Sustainability Committee

Regular Meeting (Remote)
September 3, 2026 - 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Members Present: Jami Lewchik, Chair; Brian Burkhart, Lydia Tedone

Other Attendees: Jen Weymouth, Recycling Committee Vice Chair; Nicholas Criscitelli, Planning Commission Ex-Officio; Franklyn Barrueco, Management Specialist; Marc Nelson, Town Manager; Stephen O'Brien, Board of Education Ex-Officio; Mark Scully, Former Sustainability Committee Member

Chair Lewchik called the meeting to order at 6:38 P.M.

Public Audience

Mr. Scully invited the Committee to attend the Peoples Action for Clean Energy (PACE) Electric Vehicle (EV) Readiness Workshop event in New Haven on October 16th at Hotel Marcel. He invited someone to champion the effort to get Simsbury to Charging Smart's Bronze designation level.

Approve August 6, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Tedone joined the meeting at 6:45 P.M. Mr. Burkhart moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Tedone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve September Newsletter

Chair Lewchik mentioned that the Committee will vote on the newsletter and discuss newsletter topics in the future. Mr. Burkhart moved to approve the September Newsletter as presented. Ms. Tedone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sustainability Plan Part 2 (Waste) Progress and Next Steps

Chair Lewchik and Ms. Weymouth reported on Recycling Committee initiatives. They spoke about the USA Waste contract with the Simsbury Transfer Station, and with the Town, and asked for waste and tonnage stats from USA Waste. Manager Nelson informed the Committee that his office

can acquire that information and he mentioned that the Town meets semi-annually with the Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of the company. Ms. Weymouth shared details of the Plan; expanding education and outreach on materials diversion, recycling, and reuse. Expanding municipal and school specific diversion programs, expanding food scrap collection, backyard composting, rain barrel distribution, and improving messaging regarding collecting textiles.

She also spoke about promoting plastic film recycling and appropriate outlets and eliminating single use products at the municipal level and restaurants Some communities ask restaurants to make single use materials an "opt-in" for customers. She said that she will get additional feedback from Committee members and will reach out to stakeholders such as Department of Public Works and Town Manager's Office. Chair Lewchik mentioned that it would be preferable to collect feedback and get the Plan to the Selectmen before the end of the year.

Discuss Connecticut Green Bank Switch Together Program

The Committee discussed the Program. Mr. Scully mentioned that this is similar to SolarizeCT where both programs raise awareness on solar. He mentioned this has been successful in Virginia. Vendors vet solar installers and then gather customers who are interested in solar and present the customers as a package to a vendor. Group purchasing leads to better prices. They would handle Town mailing. Mr. Scully mentioned that the Program is brand new and will start in the Spring.

Review Draft Update to the Rules of Procedure

Manager Nelson and Specialist Barrueco spoke about the Rules of Procedure and recommended the Committee vote on the document. Manager Nelson mentioned that the First Selectman and Deputy First Selectman approved putting this agenda item on their September 14th meeting agenda. Ms. Tedone was impressed with the document and moved to accept the Rules as presented. Mr. Burkhart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New England Smart Energy (NESE) Update

Chair Lewchik mentioned the live counter graphic. Mr. Criscitelli said that the letter is not a scam and had a home energy assessment done himself. He also had furnace work done and EnergizeCT has rebates on smart thermostats. Specialist Barrueco mentioned that people have come into Town Hall asking if the letter was legitimate and the Town Manager's Office put NESE as an authorized vendor under the Sustainability Committee webpage. The campaign exceeds goals, with 38 assessments scheduled as of August 15th and total sign-ups likely surpassing 50.

Efficient Lighting & Maintenance Inc. (EL&M) Update

The Committee discussed partnering with Efficient Lighting and Maintenance (EL&M) to provide energy audits for business owners. Manager Nelson reported that the letter is finalized and the business mailing address database has been transmitted to EL&M.

Chair(s) Report

Chair Lewchik spoke about the Business Roundtable and workshop. She connected with CPACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) and mentioned presenting this to the Economic Development Commission. Chair Lewchik also mentioned a potential partnership with the Open Space Committee, Simsbury Grange, or Simsbury Public Library to host the "Iconoclast" film with it's filmmaker.

Ex-Officio Reports

Town Manager's Office: Manager Nelson spoke about the rules of procedure change. He outlined continued efforts to boost e-subscriptions to the Sustainability Committee. He mentioned that he will do similar outreach to the Library as he did with the Board of Education. His proposed budget to the Selectmen is due early next year. He would like to invite some boards and commissions to request funding. He would need a written proposal by the first week of November. Manager Nelson spoke about some home businesses being duplicated in the EL&M business database since NESE did a mailing distribution to residential homes. Manager Nelson mentioned the DEI Council and Juneteenth Celebration. Specialist Barrueco reported that Simsbury has submitted a partial SustainableCT application with a full application scheduled for next Spring.

Board of Education: Mr. O'Brien mentioned that the Board has not met all summer long; not much to report. He said he will relay the information on the Solar PPAs at the next Board meeting.

Planning Commission: Mr. Criscitelli reported that the Commission is going through and evaluating state mandated requirements that became active on the first of July. He mentioned that he is going to speak with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) regarding affordable housing. The final vote on the car wash from the Zoning Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, the 9th of September. He also mentioned Willow Arms' sustainability efforts. Chair Lewchik asked who the right stakeholders would be to chat with Greenbank. Mr. Criscitelli said that the Planning Director would be the person to talk to about affordable housing solar energy.

Economic Development Commission: Manager Nelson said that the Commission is excited to work with the Committee. He reported that the Selectmen appointed two (2) new members to achieve full membership and they reappointed Vice Chair Arthur. He mentioned Chair Seavy's term expiration.

Open Forum

Ms. Weymouth mentioned coordinating with the Board of Education on waste initiatives and eliminating single use products in the public schools system. She spoke about standardizing the recycling collection across all schools and spoke about the carton recycling program. Mr. Scully mentioned how thrilled he is to hear that the Committee is pursuing the Town's SustainableCT designation.

Manager Nelson mentioned that State Senator Honig was able to secure State Bonding Authority consideration for $1.65 million to Simsbury for Eno Memorial Hall renovations including HVAC and heating and cooling upgrades. He mentioned that all the work for much needed repairs to Eno is $4 million. He mentioned that the Sustainability Committee has to report to the Selectmen before the end of November.

Adjourn

Mr. Burkhart moved to adjourn. Ms. Tedone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:32 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklyn Barrueco
Management Specialist