



**June 8, 2023**  
**7:15-8:30pm**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Becky Bunnell, Kiersten Chou, Daphne Dixon (virtual), Rabab Hussain, Larry Kaley, Emma Kaye, Peter Kraus, Bill Leavy, Dustin Mandre, Jim Marren, Shawn O’Sullivan, Doug Price, Bob Wall

**Liaisons:** n/a

**Guests:** Anya Metzack, Vandan Divatia, Julia Pida

- **Meeting Minutes**
  - Becky Bunnell made a motion, Larry Kaley seconded, no discussion, unanimous vote to approve Minutes as submitted.
- **Treasurer Report:** Ron Blumenfeld
  - Balance as of 5/9/2023 is **\$4,861.63**.
  - Interim expense \$125.00 to Larry Kaley to reimburse for Earth Day lawn signs.
- **Interns:** Mary Hogue
  - Julia Pida, rising Jr at Hobart & William Smith Colleges majoring in Environmental Studies, and Catalina Ramirez, in her FLHS Senior Experience with SFTF; other students may join after school is over (6/13)
  - Have come to meetings, garden clean ups and went to the Capital where Senator Hwang introduced them on the Senate floor and State Rep McCarthy Vahey introduced them on the House floor to standing ovations
- **Sustainability Plan:** Ron Blumenfeld
  - No changes: 9 modules finalized; 4 drafts; 5 unsubmitted
- **Liaison Reports**
  - **Bike-Ped:** TBD
  - **Solid Waste & Recycling Commission:** Misty Beyer
  - **Fairfield Forestry Committee:** Mary Hogue
    - Ted Luchsinger gave a presentation on “How to Create Your Own Pollinator Garden” to the Greenfield Hill Grange #133 on 5/20/2023
    - “Traveling Tree Show” that went to four elementary schools (Burr, Jennings, McKinley, North Stratfield) was a huge success and plans are being made for updates to the program for next year

- Ted Luchsinger and Amanda Ingrassia hosted another Professional Development program at Oliver Nurseries led by Harry Spear and at Oaklawn Cemetery and Arboretum to learn about native plants and pollinators on 5/30 1-3pm
  - **Flood and Erosion Control Board:** Becky Bunnell
  - **Conservation / Inland Wetland Commissions:** Ted Luchsinger
  - **Mill River Wetland Committee:** Kiersten Chou
  - **PTA Council:** Meghann McKale
- **Reports for Committees**
  - **Energy & Built Environment:** Bob Wall
    - Still no decision yet on our Community Partnership Initiative grant application filed in early March
    - In light of these delays and the lack of clarity on IRA incentives until late 2023, we recommend offering to conduct residential Solar+Storage campaign; Yale makes final decisions on which communities are selected
    - Obtained data from Tax Assessor's office re vehicle fleet (including municipal fleet) for Greenhouse Gas Inventory; will work with interns to crunch data to determine average fuel efficiency
    - Completed edits of energy-related modules for Sustainability Plan
  - **Transportation:** Daphne Dixon
  - **Food & Waste:** Becky Bunnell
    - **Recycling and Waste Actions:**
      - Glass Recycling pilot - There was a discussion to request this information be collected monthly and ideally placed on the town website. There was also a discussion how to encourage greater participation – ideas included: to post information at liquor stores, to reach out again to church groups, to provide a card and signage at the transfer station on what can be recycled. It was agreed to do a sign-up genius to split up who is contacting which liquor store and which church.
      - Food waste program - We got roughly 15 additional purchases of the food waste kits during our earth month promotion. It was discussed that we need to continue to promote and one option is to request a table at the Farmers market this summer and have a sign up sheet passed around to cover the weekly times. Our table would also include information on home composting (Mary to create a short “ tip” sheet) and other SFTF programs.
      - OOPS stickers and Clean the Stream - There was a discussion on looking into getting a grant to support temp staff to conduct the OOPS program as current DPW resources do not appear to be available at this time. Misty and Becky to discuss with John C. They will also discuss how the bid process is typically conducted on the Oakridge contracts and how many firms responded to the RFP.
      - Seminars on recycling and composting - None planned at this time – but an idea would be to use the Farmers market table to create awareness and encourage participation this summer.
      - School recycling initiatives / Green team - A sustainable CT grant is almost ready for submission to raise roughly \$30,000+ to allow Food waste recycling at five

additional schools. We are targeting to go live by June 13<sup>th</sup> – end of school year. We will plan to add School fridges to the budget. Food rescue will now be available at the schools in the fall, each school will need to have a binder for the Food rescuer.

