



**Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Approved Minutes April 13, 2021 7 PM**

**Virtual Zoom Meeting ID: 923-766-4832 Password: 136658**

**Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9237664832> or Telephone: 1-646-558-8656**

**I. Call to Order 7:02 pm**

The chair read the COVID-19/Zoom Meeting statement pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order 12.

**Members present:** Paul Gasowski (chair), Chuck Cox (late), Jennifer Messeder, Dean Rubine.

[Roll call attendance, no one else in anyone's room.]

**Members absent:** N/A

**Officials Present:** Katrin Kasper, Lee Select Board

**Public Present:** N/A

**II. Preliminary Actions**

**A. Introductions: Katrin Kasper, Invited Guests**

Katrin: I'm really excited to be a non-voting member. This is stuff I care deeply about.

Paul: Thank you for being our first Board representative.

**B. Approval of Agenda**

Dean moves, Jen 2nd, agenda approved 3-0 by roll call vote.

**C. Minutes: Approve Minutes from 2/17/21, 3/16/21**

Approve minutes 2/17/2021

Committee reviewed. Dean moved, Jen 2nd, roll call vote 3-0, minutes from 2/17/2021 approved as amended.

Approve minutes 3/16/2021

Jen moved, Dean 2nd, roll call vote 3-0, minutes from 3/16/2021 approved as amended.

Paul: This committee and commissions don't have a dedicated server separate from the town server so we end up using our own drives and storage to store town stuff. There's only so much Denise and the town can take.

Katrin: Have we talked to other people about changes to that in the future?

Paul: That's a good topic, a separate, parallel server for committees.

**D. Correspondence/Events: Maggie Morrison, Julie Glover, Mary Woodward (Repairability Index), Jen Messeder (Green Burial), Jen Messeder/Catherine Fisher/Andrea LeBlanc/ Barrington Rec (Trex Recycling)**

**Repairability index.**

Jen: Mary Woodward sent an email some time ago; France came up with this idea of reparability index, like energy star, how easy it is to repair, how easy it is to get a manual. I'll send it to the Sustainability Committee.

Dean: It's a pet issue of mine. Apple claims to be green but makes items difficult to repair, greatly increasing e-waste.

Paul: The next move would be to place it on the next agenda for additional discussion.

Jen: Does the committee want to take on starting whatever conversation needs to start?

Dean: A new group, fighttorepair.com, just started, addressing the Right to Repair in the electronics industry. A Right to Repair law addressing the automotive space passed in Massachusetts last election.

Katrin: Wherever we try to buy a new appliance we always look up reparability in Consumer Reports. What is this Repairability Index? How would you use it?

Jen: In France when you buy an appliance it has a rating that tells you what you need to know about repairability.

Paul: Consensus to put it on the next agenda?

Committee: Yes

**Green burial**

Jen: Seacoast NH Permaculture brought in a speaker. I was curious what kind of options is available in Lee. I was going to reach out to our cemetery trustees. The issue touches on town infrastructure. What options do we have in town? This might involve the conservation commission as well. Can we have green cemeteries on town land? Before I reached out I thought I'd inform this committee; we can be cc'd on the conversation.

Dean: I'm interested.

Paul: It's a bit of a reach for us; we have plenty on our plate right now. We could move it to the agenda at our next meeting.

Jen: The cemetery trustees would drive the conversation. Do we want to be copied?

Paul: We need to respect the trustees.

Dean: Jen does it informally, we listen and learn.

Katrin: There are more people alive on earth now than have ever died. There are many cemeteries in Lee. It's an important topic in town. It makes sense for them to be sustainable.

Jen: I'll reach out as an individual, keep this committee cc'd.

Committee concurs.

### **Barrington Rec (Trex Recycling)**

Jen: Catherine Fisher forwarded information about a plastic bag recycling challenge that's going on in Barrington and asked if we were doing anything like this in Lee. I replied that we weren't doing anything.

Dean: Market Basket recycles plastic bags.

Jen: Hannaford does too.

Paul: We've recycled bags at Market Basket. I don't know where they go. Never asked. Is Barrington talking about any bag?

Jen: If we wanted to pursue it we could reach out to the Barrington committee working on it and find out what they were doing.

Paul: Next stop would be to put in on the agenda.

Dean: Bags can be returned to Market Basket. We should find out what they do with them.

