

**TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021
5:30 P.M.**

Members Present:	Chairperson-Brooke Kornegay, Vice-Chairperson Benjamin Scarboro, John Prickett, Lee Ball, Joan Brook, Margie Mansure and Terry Cirone
Town Council Liaisons Present:	Dustin Hicks
Staff Members Present:	John Ward-Town Manager, George Santucci-Sustainability & Special Projects Manager and Marlene Crosby-Committee Secretary
Others Present:	

Call to Order

Chairperson Brooke Kornegay called the Boone Sustainability Committee, virtual meeting via WebEx, a video conferencing software, to order on January 14, 2021 at 5:34 p.m.

Introduction of Town of Boone Sustainability and Special Projects Manager

Mr. John Ward, Town Manager introduced Mr. George Santucci as the new Boone Sustainability and Special Projects Manager. Mr. Ward said that Mr. Santucci started his new position with the Town at the beginning of 2021. Mr. Santucci previously worked with the New River Conservancy and served as their President since 2005 with a board of sixteen full-time staff. Mr. Santucci has experience in grant writing and has written fifteen grants each year that resulted in funding ranging from \$500,000.00 to \$2.5 Million dollars. Mr. Santucci has experience working with local, state and federal governments through the New River watershed involving North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Mr. Santucci has been instrumental in the creation of the New River State Park. Many of the lands and streams that Mr. Santucci has worked on protecting all flow into the nations brand New River Gorge National Park and Preserve. Mr. Santucci has restored over 80 plus miles of riparian buffer and planted over 650,000 trees. Mr. Santucci has developed the Blue Ridge Conservation Corp through 4-H and the Extension Service. Some of Mr. Santucci's prior experience has been as an adjunct professor at Appalachian State University.

Mr. Ward noted that later in this meeting Mr. Santucci will cover some of the topics that he has been working on for the Town of Boone.

Mr. Ward explained that the work of the Sustainability Committee will be moved from the Planning and Inspections Department to Mr. Santucci, who is a central unified figure that will work directly with the Town Manager to implement the concept of Sustainability forward. Mr. Ward further explained that this way, no one Town department will be trying to work with all of the other Town departments on Sustainability type topics.

Mr. Ward pointed out that as the Sustainability Committee works with the Town and towards their Sustainability goals, the main use of Town funds will need to be tied back to the 2030 plan.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Scarboro to adopt the agenda as presented.

Vote:-

Aye – All

Nay- None

The motion passed.

Sustainability and Special Projects Manager Project Update

Mr. George Santucci, Boone Sustainability and Special Projects Manager informed the committee of the projects that he is currently working on for the Town of Boone and they are listed below:

- Winklers Creek Storm water/Restoration Plan – this is a study of the Hodges Winkler, and Boone Creeks’ corridors from Hwy 105 to Hwy 321 (Blowing Rock Rd). The plan will identify storm water improvements that will reduce flooding. It will also identify restoration needs to stabilize eroding streambanks.
- Boone Creek Daylighting Feasibility Study – this study will propose ways to daylight Boone Creek through the Peacock Parking Lot on the Appalachian State University Campus. The new channel will carry a 100-year flood event within its banks. This will reduce flooding impacts on site and downstream.
- South Fork Restoration – This project will restore degraded stream bank and riparian area on the South Fork along the Bolick and Brookshire properties. It will reconnect the South Fork with its floodplain reducing flood impacts. It will also create a new 30-acre woodland on the Bolick property that will provide much needed carbon sequestration for Boone.
- Wooded Tract Inventory – Mr. Santucci is inventorying all woodlands owned by Boone. This inventory will include the newly created 30 acres on the Bolick property, 20 acres at Jimmy Smith WWTP, 25 acres at the WTP, and 70 acres at the Boone reservoir. Mr. Santucci will continue to add to this inventory. The current inventory could sequester as much as 429 tons of carbon based on International Society of Arborists 2.6 tons/acre estimate.
- Street Light LED replacement – Mr. Santucci is working with Mr. Todd Moody, Deputy Director of the Town of Boone Public Works Department to secure the funds that allow him to replace all street lights with LED’s.

