

March 14, 2018 REAC Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Donna Lee Cheney, Pete LaFond, Dave Low, Dick Klain, Chris Malley, Cathy Nichols, Alan Solander

Staff: Kim Darling

Motion was made by PL to accept minutes from February mtg. Motion was seconded by DK. All voted in favor and minutes were accepted.

KD – Regarding suggested changes the high school recycling efforts. Town council has no oversight of school operations so can't suggest changes the process so that janitorial staff handle classroom recycling rather than students.

CN has written a letter to be sent to the school administration and forwarded to this group and she has asked Gary Glick more about operations as well as clearing the letter with him. She is worried about what will happen when Gary retires as he is the one shepherding efforts like recycling. We believe there is a recycling dumpster at the school.

KD is trying to be part of the sustainability committee meetings at the high school. Composting is successful at the elementary school but that and other items have been more difficult at the high school. If KD could be part of the mtgs she might be able to help in the efforts. She hopes to get a councilor to sign on to the letter with support and hopes the ltr will help in her efforts to gain traction at the high school.

KD – March 22nd movie night at the library – Tidewater – hour long documentary on the issue of water within the Virginia/MD area. Hope all can attend

KD – March 21st mtg at Wyndham High School about Highland Lake and the bacterial bloom issue. Possible reason for bloom is the lack of fish stocking for past few years.

KD – the consultant on the streetlight project has been disappointing and the project is proving slow. About to publish a 2nd notice of intent to purchase lights and hopes for installation May-June. She has hard data on the savings from the project which is mostly from the stopping of rental fees to CMP. The backwards policy from the PUC is the reason this has been slow in happening. There are sample lights installed in front of town hall and library and both look good.

KD – Earth Day April 22 -possible event to be held April 21st at the transfer station. Could highlight how much is possible the transfer station which many don't realize (paint recycling, metals, etc). Possible new signage would be helpful. She will see about a possible ad in the Forecaster

DK – how about passing on some information to a writer at the Forecaster to be included in their probably Earth Day article which could highlight the work of the REAC?

PL updated his research into possible solar array on landfill. There continues to be stalling from CMP and he thinks we might have to wait a long time before all of the hurdles are broken down which would make an array a financially attractive project. Given that, he suggested that we pursue the project anyway, with an understanding that the numbers are not as attractive as they could be if the legislature

were to change regulations, but it would better for the town to embark on the project now with unfavorable numbers rather than lose any number of years waiting for the regulation change.

KD knows Cumberland is moving forward but not sure how?

RK – could we make an argument that the \$70,000 annual savings from the LED streetlights could be funneled into the solar project?

KD still worries that the policy is not right and is not sure the town should get into the arrangement if the financials are not as good as they could be with correct policy in place. But he will re-open the project and look at it some more and send information to the group so we can look at the numbers. She explained system size, demand charges and net metering are all issues.

PL made the argument that society has subsidized oil and gas for years, time is right to subsidize solar and this should move forward.

DL agreed this should be proposed to the council again.

CM suggested we look at making the project flexible so if the policies are changed to allow for a better size for this project we can change project or add on to existing project.

KD - DL has asked about green power purchase or RECS for town usage. Feeling has always been that it is better to invest in local (in town) project rather than pay for RECS or green power purchase which helps fund projects in other locations. All agreed local project would be best.

PL suggested maybe the REAC changes its name to reflect its willingness to work on things “sustainable”. This could include a name change for the committee.

There will be no April meeting other than the Earth Day celebration April 21st at the transfer station.