- Discount composter program - Low participation so far
- Sustainable CT grant - The Green Teams (Sustainability VP of the PTA Council) - See above

■ **Food Actions:**

- Farmers market and sustainable food options outreach - Becky to follow up on the option to have SNAP included in this summer's farmers market
- Flash Food - Stop and Shop - We will ask the SFTF Communications team to help promote this program
- Refill program - It was discussed that the town has agreed to support this program and now we need to get Coffee shops signed up and once that is done, create awareness of the program. Becky to create a flyer and info sheet. We will need help getting coffee shops signed up – A signup genius form was discussed as an option. Moms of Fairfield was discussed as one of many vehicles to create awareness
- Brown paper bags at grocery stores - It was discussed that quotes from store managers would make the appeal to the RTM much stronger

○ **Natural Environment:** see Forestry Committee report, no meeting this month

○ **Equity:** Emma Kaye & Shawn O'Sullivan

○ **Communication & Outreach:** Rabab Hussain

■ Jim Marren, Dustin & Rabab have worked on the **Sustainable Fairfield Initiative Promotion Guidelines**

- **Purpose:** Define clear processes for communicating and sharing Sustainable Fairfield initiatives in order to tell a concise story, funnel viewers and readers through appropriate channels, and maximize the reach for events to make Fairfield a more sustainable place
- Newsletter for May/June has gone out. Social media posts are up to date, website as well

○ **Advocacy:** Shawn O'Sullivan

○ **Action Items:**

- **Food Waste:** Becky Bunnell advised that PTA Green Teams is applying for a Sustainable CT grant to expand composting in various schools; need to raise \$20K to receive \$50K grant; will circulate details when link is available
- **Energy:** Bob Wall advised that because Community Partnership grant application not decided yet and IRA incentives won't be known until late 2023 at earliest, we plan to move forward with *PowerSmart* campaign regarding solar+storage; it will be up to Yale as lead of US DOE grant team to decide when or if Fairfield is selected for a campaign

● **Climate Change**

- **Bike Pedestrian Petition:** Anya Metzack discussed [petition](#) for ordinance to improve infrastructure for walking and biking to school safely. Goal is 1,000 signatures (326 received to date). Suggestions included tabling at Sound Jam, working with DJ at

Sound Jam, and asking Parks and Rec to include in their distribution list and meet with Emmeline Harrington re POCD. Preamble of potential ordinance could refer to Town's Complete Streets policy and State's Lead by Example policy.

- **CT Climate Change Post-Session Legislative Wrap Up** - <https://www.ctlc.org/> (5/9/23 1-2 pm - see link to view recording)
- **Resiliency Project Status:** Becky Bunnell provided background on town's vulnerabilities with respect to coastal flooding. Federal proposal to address these issues would cost \$548M, of which the Town would be required to pay one-third. Four Flood & Erosion projects were funded by ARPA. Several of those projects are in progress but one, High Intensity Wave Study, has not moved forward. It must be completed by the end of 2024, which may not happen and Town may seek to re-purpose the \$400,000 grant. Becky to work with Communications to develop a fact sheet about the project.
- **Climate Change & Equity:** Emma Kaye reminded that climate change will disproportionately affect low and moderate income households. She reported that the Equity committee is reviewing all Sustainability Plan modules to ensure that equity is embedded throughout. She also noted that it is important to listen to representatives of underserved populations before proceeding with sustainability campaigns and other projects to better understand their issues and concerns.
- **Climate Change & Communications:** Rabab Hussain outlined suggested new guidelines and processes for promoting events and other SFTF or other sustainability projects. It remains challenging to reach beyond the proverbial "choir" with respect to such activities and why they are important.

#### Key Upcoming Dates

- Sat, 6/10, 10am-2pm, Ogden House, 1520 Bronson Road, [Open Garden Day](#)
- Sat, 6/10, 10am-2pm, Oak Lawn Cemetery & Arboretum, 1530 Bronson Road, **Open Garden Day**
- Sat, 6/17, 10am-noon, Friends of Lake Mohegan (FOLM), 960 Morehouse Highway, [BioBlitz and Invasive Plant Pull event](#)
- Sat, 6/17, 7pm, Park City Music Hall, 2926 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, [Tucker Fund Concert Fundraiser](#) (funds raised for plants in new Post Road Pollinator Pocket Park)
- **Old Business**
- **New Business**