March 18th, 2019

Finance Committee Meeting

**Present:** Ira Miller, Anil Ramoju, Gordon Gladstone, Patricia-Lee Achorn, Anja Bernier, Edward Philips, Daniel Lewenberg, Arnold Cohen, Charles Goodman, Hanna Switlekowski

**Absent:** William Brack

# Sustainable Sharon Coalition Plastic Bag Reduction – Debbie Tatro

Debbie Tatro presented the Sustainable Sharon Coalition plastic bag reduction.

* Plastics are strong synthetic polymers that do not biodegrade.
* Plastics can only be broken down into smaller pieces by sunlight.
* Plastic bags are made from fossil fuels, a nonrenewable resource.
* Scientists estimate plastic bags take 500+ years to breakdown.
* Plastics are very sticky and bind to other toxins in the environment.
* Global plastic accumulation from 1950-2015 is 8.3 billion metric tons.
* By 2050, 34 billion metric tons of plastic will accumulate.
* 12% of total was incinerated, 79% permanent part of the earth and only 9% recycled.
* In 2018 China no longer accepted U.S. plastics. Plastics now being shipped to other countries with no accountability.
* 300 million metric tons per year of plastic production, equaling 1.5 tons per square mile.
* Too many are consumed locally or globally, with Americans using 500 per year.
* Can be harmful and kill animals and threaten human health.
* Contribute to global climate change.
* Significant economic cost for recycling facilities, municipalities and consumers.
* Paper bags will still be available at check outs.
* Small retailers will have one year to comply, and larger companies will have a year.

\*Visit massgreen.org for more information.

# Bylaw Amendment Change to Select Board – Cheryl Schnitzer

Cheryl Schnitzer and Ellen Boardman presented the bylaw amendment change to Select Board.

* A study found that the lack of women running for offices is due to the lack of encouragement.
* Four women have sat on the board and that should be recognized.
* Language being used is important and all other town committee is not gender-specific.

# Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goal for 2050 – Paul Lauenstein

Jeffrey Xiang, Krishny Patidar, Robby Schnitzer and Siddharth Reddy presented the greenhouse gas emissions goal for 2050.

* Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere cause the earth to warm. Temperatures rise dating back to 1831.
* Sea level in Boston Harbor is almost a foot higher today than a century ago.
* As per the UN, urgent and unprecedented changes are needed within 12 years to prevent global warming.
* Cost effective technology is available to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.
* 112 solar panels at Sharon Middle School have generated 240,000 kilowatt hours of electricity, worth $48,000.
* Sharon replaced 1,655 street lamps with efficient LED lamps that reduced the cost of electricity and provided better illumination.
* Every year Sharon’s award-winning water conservation program saves money and helps protect drinking water quality.
* Using less electricity to pump wells means less greenhouse gas emissions.
* Sharon Power Choice program is coming soon, which will provide more than 14% of clean electricity (as state mandated).
* Towns such as Greensburg, Kansas; Georgetown, Texas; and Aspen, Colorado have also reached the goal of 100% renewable electricity.
* Boston and Somerville pledged to become carbon-neutral by 2050, and Cambridge has committed to net zero buildings by 2040.
* In Lexington, Town Meeting voted to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from all buildings within 25 to 35 years.
* In Concord, Town Meeting voted to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050.
* In Walpole, Town Meeting will soon vote to transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050.

The article will:

* It sets a goal of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions of Sharon homes, businesses, schools and municipal facilities to zero by 2050.
* It urges town officials to take greenhouse gas emissions into consideration when making decisions.
* It calls for systems to monitor and report the town’s greenhouse gas emissions.
* It also urges the Massachusetts legislature to adopt a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050.

# Discuss and Vote Operating and Capital Articles

**MOTION:** by Anja Bernier **SECONDED:** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED:** 10-0-0 in favor of approval of Article 6: Capital Outlay for $8,963,555.

**MOTION:** by Ira Miller **SECONDED:** by Anja Bernier **VOTED:** 10-0-0 in favor of approval of Article 15: Rescission of authorized unissued debt for $13,928,733.51.

**MOTION:** by Anja Bernier **SECONDED:** by Gordon Gladstone **VOTED:** 10-0-0 in favor of approval of Article 23: Citizen Petition-Plastic Waste Reduction Bylaw Amendment.

**MOTION:** by Edward Philips **SECONDED:** by Gordon Gladstone **VOTED:** 10-0-0 in favor of approval of Article 24: Citizen Petition-Change Board of Selectman to Select Board Bylaw Amendment.

**MOTION:** by Anja Bernier **SECONDED:** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED:** 10-0-0 in favor of approval of Article 25: Citizen Petition-Resolution for Sharon to Adopt a Goal of Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions to Zero by 2050.

# Liaison Updates:

* 1. **Standing Building Committee – Gordon Gladstone**
* School Building Committee will vote tomorrow to recommend the next submission to MSBA.
* The library is not in the historic district and therefore the design was changed.
* $500,000 in savings due to brick decrease.

# Documents Distributed Since the Last Meeting

## Library Current Conditions Invitation

* 1. **Executive Salary Increase Table (email)**
  2. **Article 5 Budget FY 2020**
  3. **Sudbury Budget and Financial Policies**

# Minutes to be voted: March 11, 2019

**MOTION:** by Anja Benier to approve the March 11th, 2019 minutes **SECONDED:** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED:** 10-0-0.

# Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair in 48 hours

* Revisions are due by April 1st, 2019 and write ups are due by April 21st, 2019.
* The next meeting will be held on March 28th, 2019 to vote articles.
* VisGov link will be added to the introductions and FY2020 will be updated prior to town meeting.

# Adjournment

**MOTION:** by Daniel Lewenberg to adjourn **SECONDED:** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED:** 10-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm