

City of Biddeford
Sustainability Commission
January 6, 2025, at 5:30pm
Second Floor Conference Room & Zoom

1. Declaration of Quorum/Voting Members

Kiara Frishkorn – Absent

Jeff Goldsmith – Present

Joie Grandbois – Present

Wendy Johnson – Present

William Kochtitzky – Present

Beverly Thorpe – Present

John Wallach – Absent

Max Zakian – Present (arrived at 6:00pm)

Sam Drummey (non-voting) – Present

Quorum is present.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

Jeff motions to approve, Joie seconds, passes unanimously

3. Carbon Fee & Dividend

Will and Brad met with the mayor. The mayor says the council doesn't currently back the resolution. The mayor stated that the resolutions seems anti-solar, Phil Coupe, from Revision Energy, can explain why. Mayor is also hesitant to comment on matters perceived as outside of city purview. Brad suggests waiting for some time to return to the resolution. Mayor instead suggests focusing on saving money, and stopping pollution and waste within the city.

4. Work Plan

Brad sent a folder that members have editing access on, members are free to use it to share files or create subfolders through it.

Brad passes out copies of all work plan drafts with notes.

Will summarizes priorities of Mayor from their meeting. Members discuss what an energy audit entails. Mayor had noted that due to density in the area, solar is a good opportunity. Mayor had

noted that collaboration with Casella on electric trash trucks should be mostly about learning. Brad notes that new energy efficiency codes would be a light lift. Mayor, Will, and Brad had noted that bike and pedestrian plan may be task for Traffic Committee. The mayor and Roby Fecteau are both positive towards the beach management plan. Project Canopy Committee should possibly be rolled under the Commission.

Will proposes goal for end of meeting of creating a subcommittee for each topic, and having members come back to the next meeting with some work on the topic.

Joie (Buildings and Energy):

She explained that policies in her draft that were either easy wins or strong priorities. Looking at mayor's priorities, things that will have an impact, and things that are actionable, Joie suggests focusing on stretch codes. She explains that stretch codes are codes that are stricter than current codes, seeking to increase energy efficiency in buildings. Joie also suggests doing an energy audit of municipal facilities, and members discuss feasibility. Brad states that an energy audit would be done through grant funding. Members agree that stretch codes and an energy audit should be in the work plan.

Sam (transit):

Members agree focusing on TOD-related zoning changes (including parking reform), a Bike-Ped master plan (or supporting the Traffic committee is creating one), Complete Street ordinance (the city already prioritizes this, but it's not codified in the code of ordinances), bus stop upgrades, EVCS ordinance, and a baseline evaluation of municipal fleet.

Brad shares that UNE fellow will do inventory of Biddeford's GHG emissions. This will help see municipal transportation emissions, which will be helpful in converting the municipal fleet to EVs.

Max (Land use and natural environment):

Under sustainable landscaping: members agree on including a beach management plan. Members agree on encouraging native planting through ordinance. He says that specific plants shouldn't be in an ordinance, because those will change over time. Members discuss reducing pesticides and fertilizers. Agriculture would be exempt from this, it would be to target lawns. Max states that it may be difficult to get buy-in on this until state-level bans on sales of certain fertilizers.

Under sustainable food systems: Max prioritizes expanding food gardens, including doing an inventory and having a tool library. UNE is doing something related to sustainable landscaping for homeownership. Wendy is working on a garden initiative, and supports including food gardens in the work plan. Members agree to include food garden expansion in the work plan. Another priority is expanding local food production. Max explains that this is on a larger scale, and would mean talking to fisher people and farmers to understand barriers in the code of ordinances to them creating more food. Wendy brings up Victory Gardens. Jeff brings up

incentivizing non-meat foods, or meat that takes up less land. Members agree to include expanding local food production in the work plan. Max's other priority is expanding composting, such as by having composting bins on city properties, having other locations where Garbage to Garden picks up compost, giving away small compost bins, or incentives for businesses to compost. Max is willing to fold this under other actions if there isn't space for this. Joie suggests having the city waste commission handle this.

Under mixed-use zoning: Max explains what he means by changes to zoning to allow and incentivize more mixed-use development and infill development. His general idea is about encouraging growth in targeted growth areas, and he explains why that's important.

Members agree that those are all good priority actions, however there are too many.

Brad (leadership and support):

Many of his drafted actions include actions already talked about. He highlights changes to school curricula. Max suggests including anti-idling education within that.

Members will discuss the Health and Well-being section next meeting, when Kiara is present.

Brad proposes that members who drafted the plans cull the list down to what can be done in a year, based on their judgement. Members agree. Brad will send out the list.

Members discuss the beach management plan, and how Brad wants Roby to speak to the committee about it

5. Collaboration with UNE

Brad has been speaking with Jen Brusseau (sp?) at UNE about having her students work on several priorities, those being a webpage with information about resilience for coastal residents, tree-planting, and sustainable landscaping for homeowners. She will be speaking at the next meeting.

6. Public Comment

Richard notes that Biddeford already has a lot of forests, and it should be kept, in addition to urban tree planting.

Ken states that planted trees should be well-maintained.

7. Adjournment

Max motions, Will seconds, members vote unanimously.