Approval of Minutes

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Member Prickett to approve the December 10, 2020 meeting minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Election of Officers

Chairperson Kornegay opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chairperson for the year of 2021. Member Ball and Member Brook nominated Chairperson Kornegay to continue in the position of Chairperson for the year of 2021. Chairperson Kornegay accepted the nomination.

With no other nominations for the position of Chairperson, Chairperson Kornegay closed the floor for nominations.

Motion and Vote:

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Member Brook to re-elect Chairperson Brooke Kornegay for the position of Chairperson for 2021.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Kornegay opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson for 2021. Member Ball nominated Vice-Chairperson Benjamin Scarboro to continue in the position of Vice-Chairperson for the year of 2021. Vice-Chairperson Scarboro declined the nomination noting that he did not feel like he would be able to fulfill all of the responsibilities of the position or attend all of the meetings in 2021.

While the floor was still open for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson, Member Brook and Member Ball nominated Member John Prickett for the position of Vice-Chairperson for 2021. Member Prickett accepted the nomination.

With no other nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson, Chairperson Kornegay closed the floor for nominations.

Motion and Vote:

Member Brook made a motion, seconded by Member Ball to elect Member John Prickett for the position of Vice-Chairperson for the year of 2021.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Energy Efficiency Reports:

Public Benefits Program

Chairperson Kornegay explained that at the last meeting the Sustainability Committee had identified Public Benefits Programs as an energy efficiency goal. She further explained that the Sustainability Committee had agreed to go on the two websites that the Planning Staff had emailed to the Sustainability Committee and pick three topics to discuss at the next meeting. The websites listed in the email were: Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency – DSIRE www.dsireusa.org and Home www.aceee.org.

Chairperson Kornegay talked about Zero Energy Building (ZEB) an energy-efficient building where, on a source energy basis, the actual delivered energy is less than or equal to the on-site renewable exported energy. She explained that all new construction would produce as least as much energy as they use, with a combination of high energy efficiency with solar or other renewable energy systems to meet average building loads. She talked about Ultra Low Energy (ULE) construction making Zero Energy Building (ZEB) much more feasible. She noted that the contractors would have to be trained and certified to do this type of construction. She also noted that there would need to be financing available for homeowners for energy efficiency improvements. She added that policies would require all new buildings and homes be built to these standards.

Member Ball pointed out that he feels that the Sustainability Committee needs to get clarity on what can and cannot be done on the encouraging on any kind of standard above and beyond North Carolina building code. He talked about fast tracking the permitting process as an incentive for a variety of green building and energy efficiency standards like Energy Star. He said he thinks that this type of permitting is very doable.

Member Ball talked about the Town having its own incentives like the water closets replacements that were previously done. He said this type of program could be expanded into maybe a rebate program for other energy type measures that could be implemented by the Town residents. He talked about more expensive type energy efficiency measures which could include HVAC and weatherization. He said a lot of these types of measures are run through utilities and this is why New River Light and Power Company do not have a lot of interest in these types of programs. He said that there are examples where municipalities have offered them to Town residents. He talked about the possibility of applying for grants to help with these types of programs. He said that external funds might need to be raised for the more expensive type energy efficiency measures.

Member Mansure pointed out that in the past the Watauga County Cooperative Extension had received some funding for home energy audits. She said the homeowners attended workshops to learn about weatherization procedures and other low energy costs things that can be done in their homes. She said the homeowners that participated in the workshops were qualified for a home energy audit. She talked about how applying for grants can help homeowners do small weatherization projects in their homes.

Member Ball explained to Mr. Santucci that the Sustainability Committee is aware that the ideas of the Sustainability Committee do not support the goals of the Town for carbon neutrality. Member Ball said the Sustainability Committee understands the vision between the Towns' goals to work with the Town departments and the Sustainability Committee's goals to work with the community. He said the Sustainability Committee has also talked about the Sustainability Committee's responsibility that is above and beyond the Town's goal to have an impact in the Town. He also explained that the Sustainability Committee supports both the goals of the Town and the Sustainability Committee.