Katrin: I talked to Steve. It's complicated at the transfer station with bags. There will be more information coming up. I'm going to a solid waste and recycling seminar soon.

[Chuck joins 7:32 pm]

Paul: We'll place it on the agenda. Jen can learn a bit more from Barrington. Katrin will share what she learns at the seminar.

Jen: I'll follow up on the email.

[Email correspondence with Barrington appended at the end of this document.]

### **Other**

Paul: Other correspondence discussed below.

## **E. Other N/A**

## **III. Discussion Items/Updates**

### **A. Dean/Chuck: Municipal Composting Update**

Dean: At the RCWG (Regional Compost Working Group) we discussed the application to get the committee a summer intern from UNH. It was a useful exercise; it helped the committee crystallize issues it wanted to research. This led to a discussion of the "three problems" the committee might address:

Problem 1: We need to reduce the amount of organic waste we produce.

Problem 2: Need on-site, smaller scale solutions for keeping organic waste from landfill.

Problem 3: Need a cost-effective place to send consumers' mixed organic waste.

I leaned toward Problem 2, starting small and scaling up. Nell Neal wanted to go big. Committee will continue to discuss.

Chuck: I am to talk to different farmers to see how they might be involved, accepting material, setting up compost on their site, see if there's interest, see if they could use food waste for feeding chickens. Starting the discussion. We're looking for a Madbury member, making some progress, but no one is on board yet, maybe soon.

Katrin: I'm interested in comparing the benefits of doing it as a town versus a regional effort.

Paul: What's next?

Dean: More discussion, next meeting this Thursday, 4/15/2021.

## **B. Paul: Lee Arts, Crafts and Cottage Industry Directory**

Paul: I wrote Julie Glover; she was busy, we decided to talk on the phone yesterday. Good conversation. I put some of her thoughts on the two documents she shared directly in the documents: application and draft E-Crier article.

Julie suggestions: Index or Directory. Distinction between artisan and crafts person. How do these activities help reduce the solid waste stream? Reducing carbon footprint, doing things locally, craftspeople are more prone to reuse and recycle. People meeting their needs within the town.

Julie didn't like calling it an application. The biggest question is how to screen applicants? Are there criteria for rejecting potential participants? Using "application" implies a screening process. What if someone is growing marijuana in town, considers themselves an artisan?

Katrin: We only include legal things.

Dean: For Lee's Trees we stated that we obey the policies of the town of Lee, and that we reserve the right to refuse accordingly.

Paul: Julie: How do we separate formal business from home-based operations? Do we need to create a separate directory for Lee business? Used to have a welcome wagon with lists of businesses, agencies. How do we not insult the professional business? Work on the document.

Dean: RCWG asked if Lee has a Business Development person. They want to survey local businesses about waste practices; other committees interested in energy usage.

Jen: Lee Chamber of Commerce?

Katrin: Not that I know of. It makes sense that Durham would have one.

Katrin: I do have a question about legality. If someone is selling things there is a certain amount of sales allowed before they have to officially become a business. Is the town at risk if we have folks not following that rule?

Paul: I did the Ag directory; the farmers all have their own liability coverage. Your point is good. There is a limit beyond which you need to become a business.

Dean: We would need disclaimers saying the Town of Lee makes no representations about the competence and safety of any person or business listed.

Jen: We may make people successful enough to get them above the radar.

Paul: Here's the E-Crier article. It currently requires applicants be the age of majority. Julie mentioned a girl under 18 who bakes really good bread.

Dean: Maybe if you're under 18 you need someone over 18 to assume the responsibility.

Paul: Food related items cause a problem. Canning. Foraging. Katrin, in the historical society archives did you ever come across a welcome package?

Katrin: I want to research that. I'm on board with all these ideas.

Jen: It seems like we always bump into the same liability obstacles?

Katrin: So often we have challenges in town and a liability concern means we don't address it. I want to do things; I just want to be aware of liability issues.

Paul: Julie said at some point we have to bring the insurer Primex into it; for now we try to solve it on our own.

Katrin: We could say: You are responsible as a business to follow all appropriate guidelines. Re food: the town states they have not investigated the health and safety of any entry.

Paul: Can Katrin edit the directory materials directly?

Katrin: I'll check. I believe I can make suggestions but not give orders.

Chuck: Everyone I've talked to about the idea of this directory has been very positive. I was just with the Fair committee and things are tentatively a Go on the Lee Fair for September 11, 2021. Sustainability may want to be considered in their upcoming activities.

