Green Team Meeting Minutes

October, 2019

Attendees: Missy Woller, Mark Warford, Dan Rain, Pam Macmillen, Gregg Nolte, Erin Engelson, Mike Klugman

Minutes: Mark Warford

The Green Team meeting began with a discussion about Judith Enck’s presentation at the middle school. Pollution from single use plastic is a huge environmental problem. Some of the key statistics regarding the amount of plastic pollution we make, the threats this poses to our oceans, and the reality about “biodegradable” plastics were discussed. The most reasonable starting point would be to address the plastic trifecta; plastic bags, plastic straws, and polystyrene containers.

In our schools we no longer use polystyrene serving containers in our cafeteria and have banned the use of plastic straws. The next step would be for us to expand our recycling to offer plastic bag recycling at each school. Hamagrael and Slingerlands already provide this service.

**Plastic Bag Recycling** - Recyclable plastic bag container have been secured for all schools that would like to participate. A variety of plastic packaging, that cannot be included in single stream recycling, can be recycled separately (flyer attached). All bags are simply dropped off to Hannafords on Delaware Avenue; plastic recycling collection bins are located outside the store for easy drop off. Email Mark for the containers.

Focus Areas Overviews:

**Garbage We Make:**

*Recycling Markets Collapse* - Recycling markets in America are in bad shape. China’s “National Sword” policy means that China will no longer buy recyclable material from the USA. That leaves a glut of material and has tanked markets of all recyclables, including paper. As a result, we are unable to find a vendor that wants to pick up our paper.

*Custodial Paper Recycling* - in order to continue with recycling the district has increased the co-mingled capacity so that custodians can now empty recyclable paper into commingled
dumpsters. This means that the paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, and metal recycling continue in all buildings!! **KUDOS to our building custodial staff!**

* The paper market may rebound soon so want to maintain our current paper separation process.

**Recycling Event**- will be held on **Saturday, November 16th.** (Flyer attached). Textiles, paper shredding, book recycling are all part of this event. **Dan Rain**, Town Recycling Coordinator, coordinates the event with help from the high school’s Environmental Club, led by **Erin Engelson**, and the Delmar Farmer’s Market and the Green Team! We can always use assistance from Green Team members on the day of the event. Contact Dan or Mark for details.

**Lab School Presentations**- in honor of America Recycles Day the students from the Lab School will be visiting all elementary schools to present about the importance of recycling and what items are recyclable and compostable. **Jen Gonyea** will coordinated student release time and **Mark Warford** will work with **Kaitlyn Leo** to get the students prepared. This year we hope to have additional visual props.

**Organic Fertilizer**- O&M is doing a trial run with organic fertilizers on the sports fields. Dan Rain offered well screened town compost to add to the trial. We hope for good results!!

**Re-use of School Supplies**- the high school’s Environmental Club collected “gently used” or never used school supplies at the end of the year. Other schools are encouraged to participate and a clearing house for items would be the next step.

**Energy We Use**

**Solar Panel Project** – The 2.1 megawatt solar array is up and running!! After many years of work the system is generating energy. A ribbon cutting will be planned once some preliminary measurement and verification results from the system are available. Educational kiosk will be placed at the high school. Nice job **Gregg Nolte** and O&M!

**TV Shut Off**- several buildings report that many of the new televisions are left on at night. This is a big waste of energy. **Ray Nardeli**, our Director of Technology, said that there may be an automated shutdown feature that can be engaged. More to come!!

**Conservation Messages**- short reminders are the best way to go. We start this year with Thanksgiving message.

**Electric Car Show**- the annual Drive Electric Week car show was held at the Delmar Farmers market in September. Record number of cars and a great turn out.
Food We Eat

Food Service Upgrades - the district has increased the amount of locally foods that are used and is trying to decrease the meat offerings. Maybe a meatless Monday!!

* A member brought up the lack of vegetarian options. Mike Klugman reached out to the food service director. Alissa Eisner was eager to hear feedback and work with families. Updates to come.

Salads for Kids Day - the annual event went great. Kids ate so much produce there was not enough left to sell at market!! That is great!

Garden Bistro 24 - BC Meals Night went well again this year. Garden Bistro 24 reported increased orders again this year.

School Gardens - all 7th grade students, as part of their Family Consumer Science classes, toured the BCMS gardens and harvested potatoes which they cooked in class. Although less gardens were active this year, big upgrades to Hamagrael’s school garden were made this summer and the Slingerlands gardens had a nice fall crop.

Educational Programs

Pine Allow Arboretum - High school students will once again become the teachers as they lead elementary students through the Pine Hollow Arboretum.

Events Update

Clynk Bags - are still available to help raise funds for the Green Team. Just e-mail Mark Warford for more bags or details!

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 15th 4:00 p.m. at the MS LMC!