Mr. Ward informed the Sustainability Committee that the Town has already started using a grant from the **North Carolina Environmental Quality Conservation Program** that provides funding to local governments and public schools. He noted that said funding has already helped with the Town's largest user of energy which is the Waste-Water Treatment Plant. He said a full assessment of said plant was completed by professional engineers paid for by that grant. He said this information from the assessment has been presented to Town Council. He said that funding has already been implemented by Staff for about 40 to 50 percent of the recommendations and through funds that they had in their internal maintenance line item. He said his goal is to work with Mr. Santucci to utilize the said program to do other facilities other than the Police Department because it is for sell. He noted that not including the Police Department helps him and Mr. Santucci to narrow their focus on the 2030 goal.

Mr. Ward informed the Sustainability Committee that he has been working with the International City County Managers Association to have SolSmart a national designation program that recognizes local governments for spurring solar market growth to do a complete review of the Town of Boone's Unified Development Ordinance. He said that the UDO does not mention solar or solar panels or the installation of them. He noted that the Town did not have a process to permit solar projects before and the fees for it was not listed specifically in the fee schedule.

Mr. Ward talked about the first solar array that was put in the Town located in the parking lot on North Depot Street across from Lost Province Brewing Company. He said this solar array includes a vehicle charging station which is the one of two electric charging stations in the Town.

Mr. Ward talked about how he came to the decision to not charge for the use of the vehicle electric charging stations. He said first of all the Town wants to encourage people to use the said charging stations. He said secondly, after he reviewed the numbers' he found it was going to cost the Town more to charge a person to use it because of the number of Staff that it would have to be involved in it before it was processed. He confirmed that the electric vehicle charging station is free to the public.

Mr. Ward talked about some upcoming discussions on net-metering which are scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021 Council meeting with representatives from New River Light & Power Company. Mr. Ward encouraged the Sustainability Committee to watch online the said Council meeting to hear the net-metering discussions.

Mr. Ward talked about taking the proposed SolSmart recommendations and updating the UDO. Mr. Ward suggested while the UDO is being reviewed and a fee schedule is being created for the proposed changes to the UDO. He suggested moving forward with installing solar on the roofs that meets all life safety requirements and exempt the homeowner from the permit fees. He said this way we are not trying to generate dollars from one source to subsidize another source. He said the way to encourage the solar installations is to say that it is free to install it. He said that this would be an incentive to encourage property owners to install solar. He suggested streamlining the solar installation process and making it easier for the property owners to want

to be involved in solar. He said that currently there are 18 solar installations in the Town of Boone.

Mr. Ward said that there are funds available for solar installations. He said that there is a possibility that a revolving loan fund might can be created which could help the Town partner with the utility providers. He suggested that the Town possibility take ownership of this part of the process which would be helpful rather than wait on others to develop this type of advancement that the Town is looking for with the solar installations. He explained that if the Town were to become involved and they could create the revolving loan fund and tie it to economic development and job creation with the certified solar contractors. He said he feels really confident that eventually the revolving loan fund can be created to help fund solar installations without the need for a lot of other funds. He noted that there is also the possibility of working with some of the Town's State partners on the solar installations.

Member Ball talked about green building incentives programs or fee alteration for fast tracking the solar installation process for either energy efficient or green buildings with energy star ratings. Member Ball asked if it would require a UDO change to include these types of things. Mr. Ward said he did not think that it would require a proposed change to the UDO, but it might need to be incorporated into the fee structure. Mr. Ward explained that the UDO meets the minimum requirement in the building code.