Paul: We've participated before. Chuck, please wear the LSC hat in the Fair meetings. Everybody can work on directory documents.

### **C. Jen: Update 'One Bin' Book Proof for Web Page**

I have the final two drafts for the consolidated book.

### **Office Paper**

Jen: I updated pictures.

Dean: Looks great.

Katrin: This has been very helpful; reading these has made a difference for our family

Jen: We're putting it together into one book and an associated E-Crier article

Chuck: I liked the bottom where she included Rot.

Consensus is that the paper article looks good. Next one is magazines:

## **Magazines**

Jen: We have to pay for magazines, but it's cheaper than trashing them. Committee reviewed draft.

Dean: Looks great.

Committee concurs.

Paul: Is the book done?

Jen: I will finalize these, put these into the book as a whole.

Dean: I'll get it onto the site, PDF link, pages with individual articles, both ways.

Paul: We should be able to post this one on the town site.

Dean: Maybe we can have it on the transfer station site?

Paul: Good idea.

Jen: If we're going to have it in multiple places, it's good to have one official link where it really lives, a single place to update. Everything else links to that. I can draft an E-Crier announcement.

Katrin: It's making a difference, thank you.

## **D. Paul: Drought Educational Outreach**

Paul: We're supposed to get an inch and half rain on Friday. I spoke with Denise, copied Julie. The town will continue to follow the drought, publish updates in E-Crier. We would do complementary articles, not repeating but extending.

Julie says E-Crier will become leaner and meaner, not rerun articles multiple weeks, in an effort to increase readership.

Dean: Given that, maybe we just have to archive everything we put in the E-Crier on our website as well.

Paul: I went to our Facebook page; I hadn't touched it since the end of November.

Jen: Most writing has been one bin; we have some things on our blog site.

Chuck: I was wondering whether people can go back to previous E-Criers; are they available?

Dean: Yes, they archive E-Criers on the town website.

Paul: It will take three clicks for each one, there's no easy way to get at that stuff.

Katrin: Have a link for more information.

Paul: Even with an inch and a half of rain, we will still be dry.

Katrin: I've asked for an analysis and future plan about water in the town. Hopefully LSC will help with ideas and suggestions. WMUR had a piece tonight about the drought -- that's a good link for sustainability. The worry about a problem for towns with wells.

Paul: Your pond Chuck is a topic. How's the level?

Chuck: All full at the moment, not flowing particularly strong. Not where we should be at this date with respect to the groundwater. Dry fields for this time of year.

Paul: Chuck's a farm resource. His pond informs the committees. Jen, your well?

Jen: It's better, I don't have exact numbers for the current level.

Paul: Do you think you and Rich would have interest in regularly reporting to us what's happening in your dug well?

Jen: We have a shallow well but we're in a valley near the River. It's an old dug well from the sixties. There's silt in the bottom. We were waiting for snow melt and spring rain to raise the level, but that didn't happen this year.

## **E. Other**

### **Strafford Regional Planning**

Chuck: Re the RCWG; they're looking to work with Strafford Regional Planning. Lee has in the past decided not to work with them; I'm hoping the Select Board will reconsider.

Katrin: All we need is someone to bring it up.

Dean: Should we bring it up?

Katrin: Some things have to be brought up by others. I'm learning.

Paul: Do we as a committee want to move this forward?

Chuck: Yes, regional planning is a lot of what sustainability is about, dealing with transportation, pollution. Composting is just one part. It should come from the LSC, not from the RCWG. LSC should recommend we rejoin.

Paul: There are other committees in town that would support rejoining. We could formally request it as an agenda item; invite others to join in a presentation of that agenda item. Or we could ask Julie to put it in the town administrators report, they could think about it before they bring it forward. A letter from us saying the board should revisit it.

Jen: I understand Katrin's position. I agree someone else should bring it up. The question did arise in our deliberation.

Dean: I would be in favor of rejoining but I wouldn't know what to say in the presentation supporting rejoining.

Paul: Why don't we approach it through the town's administrators report? We draft an email to all committees and commissions saying we're interested in having the board discuss, find out if any other committees are interested in supporting the idea.

Katrin: That's a great idea. Julie will research the cost to rejoin.

Dean: I vaguely remember it was \$5000 a year.

Katrin: That will need backing to pass.

