

Sustainability Committee Survey Highlights Demand for Greener Initiatives

PAUL CONVERS
HUDSON TIMES

Hudson's Sustainability Committee held its monthly meeting on Aug. 25 to review its presence at recent community events, including Old Home Days and National Night Out. As part of their outreach, the Committee conducted a survey to gauge public interest in local sustainability initiatives.

"There were four simple questions on the survey," explained Committee member Jake Keller. "Pretty much every question I got included suggestions for more items to recycle, like Styrofoam."

Survey results showed that Hudson residents are most interested in expanding access to solar power, community composting, and recycling programs.

"Overall, this confirmed that composting and recycling are probably the biggest low-hanging fruit the residents see us helping with," Keller said. "But solar was the biggest one - it came first in the survey, and about 56 people mentioned it. Roughly one in every five respondents wanted to see some kind of solar project."

Keller noted that nearby towns, such as Derry, are already pursuing new solar farms, showing that the

demand extends beyond Hudson.

Interest in composting was strong, though only a small number of residents currently practice it.

"It's possible that a lot of people simply don't know how to do it," said Committee member Robert Larson. "Education would go a long way."

Recycling also drew significant attention, with many residents calling for weekly recycling pickup and an easier way to dispose of batteries. The state's new Lithium-Ion Battery Disposal Ban, which prohibits lithium-ion batteries from landfills and

incinerators, has added urgency to the request.

"One answer from the survey really made me think: a swap shop," Keller said. "One person had lived in Litchfield, where the transfer station has a spot to leave tools or items in good condition that others can take. I'd never thought of that, but it could work here too."

Committee Chair Karl Huber added that survey responses revealed gaps in public awareness. For example, not all residents know that cardboard can be dropped off at the Hudson Transfer Station without a pass.

"If it's an apartment building of 60 people, think of all the recycling they're producing that goes right in the trash," Keller said, warning that such situations create "bad habits" and reduce recycling rates.

Huber shared a similar concern: "I live in Shepherd's Hill and sit on the board there. Residents want expanded recycling, but how do we implement it? How do we make it happen? How do we manage it?"

One committee member suggested exploring options with Casella Waste Systems. The group also agreed to continue researching the feasibility of a centralized

composting facility.

Selectman Liaison Heidi Jakoby said she was encouraged by the turnout at outreach events.

"Hudson people did come over," she said. "I really felt it was a variety of participation."

She recommended submitting a report on the survey to the Board of Selectmen.

"Let's send the top three takeaways forward," Huber agreed. "There's a lot of good results we got."

The next meeting of the Sustainability Committee is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 29, at 7 p.m. in the Buxton Meeting Room.

Hudson Administrator Outlines Software, Website, and Insurance Plans

ALEX MALM
HUDSON TIMES

At the most recent Hudson Board of Selectmen meeting, Town Administrator Roy Sorenson updated the board on several ongoing and upcoming projects, including financial software upgrades, website improvements, and potential health insurance changes.

Sorenson noted that the town is exploring a new financial software system, which would likely appear as an out-of-budget request in the FY27 budget cycle.

"It will probably be an FY27 out-of-budget re-

quest," Sorenson said. "We've been meeting with various firms that provide the software, and hopefully we'll have a solid proposal to present. There may be a couple of options on how it's presented and implemented."

He added that the town has also been coordinating with Hudson School District officials, who are in the process of moving to their own new financial software system.

"I've set up regular meetings with Superintendent Dan Moulis," Sorenson said, noting that Finance

Director Laurie May has met with the district's Business Administrator Jenny Graves and Finance Director Melissa Van Sickle. "We picked their brains on their RFP process and in general on how they run their operations. It was a good exchange of ideas."

Sorenson said he intends to continue collaborating with the district administration. "I think it's helpful for both the town and schools to have that type of relationship and see how we can enhance it in the coming years."

In addition, Sorenson

briefed the board on progress toward updating the town's website.

"We've already moved forward on this," Sorenson said. "We're looking at a September - October build. It takes some time - they have to get in, we have to transfer everything over - but you'll see some changes coming soon."

Sorenson also told the board the town may explore issuing an RFP to evaluate its health insurance provider.

"We may look at what I'm calling an exploratory RFP, whether we move away from Health Trust," Sorenson said. "I'm not saying we're doing that -

I'm just saying we might look at options. In doing so, we may save the town some money. I don't have the answers yet, but I'm pro-

posing we look into it."

The next Selectmen meeting is scheduled for Sept. 9 at 7 p.m.



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