Mr. Ward said before Mr. Santucci's Sustainability position was filled, Mr. Ward said that he was invited to be a part of the City's Initiative and he has been attending those meetings. He noted that Mr. Santucci had recently attended the last initiative meeting. Mr. Ward said one of the goals of the City Initiative is to work with the Building Code Council to introduce more energy efficiency code because we are far behind what has been adopted for North Carolina. He said until it is adopted at the State level and incorporated into the building codes, we cannot require some of the ideas that are above and beyond but the ideas can be incentivized.

Vice-Chairperson Prickett asked if there would be any advantage to encouraging property owners in the Town to consider Geo-Thermal heating and cooling in their facilities. Mr. Ward responded and noted that one of his goals on the Bolick property is to propose a variety of different heating and cooling systems that can be utilized. He said a lot of the geo-technical review has already been done that he specifically requested to be done on the said site. Mr. Ward said that with Blue Ridge Electric Company being located next door to the Bolick property that it might open the door for Blue Ridge Electric Company to partner with the Town and use the Bolick property facility as a test case and an educational exhibit for this type of system. Mr. Ward said that Mr. Santucci will be working on this topic.

Member Ball said for the Bolick property project to be a zero energy site, the geo-thermal system will have to be a part of the mix of heating and cooling systems being utilized on site. Mr. Ward noted that there is plenty of space on the said property to explore the possible use of utilizing a geo-thermal system.

Member Scarboro asked about grants and incentive programs for home improvements. He wanted to know if there was a way obtain the data and to utilize energy usage from residential homes to better target areas of energy usage without any type of means testing. Mr. Ward responded and he said he has seen this type of thing done in one other place and they used averages using the current oven being used and compared over time to a high efficiency oven. He said they did not use point and time data.

Member Scarboro talked about a set up where there was a grant that supported someone going to a residential home and letting the homeowner know that according to their energy usage their oven or hot water heater is using a lot of energy and the Town could replace it. He said it would be a way to address the old appliances and to help reduce the amount of energy being used. Mr. Ward said that he does not think the utility companies would be able to provide the data usage without consent.

Mr. Ward talked about the Town's past experience with the toilet rebate program. He said the Town was only able to grant so many permits per year based on water availability. He said the major factor that impacted the amount of water that was available was the yearly funded rebate program where people would install new toilets which would help new development until the new water intake was installed. He said this is one thing that might be looked at and targeted for possibility some older apartments and neighborhoods in Town. He said we could focus our educational effort's and help some of the lower income residents and reduce energy use at the same time.

Chairperson Kornegay asked if any formal action should be taken on any of this discussion so far in this meeting. Mr. Ward noted that in this meeting he was wanted to share some of the topics that are going on with Sustainability in the Town. He said if the Sustainability Committee wouldn't mind giving him and Mr. Santucci some time to refine some of the information, he and Mr. Santucci would try to keep the Sustainability Committee fully in the loop. Mr. Ward also noted that he would like to use the expertise of the Sustainability Committee to better refine the ideas and to get the ideas to the level of implementation in the Town.

NEW BUSINESS

Sustainable Transportation/Bike Share Program

Member Ball said for quite some time the University has been trying to figure out a ride-share program. He said the University would like to have a ride-share program that the Town of Boone could potentially implement. He said they would like to have only one vendor for said program in Town, if possible, which would make sense for a small Town.

Member Ball talked about the number of challenges that have delayed them in pursuing the ride-share program. He said some of the challenges have been safety and the model of bike. He said a number of years ago, the University had yellow bikes with their own program. He said the University has again looked at doing their own program; but they do not have the full support of their legal team on it.

Member Ball explained that in larger cities, when an application is downloaded to a smart phone to use a scooter or bike, he said all of the liability falls on the user.

Member Ball said that he would like to see hubs used to store the bikes or scooters. He said if they are not stored back at the proper location, the user will be charged for it.