Jen: Other commissions would help.

Paul: Someone make a motion that I start a draft, the committee coauthors, and when ready we'll send it to Julie.

Dean moves Paul draft a letter asking the Select Board to explore the possibility of rejoining the Strafford Regional Planning Commission, which the committee will review, then Paul will send to the town administrator, other committees. Chuck 2nd. Roll call vote: 4-0 approved.

#### **IV. New Business**

##### **A. All: Upcoming E-Crier Articles**

Paul: [Continuing drought discussion.] We develop articles time to time.

Katrin: Do we know what the biggest users of water are in Lee? Can we address those specifically? Lawns, laundry? Articles to help people save water.

Paul: We could deal with that.

Jen: The Low Carbon Diet folks also do a Water Stewardship program -- I'll check.

Katrin: If everybody did some of these things we could save water.

Dean: The committee has done a water awareness document.

Jen: I'll report Rich's measurements.

Chuck: I'll report on the pond.

Paul: Chuck, can you do it on video or picture?

Dean: I didn't write a 4Q2020 quarterly recycling review because I never got all the data from Steve. I've requested data through 1Q2021.

Paul: He's out sick right now, coming back next week.

Dean: He tells me our MSW goes to Turnkey.

Paul: Dean, try to move it along. There's plenty of writing we can do about the waste stream. Is the RCWG going to write anything?

Dean: They have committed to doing education things, nothing specific on their writings beyond internal documents.

##### **B. All: Educational Outreach-Reducing the Waste Stream**

##### **C. Chuck: Lee's Trees-Through the Years Chuck: Lee's Trees- Residents Observing and Sharing Favorite Trees Jen: Lee's Trees- Plant a Tree on Arbor Day**

Paul: Jen mentioned planting trees on Arbor Day.

Chuck: I thought we could compare old photographs of places in town 20, 40, 60 years ago with recent pictures.

Katrin: The Historical Society can help with even older photos.

Chuck: I know there are Cartland Rd. pictures way back when.

Paul: Would you be able to find time to talk to the Historical Society?

Chuck: Laurel's been connected with the historical stuff; we can get discussion going that way.

Paul: Over multiple years we can handle things. Start with this year. We could promote it at the Lee fair.

Dean: I thought we could get people involved with now and then photos instead of us doing it all ourselves.

Chuck: Ask if they have old pictures, three year old kids in yards versus now.

Dean: This is the idea of this year's Lee's Trees; get it out in time for the Fair.

Katrin: It's hard to water a tree in the drought right now.

Paul: Chuck will talk to Laurel, we'll work through the historical society and others to create a memory bank of Lee's trees.

Paul: In early March we had a blowdown that got hung up. A maple tree I transplanted split in a thunderstorm. We will lose the other two thirds. I roped it so it wouldn't fall on the blueberries. I hope the neighbors aren't watching.

Dean: Be careful. They don't call them widowmakers for nothing.

#### **D. Other**

Katrin: I understand we recycle things that make sense economically. We don't do certain paper because sometimes it costs more as mixed paper than trash. And sometimes we make money on it. It might cost \$2000 a year more to recycle this product. Should we go beyond "only if it makes money"?

Jen: Glass costs money but can be recycled over and over again.

Katrin: Values-wise sometimes I think every choice is based on the dollars. We can be better.

Jen: Particularly when it comes to boxy milk cartons -- they have plastic and aluminum along with paper. The recycling process is so intense there might be a big carbon footprint.

Katrin: Is there a benefit? Maybe there is a reason to pay a little.

Dean: Mr. Fox used to cost the town of Lee extra money to compost. These days Steve packs the bins so sending food waste to Mr. Fox costs now less than putting it in the MSW (landfill trash). But it is an example of the town approving spending a little extra to help the environment.

Chuck: The RCWG's two focuses are educating people so they don't get things they have to throw out, reduce packaging, local economy and keep asking questions. Where's the technology, there must be some ways to reuse this stuff. Maybe there's not a lot of money to be made. I think compost is one of the things that works into this -- improving the soil, etc. There are some towns that have said that food waste must be composted, and can't be landfilled. One or two towns in Massachusetts, some states. Education and economic issues.

Paul: I'm very much focused on upstream. People need to be educated to make better choices upstream. As a group we're working on both ends.

Dean: I think the costs are an important part of sustainability; if it costs extra money sooner or later it will be cut from the town budget.

