

Climate Change Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 9, 2023

Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Hadley Senior Center

Members Present: Jack Czajkowski, Kathy Nelson, Michael Docter, Marian Parker **Members Absent:** Catalina Arrubla, Kelly Minton

Also Present: Select Board liaison, Jane Nevensmith, Randy Izer, Molly Keegan, Tom Fil, Susan Melchin, Steven Devine, Carol Kostek, Wally Czajkowski, Andy Czajkowski, Russ Vernon-Jones, Ellen Drew, Andrea — , Ken Pollard

1. Call to Order

The Climate Committee convened an in-person meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 7 pm at the Hadley Senior Center at 46 Middle Street, Hadley, MA 01035, there and then to act on the following agenda.

2. Dr. Moser's Letter of Resignation

Jack Czajkowski read Dr. Moser's letter aloud.

3. Code of Conduct and Open Meeting Law Public Participation

Michael Doctor read aloud the **Code of Conduct Guidelines of Town Boards and Committees** and **Public Participation Guidelines**.

4. Meeting Best Practices

Randy Izer, as a private citizen of Hadley with experience as a Select Board member, shared some of his thoughts and experiences regarding meeting best practices. He first acknowledged that members of committees are given little or no training. He said there is a bill in the state house that is attempting to get funding to give training to people who serve on committees for municipalities. He also said all committee members are required to sign a code of conduct, but the public are not asked to sign any code of conduct. When a public comment or question is made, it is at the discretion of the chair to whether or not to respond to the question/comment during the next meeting.

Randy Izer recommends that we have consistency in our agenda so that the public can look at the agenda and decide when they are going to arrive at the meeting. He said the co-chairs should alternate being in charge of meetings rather than sharing that responsibility during each meeting. He reminded us that attending as a member of the public is a right, not a privilege and that people can disagree whole-heartedly, but that there should be no arguing. Committee members "need to have tough skin." If the committee encounters challenges, there are places to get help if needed.

Kathy Nelson mentioned that she will be attending a webinar next week sponsored by the Massachusetts Municipal Association about how to run a good meeting.

Jack Czajkowski asked for clarification around the role of the committee. Jane Nevinsmith reiterated that we are in a role of advising, not in a role to make policy. She also mentioned that without our committee, we would not have gotten a Green Community Grant of \$140,000.

5. Public Comment (up to 3 mins per guest)

Susan Melchin said she is relieved that the committee is signing off on the code of conduct and she would like it if questions can be answered after a presentation. She said she has been to a Select Board meeting where that was practiced allowing for immediate responses which builds public confidence.

Jane Nevinsmith responded by saying that committee members can only follow what's on the agenda.

Wally Czajkowski said the growing season has changed and he believes some things about climate change, but where he parts from Jack is that he believes that aliens are responsible for climate change.

Tom Fil shared his comments about nuclear power and his concerns about trusting authority.

A local farmer named Ellen Drews from Astarte Farm in Hadley introduced herself and said that she had a rough season and knows of many farmers in the valley that were affected by climate change this summer with severe levels of rain. She said she would like to see the HCCC take up more information about farming and ways that farmers are adapting to these changes. She'd like, also, to see if there are more resources and funding to help farmers make the necessary adaptations to a changing climate.

6. Approved Minutes

Kathy Nelson asked for a vote to approve the minutes from August 2022-August 2023 and October 2023. The committee moved to vote and it was unanimously approved.

7. Updates

Opt-in Specialized Stretch Code

Kathy Nelson reported that there is no new news on the Specialized Stretch Code. We will follow up on that and bring someone to a meeting to discuss.

Solar on the Town Landfill

Michael Docter said he talked to Carolyn Brennan who has a memory of connecting with Eversource regarding solar on the landfill, but is not sure what has been done. He said he is going to follow up with David Fil who may have more information about the conversation.

Jack Czajkowski emphasized the importance of stability when you're placing solar on a landfill.

Kathy Nelson asked questions about the details of ownership.

Michael Docter explained that depending on the arrangement, the town could own the solar or they could set up a contract with a company. He mentioned that there are municipal rebates for installation that are up to 30% and that this may make it much more affordable for the town and the town may be able to take advantage of these savings. The town needs to fill out a Schedule Z and can designate where the electric goes, i.e. school, library, etc.