Member Ball said the Town and the University looked at working on an RFP together, but they did not have the full support of their legal teams. He said the University worked on an RFP for themselves. He said it is almost completed and ready to be sent for approval for mostly the safety part of it and the number of bikes or scooters to have in the initial deployment. He said the University is looking at a pilot deployment by the fall of August of 2021. He said that he was not sure if they are doing both scooters and bikes. He said the University can govern the speed on the scooters on different parts of the University campus. He said that e-bikes are deployed in their initial employment in other cities. Member Ball said they can govern the speed of the scooters and they can remove the batteries from the e-bikes. He said that there is a lot of interest in the e-bikes because of the topography in this area.

Member Ball talked about having safe corridors for the scooters and e-bikes to travel on. He talked about being able to cross the major corridors and the creeks and connecting to the Boone Greenway. He said this type of connector is needed very badly and it would transform this community in so many different ways.

Member Brook said she is in support of the proposed ride-share program. She asked if there have been any conversations regarding “pedestrian only” sidewalk paths. She talked about Howard Street being an appropriate place for the scooters and e-bikes used and to be parked. Member Ball noted that this topic of conversation would be better addressed to Mr. Ward and Mr. Santucci. He noted that Faculty Street in the future could be an ideal one-way pedestrian pathway along with human powered vehicles like scooters and e-bikes on one side and with other vehicles going one way towards Hwy 105.

Mr. Ward said that there have been previous discussions on pedestrian pathways. He said the largest thing that has come out of these past discussions is the work being done at the hospital. He said a greenway path is being added along Deerfield Road and will connect to the health and sciences building path to the Greenway parking lot on Deerfield Road. He explained that while this health and sciences building was being constructed that the Town required that they put in a ten-foot wide multi-use path that connects to the Boone Greenway.

Mr. Ward said there is an adopted Middle Fork Greenway plan. He said when they reach Phase II through the old farm property with said greenway, they will also preserve a corridor that will allow a connection to the Middle Fork Greenway.

Mr. Ward said the most recent suggestion regarding, to bridge Hwy 105 has been brought to the Town Council by Harmony Lane and his group promoting it and looking at some of the potential greenway corridor connections that would go down to greenway to tie into the existing greenway behind Coyote Kitchen. He said the Town has an easement behind the Publix grocery store that would allow for a greenway in that area. He said the newest easement is from Burrell Street and Rivers Street all the way to the County Complex. He said that he hopes to take the greenway up

behind the new Rivers Walk Development. He said the Town used greenway funds and paved the greenway through this area. He noted this section of the greenway will connect to the Howard Street pathway.

Mr. Ward said that he hopes that with the new parking deck construction the stream will be day lighted to allow for centralized parking which would be available for anyone to bike or walk on the pedestrian pathway while in the area.

Mr. Ward said he hopes to take some of the surface parking lots like Clawson-Burnley Park, Queen Street lot and Dan'l Boone Park lot and include them in an expansion or hub for the proposed ride-share program.

Informal Discussion/Other Matters

Discussion ensued on the work of the Transportation Committee. Chairperson Kornegay had asked for some of the Transportation Committee Town Staff to brief the Sustainability Committee on what they had worked on. Mr. Ward offered to attend this meeting and give a brief summary of the work of the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Ward began by informing the Sustainability Committee about the different grants that require certain designations and certifications for a Town to have a Transportation Committee. He noted that the Transportation Committee had not met since January of 2020 and they used to meet more often.

Mr. Ward said the Transportation Committee worked on transportation, safety and walkability. He also noted that the Transportation Committee had a large component in the Boone skate park.

Mr. Ward began in January of 2017 noting the work of the Transportation Committee: they worked on the Eastbrook and Westbrook corridor and up to Howard's Knob and commented on the lack of sidewalks in that area, the new complete street on New Market Boulevard, the center islands on the upper section of New Market Boulevard closest to Hardin Park School which have trees planted in that area which is opposite to the striped island which included adding water-filled barricades, lowered the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph, bicycle and pedestrian plan with the inclusion of the greenway, endorsed Bodenheimer Drive in the bike and pedestrian plan, responsible for the "Watch for Me" North Carolina educational campaign, applied for the walk-friendly designation through the State of North Carolina, were responsible for the Walk Boone Map pamphlet to encourage the public to learn about our parks and trails, members of the Transportation Committee partnered with the Planning Department and Police Department to hold the annual bike rodeo which occurs in September at Hardin Park School which has been a growing event over the years, helped with the installation of new cross walks around Town, they started a new committee called the "Cruzin Committee" which was focused mostly on skateboarding and they worked with Council Member Sam Furguele on making sure that skateboarding is allowed in Town which led to the changing of the ordinance regarding skateboarding.

