

April 19th, 2017 Minutes

Business Energy Fair, April 12th—The partnership between the Town and the Chamber of Commerce worked very well. Kimberly and Chamber volunteers hand delivered ‘save the dates’ for the event to every business on route one and on gray road, and mailed the others. Every business in Falmouth knew about the event, but it wasn’t well attended during the daytime. In the evening hours, attendance seemed to pick up and a total of 100 people attended throughout the day. The Police Department generously agreed to use their automated sign board which was displayed on route one prior to the event. In thinking of increasing attendance for next year, it may be a good idea to order “road signs” as we’ve done for the Home Energy Fair. Vendors were very pleased with the turnout regardless of the slow period during the early hours of the event. Kimberly will be working directly with Efficiency Maine on strategies for business engagement in focusing on energy use, as well as provide resources to them to begin implementing these types of practices.

Shopping bag Ordinances—REAC owes the Town Council an update (may be in the form of a report of a memorandum) on how the ordinance has been, given it has been in place for one year. The only number we have for comparison is a 2 million figure—Hannaford told us how many bags they distribute in one month, that was multiplied by twelve (annual), and then multiplied out by 3—to approximate how many bags are distributed in Falmouth by the three largest retailers in Town (Hannaford, Walmart and Shaws). Kimberly has asked the “Big 6” who are in compliance of the Shopping Bag ordinance to provide a year’s worth of data; she expects to have this data soon.

The current reusable bag ordinances in effect in Maine include: Portland, South Portland, York, Falmouth, Freeport, Kennebunk, Topsham, Brunswick and Saco. Of those 9, 5 of the ordinances include an outright ban on plastic bags.

Solar—The committee discussed the three solar bills current in this Legislative session.

LD 1373—Berry’s bill, LD ____ Saveillo’s bill (not printed yet), and LD 1444 Woodsome’s bill

Each of the bills look different, and have certain pros and cons for the residential markets, as well as large scale markets that don’t exist currently in Maine. There is a public hearing on LD 1373, Rep. Berry’s bill on May 4th. That day there will also be a solar rally put together by NRCM. From a municipal perspective, LD 1444 titled “An Act Regarding Large-scale Community Solar Procurement” makes the most sense to reference and support in terms of passing a resolution by the Falmouth Town Council. Kimberly needs to have a conversation with Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), as that conversation has been delayed until bills have been printed—which now they have been (mostly).

Food Waste Collection—the RFP the Town has drafted has been put on hold. A press conference regarding two pilot compost curbside collection programs, one in Scarborough and the other in South Portland, will be held on Thursday, April 20th. Kimberly plans to attend. The pilot drop-off organic program at the Falmouth Transfer Station has been

successful. During a year, 12 tons of organic material was recovered in this program, which is much more than what was expected. Kimberly will be working with a professor at the University of Southern Maine to collect data on the program through surveys. USM has received a grant to assist with and to analyze the data collected. The group discussed having an outreach event in light of Maine Compost Week, which begins on May 8th. It was recommended to connect with folks at the UMaine Cooperative Extension, the community garden and/or Tidewater farms in Falmouth to put something together.

Wellness Fair—On May 21st, the Town and many organizations are hosting a Wellness Fair at the Falmouth Elementary School from 10am-2pm. Kimberly has reached out to organizers to ask if REAC can participate, but hasn't heard back. She plans to follow up with the group when she hears more.

WindowDressers—Kimberly is going to make a flier for the program to distribute to all Falmouth residents, and will work with committee members to further distribute within their own networks. The Town has budgeted funds to cover the entire costs of the inserts for lower income folks. There have been challenges on how to reach these lower income folks, but working directly with General Assistance through the Opportunity Alliance has certainly helped overcome these barriers. Kimberly has also reached out to church groups and is working with the food pantry as well. She has another "local coordinators" training coming up in Brunswick on April 27th. Once a few weeks pass, measuring teams will be organized by REAC volunteers. From there, the group will schedule times with residents to measure their windows, insert that information into WindowDressers software. From there, the frames are built in Rockland over the summer. Our build is scheduled at the Mason-Motz Community Center September 15-18th.