Katrin: [re paper] Sometimes it saves money, sometimes not. Was it shortsighted to not recycle it at all because sometimes it's a cost?

Chuck: We're not costing things out where we need to. Some things we think are cheap, but we're not counting the disposal, long term pollution costs. Cheap food policy has been that way.

## **V. Public Comments N/A**

## **VI. Closing Actions**

**A. Future Meeting Dates: 5/11/21, 6/8/21, 7/13/21, 8/10/21**

**B. Agenda Planning for Next Meeting**

[see above]

## **VII. Adjournment**

Paul: Thanks for joining us Katrin.

Dean: I think we should try again to invite people to the next meeting. [Committee concurs]

Chuck: I have a book by Newt Gingrich, A Contract With the Earth, 2007. Ten commitments you can make to protect the environment now.

Jen: The environment needs to be a bipartisan issue.

Chuck moves to adjourn. Jen 2nd. Roll Call vote 4-0. Adjourned 8:49 pm

- Respectfully Submitted, Dean Rubine

## **Appendix - Email Correspondence with Barrington**

Fw: FYI: Recycling plastic in Barrington

To: Chuck Cox, Dean Rubine, Sheltering Rock

Cc: Jennifer Messeder, Paul L. Gasowski

FYI. A second thread from Jen via some Lee folks and some groups in Barrington. This will be discussed under 'Correspondence' at next Tuesday's LSC meeting.

Thanks,

Paul

From: Jennifer Messeder

Sent: Friday, April 2, 2021 12:44 PM

To: Catherine Fisher; sustain <sustain@leenh.org>; Paul L. Gasowski

Subject: Re: FYI: Recycling plastic in Barrington

Hi, Catherine

I'm glad you're well and look forward to hikes once I'm vaccinated (hopefully by mid-May).

I haven't heard anything in Lee like the plastic film challenge that Barrington is doing, but I've copied the Lee Sustainability Committee in case it's something worth our looking into.

Thanks for the heads up, and I'll see you out in nature soon.

Jen

On Fri, Apr 2, 2021 at 8:17 AM Catherine Fisher <catherineckx@gmail.com> wrote:

Good morning Jennifer,

My friend Andrea sent the above to me this morning, wanting to know if Lee had anything similar in the works.

Hope this finds you well - I am exactly two weeks past my second vac., and am beginning to think about trying some socially distanced nature walks...

Catherine

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Andrea LeBlanc

Date: Fri, Apr 2, 2021 at 7:11 AM

Subject: FYI: Recycling plastic in Barrington

To: Catherine Fisher

Hi Catherine, Do you know if Lee is considering this? I would LOVE to be able to recycle plastic bags, etc.

When you are 2 wks. post 2nd vaccination, perhaps we can do some birding trips.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Virginia Schonwald Subject: Re: Recycling plastic in Barrington

Date: April 1, 2021 at 2:13:43 PM EDT

To: [list omitted]

I know! Isn't this great!

Ginna

On 4/1/2021 10:58 AM, Karolina wrote:

Wow!!!!

On Wednesday, March 31, 2021, 12:10 PM, Barrington Recreation Department  
<recreation@barrington.nh.gov> wrote:

Dear Barrington Community,

Spring is certainly in the air! Along with the warm weather, comes plenty of new programs including summer camp, four square tournament and new recycling initiative. Take a look below on how to get involved!

We have partnered with the Barrington Highway Department to bring the TREX Plastic Film Recycling Challenge to our community. This 6-month challenge promotes smart recycling of plastic films in attempt to reach 500lbs worth of plastics. Upon meeting that goal, our community will be gifted a park bench made from those same recycled materials. Starting April 1st, you will find TREX recycling bins at the Transfer Station, the Barrington Recreation offices and the Town Hall. We ask you to refer to the TREX graphic above to see how you can get involved, and start building towards our goal!

Summer Camp Information

Join us at the Barrington town gym on April 24th for our new four square tournament! Come challenge your friends and attempt to conquer each square one by one. This event, though competitive, will focus on staying active and having fun - no

Four Square Information

Sincerely,

Barrington Recreation Staff  
Recreation@Barrington.nh.gov  
603-664-5224

Facebook Twitter Instagram

Barrington Recreation Department | 105 Ramsdell Lane, PO Box 660, Barrington, NH 03825

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Jen Messeder