Mr. Ward said in 2018, they worked on the super street program that was being discussed for Hwy 105 which was ceased by the Town Council for a variety of issues.

Mr. Ward said in 2019, they worked on the Hwy 194 sidewalks so the Town could connect the sidewalks on Hwy 421 from about Hardees Restaurant to Hardin Park School, they worked with Speedway, Mike Inlands Seafood and others on donating easements for this area. Mr. Ward said the Perkinsville Baptist Church submitted an expansion plan that includes installing a sidewalk in front of the church and on up most of that corridor. Mr. Ward said that North Carolina Department of Transportation has dedicated \$50,000.00 for a mass-armed crossing for this area. He said there is some difficulty with a couple of easements, but he will present them to the Town Council next month.

Mr. Ward said there is a short-term improvement plan with NCDOT, he said this is where a road and a trail project are picked. He said the second trail project that has been picked and almost has been funded and is moving into the land acquisition stage is the greenway expansion project on Hwy 421, he said it would begin at the greenway at Brookshire park and bring the greenway all the way up Hwy 421 to Grove Street past Bubbles car wash on Hwy 421 connecting that corridor back into Town and into the sidewalk system. He said if there is an issue with connecting back into the University sidewalk system, this might could be an alternative to connecting in from another direction.

Mr. Ward said they worked on a connection from Brookshire park to the Bolick property that will allow for an expansion of trails on the said property in the conservation easement.

Mr. Ward talked about the area of the Town of Boone Waste Water Treatment Plant being part of the road project located where the trail runs along the river and comes out where the road crosses a low-water bridge.

Mr. Ward said the Transportation Committee continually did walkability audits almost on a yearly basis. He said these audits identify issues with sidewalks or areas where there are not sidewalks.

Mr. Ward explained that while the Sustainability aspect is improving the safety of sidewalks and trails, he said it has not carried over beyond what is traditionally transportation or safe sidewalks. He said now that we have a Sustainability position dedicated to sustainability, we can bridge some of this gap with some more effective means. He said in the past the transportation has been mostly NC DOT and road engineers and sidewalk Staff and road repair and maintenance.

Chairperson Kornegay thanked Mr. Ward for providing the information on the past work of the Transportation Committee. She asked Mr. Ward how the Sustainability Committee can help with transportation in the Town.

Mr. Ward explained that over the last four or five years the Sustainability Committee has been asked to tackle larger topics on ideas that they did not know what the measurement of them would be. He said right now, they are trying to get a handle on the emissions on their Town fleet, carbon offset on current property and the efficiency and utility usage of each Town building. Mr. Ward said that he and Mr. Santucci are gathering this type of information, so they can come back to the Sustainability Committee and ask for their assistance in picking some high-level things that can be tackled. He said one of the most important things would be proofing and editing some ideas and taking some new ideas that the Sustainability Committee have that fit into the 2030 confine and some parallel tracks to use their expertise on and advocate to the Town Council through recommendations to get some of the ideas moving faster.

Mr. Ward noted that the Town has replaced between 40 and 50 percent of the streetlights with LED's. He said that now they have run out of funding to be able to work on this project. He said that he would present the information to the Town Council on the streetlights in light of the upcoming budget and advocate for more funding to be able to continue to change out the streetlights.

Vice-Chairperson Prickett talked about some information he had found in a vehicle emission report that talked about the improvements that has been made in batteries that helps with the carbon offset.

