



Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability Subcommittee

Remote

November 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Open Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Chair Geoffrey Epstein, Adam Freudberg, William LaBarge, Priscila Sousa*

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent, Emily Rathmell and Rebecca Maynard High School Environmental Club Advisors, High School Environmental Club Student Members Casey Corcoran, Ella Downey, Emma Rothwell, Joanna Hastry, Executive Assistant to the School Committee

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He noted all in attendance and said that the meeting was being held remotely, was being broadcast live on Facebook, and was also being recorded.

Public Comment

No public comment

Joint Meeting with the High School Environmental Club

Mr. Epstein spoke to some of the subcommittee interests such as recycling and reducing trash, solar installations, and reducing fossil fuels in heating systems. High School Environment Club Advisors Emily Rathmell and Rebecca Maynard High and High School Environmental Club Student Members Casey Corcoran, Ella Downey, Emma Rothwell spoke about the club that has been running for three years and is currently meeting virtually. They spoke about what they have worked on including a community campaign for the Community Preservation Act, joining with Energize Framingham, which is a volunteer run website for community members to take earth friendly actions, planning to drop seed bombs after the first frost to spread milkweed to encourage pollinators, and partnering with Tree-Plenish for students to lead and fundraise for planting trees at a community event in the spring. They said that with Tree-Plenish they have a goal of 210 trees, which would replenish 100 percent of the paper use at the high school last year. They spoke about wanting to get rid of styrofoam trays at the high school and looking into composting.

In response to Mr. Epstein's question about future goals for the club, student members spoke about paper usage being the biggest problem in the high school. They spoke about the Tree-Plenish Program helping with that, but also easy fixes that teachers could do such as changing margins and fonts. They spoke about other goals such as looking into improving recycling, to include educating around what can be recycled and what cannot. Mr. Epstein

spoke about how paper use has probably changed this year, since everyone has had to learn how to have school and work remotely, and suggested looking into paper usage in the budget. Dr. Tremblay said they were looking at other solutions prior to COVID-19 in regards to paper usage, and how the biggest usage is in the Special Education Department with IEPs, etc, and how we can look at if there could be a bigger effort to see if we can move somewhat away from that. Dr. Tremblay spoke about alternatives such as Meatless Mondays being discussed, and said he would like to see schools move towards having washing stations. Members thanked students and teachers, and commented on the importance of having their feedback.

Mr. Freudberg said that getting rid of styrofoam was discussed at the last meeting, but due to the cost it would have to be phased in over many years, and suggested that there be a long term plan for that within the budget. He noted that the District reduced paper in the past, and cut the paper budget from last year to this one. High School Environment Club Advisor Rebecca Maynard discussed how education for teachers and students is important, and spoke about a presentation from Woods Hole on the research on plastic, and suggested that there be future experts coming in to speak on things such as styrofoam trays and food waste among other topics. High School Environment Club Advisor Emily Rathmell said that they have found some programs where districts and schools can become green certified, and how students have wondered why Environmental Sciences is not a required course, with everything changing and how much they have learned from it. She suggested looking to see if some items from that course could be worked into other courses for more exposure. Environmental Club student members spoke about their thoughts on assemblies and required courses, how assemblies would be good for teachers to learn as well, spoke about educating people about paper usage and what can be done to lessen it, and how presentations changed how they viewed things they were doing. Mr. Epstein asked that information and recordings of presentations that have been done be shared. He asked about plastics in the schools, and about environmental clubs in the lower grade levels. Ms. Rathmell said they did start talking about looking at the plastics in the vending machines and changing what the options are. Ms. Maynard said the Environmental Club President was going to the middle schools to try and get kids to participate in certain lessons he created, and get them interested ahead of when they were in high school. She spoke about trying to get more students involved.

*Ms. Sousa left the meeting due to a prior engagement at 7:57 p.m.

Mr. Epstein spoke about the planning efforts being made to make sure the new Fuller Middle School building is ready for a switch in the future to get away from fossil fuels, solar installation at Brophy Elementary School, and charging stations at all schools. Ms. Rathmell suggested looking at electric school buses. Mr. Epstein suggested that the Environmental Club copy the School Committee on projects they are working on, such as information on the Tree-Plenish program. He spoke about how the subcommittee will be looking at a policy for climate change, environment, and sustainability, and wanting the students' input on that in the future.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Mr. Freudberg **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (3-0-0)
(Yes: Freudberg, Epstein, LaBarge)

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

These minutes were approved in Open Session by the Climate Change, Environment, and Sustainability Subcommittee on January 27, 2021.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on July 18, 2021.