

**BOROUGH OF OAKLAND**  
**Sustainable Oakland Green Team**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

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January 24, 2024 – 7:30 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Borough of Oakland Sustainable Oakland Green Team opened on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 7:31 p.m. in the Oakland Senior Center, 20 Lawlor Drive, Oakland, N.J. 07436.

**ROLL CALL: Present:** Chair Alison Fleeson, William Eilert, Terre Baarlaer, Council Liaison Kevin Slasinski, SOGT Secretary Laura Saunders

**Absent:** Andrea Levy, Ron Petherbridge, and Liz Brodie

On motion of Mr. Eilert, seconded by Ms. Baarlaer, all absent members are excused.

**BOARD POSITIONS:**

Ms. Fleeson called for nominations for SOGT Chair for 2024.

On motion of Mr. Eilert, seconded by Ms. Baarlaer, Ms. Fleeson was nominated SOGT Chair.

Ms. Fleeson called for nominations for SOGT Vice-Chair for 2024.

On motion of Ms. Fleeson, seconded by Ms. Baarlaer, Mr. Eilert was nominated Vice-Chair.

**OATHS OF OFFICE:**

Ms. Fleeson read the Oaths of Office aloud in agreement for a term of 5 years.

Mr. Eilert read the Oaths of Office aloud in agreement for a term of 4 years.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

Chair Alison Fleeson opened for public comment.

On motion of Mr. Eilert, seconded by Ms. Baarlaer, the meeting was closed for public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**STYROFOAM DRIVE:**

The Styrofoam Drive was successful, filling the two bins. The next drives are scheduled for April, June and September.

**HOLIDAY LIGHTS:**

Collecting recycled lights for another week until January 30<sup>th</sup>. The program was extremely successful.

**FIRST SUNDAY HIKES:**

First hike was the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. The hikes are led by Andrea Levy and have been well attended with about 15-20 people. The hikes occur off Skyline Drive.

**COMMUNITY SOLAR:**

A Community Solar representative was present at the Council Meeting the night before. They want to use the former NJ Sports House and the building right next to it. Only services about 200. The Green Team can help them advertise by putting packages together, putting information on the town website, and a putting a generic community solar finder on the website. Rockland Electric has just started the program with two properties in Mahwah. This is projected to create a 15-20% discount. The project is at the very beginning stages starting with obtaining the applicable approvals from town. There are not a lot of viable properties in NJ to use. Oakland ordinances already support the project.

**RAIN BARRELS & COMPOSTERS:**

Initial purchase of 10 of each. The supply needs to be replenished. Ms. Fleeson will follow up with DPW.

**ROOTS FOR RIVERS:**

On hold until good weather. Mr. Eilert to facilitate coordination with Ed and Nancy. A cleanup needs to be scheduled to pick up the "grow tubes" which may have fallen off the saplings and are left on the ground.

**PLANT SALE:**

Mr. Eilert will reach out to Ed regarding another plant sale. Ms. Fleeson has a list of the plants that sold. Ms. Saunders is to work with the Borough to develop a sign up through Community Pass which was used last year.

**GREAT OAK PARK POLLINATOR GARDEN:**

Plant Sale would help support Great Oak Park by using whatever plants are leftover.

**COMMUNITY GARDEN:**

Need to start advertising garden plots. Sign up will occur through Community Pass. Once people start signing up, Ms. Fleeson will assign the plots. A packet will be given to the people who are getting plots, including rules of the garden and a waiver which needs to be signed. Ms. Fleeson wants to get out information by the end of February, if not sooner.

**RECYCLING PROJECT:**

Ms. Fleeson will put out a box for crayon recycling at the library, as well as advertise it. DPW is still doing battery recycling. Ms. Fleeson will follow up with DPW to see if there is need for another box.

**BIRD WATCHING:**

Pat's husband will continue to lead the bird watching. Ms. Fleeson will also meet with Kerri Wallace, the library coordinator, to see about more animal programs. Need to do renewals of wildlife plans this year.

**BUY LOCAL UPDATE:**

Ms. Fleeson needs to coordinate with the SOGT Secretary and Borough Clerk to update the website. Website has a link for Buy Local, similar to a Jersey Fresh list. Advertising also needs to be done.

**REPAIR IT CAFÉ:**

Needs to be coordinated with Kerri Wallace at the library.

**FOOD SECURITY ACTIONS:**

Working with the church and food banks and making a directory of where people in need can find food. This action needs to be assigned to someone.

**GREEN BUSINESS REWARDS:**

A program to reward businesses that choose to have greener practices. Ms. Levy put something together to work with the Chamber of Commerce to create a recognition program.

**COMPLETE STREETS:**

The Complete Streets Policy is done, and now waiting on the Council to move it forward. Complete Streets came to a Council Meeting in November 2023 and presented the policy. A custom policy was built for Oakland. This will open more grant monies for improvements.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**PLANT SWAP:**

Propagated plants brought in and exchanged by residents. It was a successful program. Need volunteers to help run it again, and it would need to be advertised. Ms. Fleeson to follow up with prior volunteers to gauge interest.

**MUNICIPAL ENERGY PLAN:**

Email sent by Richard Kunze, Borough Administrator, with information about grants which are available. Just putting an energy plan together, opens up the possibility of a \$10,000 grant and potentially more. A team would need to be put together to make a wish list based on NJ state plan. Ms. Fleeson and Mr. Kunze have scheduled a call to meet with Sustainable Jersey about next steps. The first grant deadline is the end of February. If it is too late for this cycle, it may have to wait until the next year.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On motion of Mr. Reilly, seconded by Ms. Baarlaer, the meeting is adjourned.

**ALL IN FAVOR.**

Adjourned: 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Saunders', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Laura Saunders  
SOGT Secretary

**SUSTAINABLE OAKLAND GREEN TEAM**