments to further advance the principles of sustainability, equity, and environmental stewardship within and beyond our community while fostering community support and with development of a sustainability plan and management of initiatives to achieve long term sustainability goals for the community and to become a full standing commission by ordinance.  
Tom Kenefick motioned to approve changes as amended; Hillary Drumm seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
  - a. **Vote: Yes** - Lor Ferrante Fernandes, Hillary Drumm, Tom Kenefick, Nita Lathia, Leslie Lyons, Kelly Aviles.
  
11. **New Members:** Hillary Drumm made a motion to add new members. Their names are Diane McCarthy-Bercury, Beej Ahern, Lana Marcucio, and Alyssa Anderson. Kelly Aviles seconded. Motion passes unanimously.
  - a. **Vote: Yes** - Lor Ferrante Fernandes, Hillary Drumm, Tom Kenefick, Nita Lathia, Leslie Lyons, Kelly Aviles.

12. **Chair Report:** Co-Chair Hillary Drumm reported that the town library wants help getting more solar panels. Question was raised to Hillary if the ad hoc committee could get Woodbridge to be carbon neutral by 2023, which Ithaca, NY has just declared they would be doing. This will be tabled for further discussion at future meetings. Members will need to first understand and research what carbon neutral truly means for a town and what is needed.
13. **Summer Concerts:** members discussed getting table at summer concerts to use for town education and sustainability discussions. Further discussion to be had at future meetings.
14. **Next Meeting:** Next meeting will be held on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Lor Ferrante Fernandes volunteered to reach out to Sustainable CT to come speak about their programs.
15. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

Minutes taken by: Kelly Aviles