



Harvard Climate Initiative Committee

Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2023

The meeting convened at 7:30 pm in person at Upper Town Hall meeting Room and on Zoom

Members Present: Ellen Sachs Leicher, Sharon McCarthy, Deborah O'Rourke, Rich Marcello, Lucy Wallace, Pat Natoli, Staci Donahue

Guest: One present on Zoom but not visible or name noted

1- Approval of minutes:

Minutes for October 26, 2023 moved by Deborah O'Rourke and 2nd by Lucy Wallace – approved unanimous.

2 - Liaison CAP Updates

HEAC liaison will be Ellen moving forward as Brian Smith resigned from HCIC due to time constraint issues.

Short discussion of breaking away from the model of having board members from other committees also serving on HCIC as being on multiple boards at the same time has been hard on volunteers. However, it has been essential for communication across committees as there is no cross-committee communication coming from Town Hall. HCIC members will be liaisons to other committees in accordance with the climate action plan needs.

3 – CAP review for presentation to Select Board on December 19, 2023.

Ellen shared a slide deck showing the original CAP presentation slides for SB with amendments to show progress to date toward the goals listed in the CAP.

The team revised some points and adjusted wording on some of the achievements. Items that have been completed will be highlighted so that in the presentation it's clear where progress is being made.

The team also suggested that the SB and Town Administrator would benefit from knowing the cost for Town when repairs are forced to be made due to climate driven events. The recent flooding in Leominster was cited as an event we could put a cost to that is a very close to home. The hope was that showing the case for time and preventative investment in the CAP could prove to save the Town money in the future. Pat may be able to get photos of the event and some information from Leominster to help bolster the argument.

It was recommended the entire CAP of goals and actions update be put In the Select Board packet and only highlights be presented at the Select Board meeting so that there is time to discuss the concerns and needs of HCIC.

Long discussion on volunteer and lack of volunteer base to move projects and tasks on the CAP forward. Without town staff support there is a need to find a way to attract and more efficiently use any volunteers that we can get. One suggestion was to break some tasks into easy-to-manage chunks of time. Some tasks can be handled by a short time (non-board member) volunteer. It was also suggested that we market ourselves more as needing more volunteers. This will be easier once we have some tasks broken out that can be posted.

4 – Next meeting is back to fully remote Zoom meeting – Dec. 14, 7:30PM

Move to adjourn at 9:00 pm by Sharon McCarthy; 2nd by Lucy Wallace; all in favor.

Submitted by
Stacia Donahue, committee member