

MEETING MINUTES
Sustainable Sharon Coalition General Meeting
Wednesday, December 2, 2020, 7:00 PM
Zoom Remote Meeting, <https://zoom.us/j/3524688267>

In Attendance: Aneeza Ahmad, Marlene Arnold, Ellen Bordman, Stuart Brown, Artie Crocker, Nivedi Das, Molli Denrich, Kathy Farrell, Silas Fyler, David Green, Tim Humphreys, Judy Leher Jacobs, Judith Karlin, Paul Lauenstein, Bri McAlevey, Rory McGregor, Kimberly Newton, Ted Philips, Charlotte Pototsky, Helen Poynton, Beth Rodio, Cheryl Schnitzer, David Slater, Ricky Stern, Aaron Tamkin, Simone Tamkin, Debbie Tatro, Pat Walker, Cheryl Weinstein, Sandra Widland, Steven Zeitler

1. Rory recited the Vision Statement for the group. Cheryl reviewed meeting logistics.
2. Motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting. Passed by 11 Yes, 0 No.
3. President's Remarks: Cheryl announced that Aaron Tamkin's High School Environmental Science teacher would like suggestions for the class to help SSC/Sharon with an environmental community issue. Please think about what issue we would like help with.
4. Induction Cooktop Demonstration with Beth Rodio: Bri introduced Beth and Paul. Paul presented background information and benefits of induction cooking. It is more energy efficient than gas or electric and cooks in half the time. Can purchase an inexpensive countertop induction burner to try it out.

Beth gave the stir-fry cooking demonstration; showed how quickly water boils and rice cooks. Other benefits include cleaner pans (no burn marks), reduced fire risk (won't turn on if no metal detected), and extremely precise temperature settings. Requires the right cookware - look for pots where magnets stick.
5. Treasurer's Report: David reported that expenses in November included Mailchimp & Zoom (normal recurring expenses). We received \$600 in revenue - \$500 from NEC (solar install) and \$100 from Relay Power (community solar). No income from energy audits last month. Total cash on hand: \$7,163.
6. Committee Chair Reports
 - a. Education Committee: "Read for the Planet" community book club
 - Cheryl introduced The Future We Choose, Surviving the Climate Crisis, by Christiana Figuaras and Tom Rivali-Carnas (negotiators of the Paris Climate Agreement) as the book we will be reading.

- Bri already created a promotion flier that includes logos of current sponsors. Can still sign up sponsors by completing SSC website form. There is no cost to sponsor, just agreement to promote.
- Please donate money to enable us to give away free books to those who can not purchase. We want to encourage it to be read by many people (sign up on website). To purchase, we recommend buying through any small independent book store.
- Beginning in January, the first part of our monthly meeting (7-7:45pm) will be the book group discussion (in lieu of guest presentation).
- Planning committee will be meeting next Wed Dec 9th 7-8pm.
- MOTION: To allocate \$300 if needed in order to purchase 3 additional sets (5 books each) for \$80/set. Motion passed (10 Yes).

b. Zero Waste Committee

- Cheryl announced that five SSC litter pickers were purchased and being stored at her house. Contact Cheryl to borrow one.
- Debbie reported that due to Covid 19, we can no longer work to ban disposable items from local restaurants. Instead we are looking to support restaurants by helping them reduce trash and save money on unnecessary disposables. We will be encouraging them to ask customers whether they actually want disposable items like silverware/straws/etc. and only provide when requested. Also black plastic containers aren't recyclable so suggesting that they switch to white ones. A Google doc is tracking what restaurants use, and you can help fill it in.
- Ricky reported that "selling" reusable bags with donation isn't working. She offered to donate to cover the cost, and suggested it would be better to just give them away.

c. Energy & Climate Committee: Silas (member of the town Energy Advisory Committee) presented details of Sharon Power Choice and timeline of roll-out.

- Sharon Power Choice is our town's municipal electricity aggregation program where we are using bulk purchasing power to get greener energy at a discounted, stable rate. The goal was to beat the 18% (state required minimum) renewable power offered by Eversource at a more competitive rate. The program will be using a third party (Constellation) to supply the energy but will still be delivered by the utility.
- The town negotiated 3 rates: "Standard" is chosen by default and uses 20% more green energy at lower price. Participants can opt up to higher priced "Green" for 100% renewable energy sourced in New England, or opt down to "Basic" which gives the same minimum 18% as Eversource but for a cheaper rate. Rates will be locked in for 36 months, and you can change between them at any time. Similar for businesses, however large businesses will be renegotiated every 4 months. Program starts March 1 and is an Opt-Out program.

- Mailers going out soon to alert town of the program. Group presentations will follow. Look for town logo to be sure it's the town's program and not something else. More info available at www.sharonpowerchoice.com
 - Q&A:
 1. If you have solar panels, can you still sell your power back to the grid? Yes, the program only affects supply portion of the utility bill.
 2. What happens if you already have a supply contract with someone? You will stay with them by default, but you can opt in anytime.
 3. Can we see details of renewable energy sources? Yes they will be available in a detailed report provided quarterly.
 4. What rate is suggested if you get energy from community solar? If you are getting 100% renewable, you should opt down to cheapest rate. If you're only getting 80% then you might want to opt up to get 100% renewable.
 - Action needed for SSC to educate and encourage residents to choose the 100% renewable option. Meeting scheduled for Tuesday Dec. 15 at 7pm to discuss an action plan.
7. Old Business: SSC is signing up as MCAN (Massachusetts Climate Action Network) affiliate. Judy Leher Jacobs volunteered to be the liaison. MCAN is a statewide organization that supports their affiliates to work on issues they prioritize. Currently MCAN is working on affordable housing by doing a series of webinars. Can assist with how to reduce carbon emissions for new affordable housing.
8. New Business
- a. SSC 10th Anniversary Celebration: Cheryl would like to create a task force to plan how best to celebrate our upcoming 10th anniversary next year. Ideas include creating a new logo and redesigning our website. David Slater and Simone Tamkin volunteered to join Cheryl in the effort. Hope to get more volunteers.
 - b. Facebook Fundraiser: Facebook is currently matching all donations made beginning December 1st until their \$7M match runs out. Please consider donating any amount to SSC to double your contribution.
9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, Jan 6, 2020 at 7:00 PM
10. Adjournment at 8:50PM

Minutes submitted by Marlene Arnold