Jack Czajkowski reminded us about Bryan Adams' visit and that he has provided seed money for Northampton and that there may be ways for us to get seed money.

Michael Docter said he will continue to learn more and share out to the committee.

Levee

Jack Czajkowski reported that the levee is still being discussed and in the works. It's going to cost the town 25-65 million dollars to work on the dike and hopefully we will have more information soon.

MA DESE-updated Instructional Guidelines for 6th-8th grade

Jack Czajkowski read the new state public school standards established August 2023 for science that includes explicit lessons about human caused climate change.

Link included: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/g6-g8.pdf>

8. New Topics

Speaker Series

Kathy Nelson said she attended a presentation given at the Hitchcock Center given by Steven Roof on the Massachusetts Climate Action Plan and Massachusetts 2025, 2030 and 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap and that she thinks we should offer a similar presentation to the public with time for questions and answers.

Jack Czajkowski proposed another topic which is, how are farmers being impacted by climate change and what are some new methods and adaptations they are using to adapt and to mitigate release of carbon into the atmosphere. He said there are many farmers in the community: Denise Mann Barstow, Stephen Devine, and Wally Czajkowski who could lend their knowledge and expertise.

Molly Keegan said Al Zuchowski of Lazy Acres Farm would be a good person to include as well.

There are two farmers who came as members of the public who said they would help organize this speaker series. Kathy Nelson said she will follow up with them.

Marian Parker suggested a Climate Science Educators Forum based on the new state standards.

9. Items not anticipated at the time of posting

Kathy Nelson reported that plastic writing utensils such as markers and pens are now being recycled by Staples.

Michael Docter asked about the status of solar for the Senior Center.

Jane Nevinsmith reported that it's going out for bid. As far as she knows, the library is still on hold due to roof technicalities.

10. Jack Czajkowski adjourned the meeting at 8 pm.

Documents used during this meeting are attached.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marian Parker.

October 16, 2023

Dear Jack, Kathy, members of the Hadley Climate Change Committee, and frequently attending members of the public,

I recently have become aware of the challenging situation I have contributed to at the last meeting I attended in August 2023. While I am on travel, I am writing to you all to address this issue. Please feel free to enter the letter in the official meeting minutes.

First, I want to apologize for my choice of language that has offended the members of the public who attended that August meeting. I did not intend to cause anyone harm in my defense of well-established scientific facts and in guarding the truth of what I actually said, when words to the contrary were put in my mouth. I say this not as an excuse, just as explanation. I apologize for offending anyone with my words and am sorry for not being better able to contain my emotions. To be clear, I am not apologizing for my standing up for science, or for defending my truth. But I am sorry I did it in the way I did.

I am also very sorry for the challenges and delays this has created since for the Committee. I joined it a couple of years ago to help by bringing my professional expertise to bear on Hadley's efforts to mitigate its share of heat-trapping emissions and its more recent efforts in preparing for and adapting to the inevitable impacts of climate change that we are now experiencing. The last thing I want is to cause any delays or obstacles for the Committee to continue its important work, given the speed of climate change and Hadley and everyone else in the world being so far behind with both mitigation and adaptation. So, I hope that my apology to those who were offended goes a long way toward calming down the situation so you can get back to the critical work at hand.

The second, and related reason for writing is that I want this letter to serve as my official notice of resignation from the Committee. I have come to the conviction that my presence on the Committee will be more problematic than helpful going forward, given this recent incidence and its lasting impacts. I have dedicated my life to preserving the conditions for life on Earth. Work on this Committee is just one way in which I have tried to do that. I have other ways to help out Hadley if needed or useful, and to work across the Pioneer Valley and Massachusetts, as well as more broadly across the Northeast, the US, and internationally. So, I will direct my energies there, but I do not want to be the cause for you not to be able to move forward effectively with your work on behalf of all Hadley residents.

I have learned a lot during my time on the Committee and am glad to get to know each of you. I appreciate the hard work of the Committee, and what everyone brings to it. Thank you for your dedication and time, and I wish you the best of luck moving forward.

Sincerely,
Susi Moser, Ph.D.