Discussion ensued on electric vehicles. Mr. Ward pointed out that the Town has received a number of donations for vehicles. He said the Town has purchased an electric ATV used for patrol and rescue on the Boone Greenway. He noted that the Police Department was in favor of it. Mr. Ward said that some of the Town's work trucks can even be replaced as well with taking into consideration the environment of Boone.

Chairperson Kornegay asked Mr. Ward what can the Sustainability Committee be focusing on to help support what he and Mr. Santucci are working on. Mr. Ward said the Sustainability Committee can support what Member Ball is doing with the bike-share Program by expanding that idea into Town parks and parking lots, if the Sustainability Committee would be in support of it.

Chairperson Kornegay suggested that the Sustainability Committee focus on providing support for the greenway expansion.

Member Ball noted that after Mr. Santucci has had time to absorb more of the Sustainability Committee's ideas and discussions and other information, Mr. Santucci can let the Sustainability Committee know what they can do to best utilize their time and to make potentials recommendations.

Chairperson Kornegay asked if there were any time sensitive topics that needed to be discussed as a result, of the upcoming budget hearings with the Town Council. Mr. Ward said not at this time, but he and Mr. Santucci will bring back to them some topics for the Sustainability Committee to work on.

Discussion ensued on continuing monthly Sustainability Committee meetings. Mr. Ward asked if the Sustainability Committee wanted to go to bi-monthly meetings. Mr. Ward said as soon as Mr. Santucci is up and running in his new position, he and Mr. Santucci will bring back to the Sustainability Committee some ideas to prioritize and work together on with Mr. Ward and Mr. Santucci.

Member Mansure noted that she was on the Transportation Committee and their main focus was health. She suggested having possible sub-committees to help work on specific topics as we move forward.

Member Ball suggested having the next meeting in March of 2021 to give Mr. Santucci an opportunity to become more familiar with the topics needing to be worked on. He said that he can also meet in February of 2021, if the Sustainability Committee feels like it would be productive. Vice-Chairperson Prickett agreed with Member Ball.

Member Scarboro asked about the Town's budget hearings. Mr. Ward said they will probably occur in March of 2021. Member Scarboro suggested waiting on changing the bi-monthly meeting schedule until all of the discussions have occurred regarding any recommendations that might need to be included in the budget hearings. Member Scarboro noted that the Sustainability Committee would need to meet in February, if they are going to make any budget recommendations and suggested that the Sustainability Committee focus on said recommendations and present them at the February 2021 meeting.

Mr. Ward said the main thing that we know we can do right now is to supplement the streetlight conversion. He explained that the Town has certified Staff to do the work and New River Light and Power has provided the Town with the rate of \$200.00 per streetlight replacement.

Member Ball asked about the remaining cost for the lights and Mr. Santucci responded noting that after the lights are changed out they will cost \$2.00 instead of \$11.00 per light.

Member Ball noted that he agrees with Member Scarboro about having the February 2021 Sustainability Committee meeting to discuss the remaining cost of the lights and to make possible recommendations to Council. Mr. Ward said that he and Mr. Santucci could narrow down the topics for discussion and possible recommendations to be send to Council at the next meeting. The Sustainability Committee members were in consensus for Mr. Ward and Mr. Santucci to narrow down the topics for discussion for the next Sustainability Committee meeting scheduled for February 11, 2021.

Member Scarboro asked if there is an amount of money already allocated for Sustainability topics. Mr. Ward said there is money allocated but not designated. Mr. Ward said any recommendations made would be a new request for funds. Mr. Ward said he would have to look at the budget and see how much money is remaining in the amount that Former Member Harvard Ayers previously requested. Mr. Ward said if there is money left in that budget item, it might be possible to make a budget adjustment with that money to tackle some of streetlights which would alter the amount that the Sustainability Committee would make in a recommendation to the Town Council.

Member Ball asked Mr. Ward if they were seeing a safety improvement with the newly installed LED lights. Mr. Ward said yes as well as a reduction in repair and maintenance, fuel reduction and a reduction in liability compensation.

Public Comment

No individual requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

Adjournment

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Member Cirone to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.