

Infrastructure & Energy Committee
Minutes
January 23, 2023

Infrastructure & Energy Committee Members present: (On Zoom)

Peter Doyle, Chair; Jane Ward, Vice Chair, Kathryn Hautanen, John Solomon, Rob Wilson

Infrastructure & Energy Committee Members absent:

Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)

Gordon Starr, Councilor, Cindy Dabkowski, Administrative Assistant, Andrew Todoroff Cape Cod Challenger Club

Call to Order:

Peter Doyle, Chair called the January 23, 2023 meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee (IEC) to order at 5:01 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely to avoid group congregation.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion moved by Jane Ward to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2022 Infrastructure and Energy Committee meeting. 2nd by Peter Doyle, five members in attendance voted affirmatively, motion carried.

New Business

Andrew Todoroff, Cape Cod Challenger Club answers questions about the food waste processing program. Andrew Todoroff introduces himself to the committee. He explains that the Cape Cod challenger Club is a nonprofit out of Osterville. That shares the building with Cape Cod Collaborative, a special needs school. Back in 2007 we purchased a food dehydrator. Placed it in Barnstable High School with the cooperation of the Environmental Science Department and the special needs department and we trained them to use the machine. They worked together to collect the food waste, which is about 100 pounds a day of food waste at that time. So figure 100 pounds and 180 days a year you're at about 18,000 pounds a year. We dehydrated it for a few years trying to figure out what to do with it. We felt strongly that we could make some sort of fertilizer for plant food out of it. We sent it away to University of Maine for the nitrogen, phosphorus potassium value. And then we played around with different recipes over the next couple of years we've worked with in Cape Cod Extension, and the Master Gardeners Program. We worked with a small farm as well. And finally, last year really dialed in our formula and we're happy with. We now have three products that we produce a hydrangea fertilizer, and an all-purpose fertilizer, and a tomato fertilizer. Essentially the goal for the project was to reduce food waste and to create some jobs or job training for the special needs population. The third part of our goal was to generate some revenue to fund our nonprofit we provide three activities for both youth and adults with disabilities year round at our facility in Osterville. Now in 2023 our products will be in all the Aubuchon hardware stores in New England. Andrew Todoroff figures produced about 100,000 pounds this year. And explains they are maxed out what we can do we have three machines now one at Barnstable High School, one at our offices at collaborative school in Osterville and then we just placed another machine in Monomoy High

School. They're going to work between the special needs department and the environmental science and they have a little culinary program as well. Andrew Todoroff states the ratio of food waste is about 10 to 1. For every 10 pounds you put in you end up with about one pound dehydrated. Infrastructure and Energy Committee members ask "Is there anything useful? Just as the dehumidified product? Andrew Todoroff replies we tried to not add anything. The one study that we saw stated if you could control the food that you put in there, you can pelletize it and make it a fish. Now, the Fisher fishery people who we spoke to said that's like a whole different set of nutrients they would test for whereas agriculturally, you're testing for nitrogen, phosphorus. It was easier to do go after the agriculture application. A lot of people don't know what to do with it. You can spread some on your lawn. But the problem is if you generate a lot of food waste. If you add too much to your lawn, you can actually end up hurting the lawn. So it's interesting. Committee members ask is there a lot of nitrogen or phosphorus, what is the pH I of the stuff that comes out originally? Andrew Todoroff states the pH actually comes out very low which is why we developed a hydrangea formula – hydrangeas like a low pH. The nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium over a number of tests is really pretty consistent it is about 201 and we raise that up to 404. Andrew Todoroff explains the vision initially was that the kids from the environmental science would partner with the special needs program kids and that that worked really well for about two years. It has a lot to do with the interests of the students. It ebbs and flows. Committee members ask do you also collect food waste from restaurants. Andrew Todoroff explains the majority of our food waste comes from Spaulding Rehab Hospital in Sandwich. We do collect from a few restaurants in Osterville. Committee members ask is that a continuous machine or a batch machine? Andrew Todoroff explains it is a batch machine. A cycle on our small machine is about nine hours and on our larger machine that cycle is 17 hours. The difference is 80 pounds in the small machine versus about 260 pounds in a large machine. Committee members ask who pays the electric bill. Andrew Todoroff answers right now the school covers the cost of the electricity. We specific amount but we ran some tests at the school and the amount of electricity we use was like the same amount as a refrigerator. The schools said don't worry about it. Which is interesting you know, we were concerned that these machines had a large draw of electricity and they really don't?

Old Business

John Solomon goes over the recycling subcommittee recommendations letter. John Solomon states he is ready to present to the Town Council. Gordon Starr will facilitate getting on the Town Council Agenda. He will also let Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members know the date so they can attend.

Members discussed going to the Transfer Station and talking with citizens and encouraging food waste composting.

Members continue to discuss ways to inform Town Councilors and educate citizens on the importance of composting and food waste reduction. Members discuss using grant money for education on the topic.

The next meeting is February 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM

Adjourn

Peter Doyle asks for a motion to adjourn meeting. Jane Ward makes motion to adjourn the January 23, 2023 meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee at 6:21 PM, 2nd by Kathryn Hautanen; five members in attendance voted affirmatively.

Next Meeting: February 13, 2023 at 5:00PM | Remote Zoom Meeting

Upcoming Meetings: February 27, 2023 March 13, 2023 March 27, 2023

Documents and Exhibits

Handout 1: Agenda, January 23, 2023

Handout 2: Draft Infrastructure and Energy Committee Minutes December 12, 2022

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Dabkowski