

**MINUTES**  
**CHESTER CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**December 15, 2023 – 7:00 PM Senior Center, 81 Laroe Road, Chester**

**Attendance:**

**In-person:** Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn, Jane Dysinger, E J Szulwach, Brandon Holdridge

**On-Zoom:** Helen Flavin, Grayson Sussman Squires (tried to join, passcode not included)

**Approval of Minutes**

On a motion offered by B. Holdridge and seconded by J. Dysinger to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on November 17, 2023.

4 in favor/ 0 opposed: MOTION CARRIES

**Homework**

- A. We would like to update our member contact information. Please email Elizabeth with your phone number (indicate cell or home).
- B. Please review the attached “Ideas” spreadsheet from Jane if possible before our next meeting on 1/19. Think about and indicate under the Priority Column whether each idea, in your opinion, should be High, Medium, or Low. We will discuss the priority ranking at our next meeting.
- C.

**New Business**

- A. E. Barrett-Zahn made a recommendation to the group for the need to have a chairperson to help guide and focus the group work. She nominated Jane Dysinger to fill that role. We briefly discussed with the attending members and felt that a vote could only be taken with a quorum. Therefore, a proposed vote is set for the January 19, 2024 meeting. At that time, we can consider other nominations and head to a vote. Please let Elizabeth know before our Jan. 19th meeting if you want to run for chairperson.
- B. The group, again, discussed a proposed name change to the Conservation Advisory Council. Please see the attached sheet for the CAC description. We will vote on this name change at the meeting on January 19, 2024. Then, send a formal request to the Town Board to add this to the January 24, 2024 agenda.
- C. The group discussed developing a plan for Earth Day (April 22, 2024). Potential ideas include cleanups, tree plantings, and collaborations with the Green team.
- D. There was a discussion at this meeting about having committee representation at both the Town Board and Planning Board meetings. At our next meeting, we will discuss this further and provide a calendar for Town Board and Planning Board meetings along with a sign-up sheet for meeting/s you would be able to attend.

**Committee Reports**

- A. EJ Szulwach visited the Police Station, Highway Department, Town Hall, and Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center (SLPAC) to take inventory of light usage. EJ observed many lights on in rooms that were not being used in all locations. He discussed the importance of being fiscally conservative in each location when considering energy usage across town buildings. He asked for recommendations and was told by Walt Popailo, SLPAC director, that they would like to use LED bulbs for the stage lighting but that the expense was prohibitive.

The group will review prospective grant opportunities for replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs. EJ will continue discussing how cost-effective energy reductions can be achieved within town locations.

- B. Jane Dysinger reported that the Chronicle reporter has agreed to wait until after our January meeting to write an article about the formation and focus of our group. We have requested this delay to develop our goals and group focus before reporting to the Chronicle.

Jane created an Ideas Spreadsheet with contacts, web links, and more. This brainstorming list has come from our members' interests. We will rank these "ideas" by priority: high, medium, and low as we begin to match our interests with the goals of the Committee.

- C. Justin George reached out to different town departments regarding gas/electric vehicles and has heard back from the Water and Park/Recreation Depts. (see attached Member Report)
- D. Susannah Devine (summarized from email) reported on adding the Town Website and the Trash Collection Contract. She reached out to Linda A. Zappala, Town Clerk. (see attached Member Report)
- E. Jane reviewed a few grant possibilities from the Hudson Valley Regional Council Grants list. Some grants have imminent or expired submission dates, but we can also get a sense of what opportunities are out there and what we can consider for future applications. Two grants of particular interest were:
  - a. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (deadline 4/1/24)
  - b. Municipal Funding for Food Scraps (rolling deadline 5/3/24)
  - c. NYS Green Innovative Grant Program (rolling deadline)Brandon will serve as the point person for grants. We should let Brandon know when our Committee finds or reads about a grant that would support our projects or the town's interests.

#### **Next steps**

- A. Continue to pursue creating a committee website linked to the Town Website. Consider making this interactive, informational, and instructive. Currently, the Senior Center and SLPAC have links on the Town's site for their own website. We are looking for a webmaster who would take on the responsibility of creating, maintaining, and populating the website. We will need Board approval for the creation of a linked website on the Town's webpage. The request should be made for the January 10, 2024 Town Board Meeting.
- B. A contact person list will be created. This list should continue to grow as members find connections and contacts for us to reach out to about projects and possibilities.
- C. Brainstorm ideas for an Earth Day event, i.e., tree planting, cleanups, and collaboration with the Green Team project – Trex Challenge. (See attached information)
- D. Be sure to have dedicated space for the CCAC and Green Team at the Sugar Loaf Festivals. (Elizabeth will reach out to the Chamber of Commerce).
- E. We will request a name change (Conservation Advisory Council) at the January 24, 2024 meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM**

#### **Next Meeting:**

Friday, January 19, 2023– 7:00 PM – Senior Center

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86142846486?pwd=Z3hVN1Foa2ZibitYnVpCVzJYajNVdz09>

**Meeting ID: 861 4284 6486**

**Passcode: 400818**

