

## **Sustainability & Natural Resources Management Board**

**Minutes:** January 9, 2025

### **Attending:**

Community Forest Working Group:	Dave Griswold
Conservation Working Group:	Jane Costlow
Natural Products & Agriculture Working Group:	Chris Carson & Kathy Shaw
Sustainability Working Group:	Brian Cullen
Mayor's Representative:	none
City Council Representative:	Tim Cowan (not in attendance)
Planning Board Representative:	Bob Hayes
Staff:	Phil Crowell
Guests:	None

**Recorder:** Chris Carson

**Call to Order:** 6:00pm

1. **Meeting call to order/introductions**
2. **Minutes** for 10.10.2024 Approved, one abstention
3. **Public Participation:** None
4. **New Member nominations:**
  - a. Conservation Working Group: New members Kim Rand, Lisa Ruccolo
  - b. Natural Products & Ag: Chloe Myera & Grant ? have applied to be members
  - c. PROCEDURAL NOTE: Working Group Chairs should receive notification of meetings and packets as well as the SNRB representatives
5. **City of Auburn Sustainability Initiatives Report** (Phil Crowell)
  - a. Projects:
    - i. Each project Phil detailed focuses on energy efficiency
    - ii. City hall and library were enhanced with new boilers

- iii. New facilities manager will come to next SNRB meeting
- iv. Derrick Bellanger (sp?) was liaison with mechanical services, maintenance of city facilities, purchasing etc. and when he left his responsibilities have been assigned to a new representative (John) and purchasing responsibilities have been moved to an administrative position
- v. Rink floor replacement has improved efficiency
- vi. Salt brine system for PW trucks saves considerable sums annually
- vii. Entire PW fleet and PD fleet is GPS equipped and digitally connected
- viii. Brian Cullen pointed out that measuring raw energy units may be more accurate than reporting cost savings
- ix. EV charging systems are being added (Library, NSBA & PAL)
  - 1. One vendor is doing all of these installs
  - 2. All chargers thus far are free to use
    - a. The return on the investment was too long to allow for pay to use.
    - b. The chargers are paid for by hydropower credits
- x. The city has been addressing the sewage outfalls
  - 1. City has been deciphering where storm flow is intermingling with sewage
  - 2. The city has built a stormwater retention tank shared with Lewiston, costs are shared according to proportional usage
- xi. Composting with schools is proceeding via agri-cycle
- xii. Citywide grant concerning food waste recycling (details?)
- xiii. Solid waste contract potential bidders:
  - 1. Casella
  - 2. Waste management
  - 3. Aroostook
  - 4. Agri-cycle

## **6. Discussion of Sustainability Scorecard and Sustainability position**

### **a. Sustainability Scorecard**

- i. Initially submitted by Dave Griswold
- ii. Jenna Rae has been leading this effort and they have come up with a template
- iii. A road assessment is being done throughout Auburn
  - 1. Kath shaw - could gravel roads be considered more sustainable?
  - 2. Could some roads be reconverted to gravel?

### **b. Community Resilience Partnership**

- i. Auburn has identified our action areas to meet state goals
- ii. The city needs to provide this as a grant update
- iii. Jay Brenchick is working with manufacturers on obtaining energy efficiency credits

**7. Discussion of SNRB meeting with workgroups, city staff**

- a. SNRB will meet at 4:30 on Jan 30th
- b. Jenna Rae will be asked to send a poll to determine best days

**8. Discussion of SNRB structure including working groups**

- a. Does the SNRB need to exist?
- b. Discussions with Working Groups are ongoing
- c. Dave Griswold pointed out that the Working Groups enjoy a level of informality due to their status
- d. The SNRB was formed as a coordinating and communicating body
- e. Dave Griswold says the consensus he heard is there is value to maintain the SNRB
- f. There may be a need to allow for more frequent meetings
- g. Kathy Shaw feels the SNRB is valuable
- h. Brian Cullen pointed out that the senior city leadership can attend SNRB meetings instead of needing to attend committee meetings
- i. City struggles with city representation for workgroups
- j. SNRB was created to enhance communication between working groups and city staff
- k. Potential to meet as needed (more frequent meetings)
- l. Perhaps SNRB receives some city funds and allocates those to workgroups?

**9. Discuss Community Garden Governance Agreements**

- a. Donated materials
- b. A new agreement needs to be made with the new entity (formerly St. Mary's)
- c. Kathy Shaw and Phil Crowell will determine who needs to review the agreements

**10. Reports from Working Groups:**

- a. **Sustainability:** Brian Cullen
  - i. Brian Cullen is setting up Sustainability meeting
- b. **Conservation:** Jane Costlow
  - i. Pollinator Garden did very well and will happen again in 2025
  - ii. Survey of community on priorities
  - iii. City has done a survey of all vacant lands that could be used for gardens
- c. **Forestry:** Dave Griswold
  - i. Meeting next week - establishing priorities for next year
  - ii. Received grant money for the nursery
    - 1. Spots for 250 trees
    - 2. 20 trees will be taken out and planted this year (in lewiston/auburn)
    - 3. Deer fence and signage are being installed

4. \$20,000 grant has been awarded to cover deer fencing around the nursery
- iii. Looking at Project Canopy grants for the upcoming year
  1. Considering 50/50 grants where homeowner covers 50% of cost of planting a tree
  - 2.
- d. **Natural Products & Agriculture:** Kathy Shaw
  - i. Fall Farm & Forest Tour - October 19, 2024. Details on the city website.
    1. Well received
  - ii. 2025 Farm Tour: Planning is commencing
  - iii. Chris Piercy coordinating with local farmers to bring in local produce
  - iv. Chris Piercy now has processing machinery for long term storage
  - v. Land Use Seminar to be held again
  - vi. Maine Farmland Trust held a workgroup concerning farm transitions
  - vii. Municipal Farm Support system - a lifeline for struggling farms

**11. Adjourn. Next Meeting:** January 30, 2025