TOWN OF HADLEY
SELECT BOARD
100 MIDDLE STREET, HADLEY, MA 01035
TELEPHONE: 413-586-0221

Date: July 19, 2023

To: All Boards, Commissions, and Committees for the Town of Hadley

From: Select Board, Town of Hadley

Subject: Code of Conduct, Guidelines for Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees

I. PURPOSE

These guidelines serve as the standard for achieving and maintaining a high level of public confidence, trust, and professional respect with regard to how the Town of Hadley and its officials conduct business. These guidelines are intended to define and create a centralized understanding with regard to standards of conduct. The Select Board recognizes the importance of maintaining professional standards at all levels of the government, including for those who volunteer their time and services on behalf of the Town. The Select Board encourages other boards and committees of the Town who are not appointed by the Select Board to adopt these Guidelines.

II. APPLICABILITY

These guidelines apply to the Select Board; to all other Town boards, commissions, and committees appointed by the Select Board or the Town Administrator; and to all presiding officers, board members, commission members, committee members, public officials, and other representatives of the Town appointed by the Select Board, or Town Administrator while acting in their official capacity or while acting on behalf of the Town.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of the Select Board and all other individuals listed above assume the following obligations and commitments:

A. Conduct Generally and in Relation to the Community

- Stay informed about the local and state duties of a board or committee member.
- Remember that you represent the Town at all times.
- Accept your position as a means of unselfish public service and do not attempt to benefit personally, professionally, or financially from your position.
- Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all of the people.
- Demonstrate respect for the public that you serve.

- Safeguard all confidential information, including, without limitation, privileged attorney- client communications.
- Seek no favors and understand that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by holding these positions is often dishonest and may be unlawful.
- Conduct yourself so as to maintain public confidence in our local government.
- Conduct official business in such a manner as to give the clear impression that you cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of your official duties.
- Unless specifically exempted (e.g., Executive Session), conduct the business of the public in a manner that promotes open and transparent government and maintains full compliance with the Open Meeting Law.
- Comply as fully as possible with all Town policies.
- Comply as fully as possible with all applicable laws, including, without limitation, the following:
 - o The Open Meeting Law (G. L. c. 30A, § 18-25)
 - o Procurement Laws (G. L. c. 30B)
 - o The Ethics/Conflict of Interest Statute (G. L. c. 268A)
 - o The Public Records Law (G.L. c. 66, § 10).

B. Conduct in Relation to Your Fellow Board/Commission/Committee Members

- Treat all members of the board/commission/committee with respect despite differences of opinion; professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion but requires respect within those differences.
- Recognize your responsibility to attend all meetings to assure a quorum and promptly notify the chair should you for any reason be absent from a given meeting or be unable or unwilling to continue to serve. Formal notice to resign from a board/commission/committee requires written notification to the Town Clerk.
- Recognize that action at official legal meetings is binding and that you alone cannot bind the board/commission/committee outside of such meetings.
- Refrain from making statements or promises as to how you will vote on quasi-judicial matters that will come before the board until you have had an opportunity to hear the pros and cons of the issue during a public meeting.
- Uphold the intent of executive session and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive session.
- Make decisions only after the presentation and discussion of all facts applicable to a question.

C. Conduct in Relation to the Town Administrator

- Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
- Give the Town Administrator full responsibility for making and implementing their decisions.
- Refrain from giving orders or directions to the Town Administrator for action as an individual Select Board member.
- Refrain from giving instructions to or requesting assistance from Town department heads, but rather channel all such activities through the full board/commission/committee and the Town Administrator.

- Refrain from providing information to the Town Administrator that you would not be willing to share with other Board members.

D. Conduct in Relation to Town Staff

- Treat all staff as professionals and respect the abilities, experience, and dignity of each. •
- Direct questions about Town staff or requests for additional background information to the Town Administrator.
- Avoid publicly criticizing an individual employee or a department: only raise concerns about staff performance to the Town Administrator through private communication.
- Ensure that all requests for staff support go through the Town Administrator's office.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS SPEAKING AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

- The chair of the public body is responsible for conducting all public meetings in an orderly and peaceable manner.
- The public body may allow a public comment session during the open session of a public meeting. If public comments are posted on the meeting agenda, the session will last for no more than fifteen minutes. Each speaker during the public comment session shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes.
- Members of the public may speak only with the permission of the chair. To maintain an orderly and peaceable meeting, all speakers must identify themselves by name and address prior to speaking.
- All remarks shall be addressed to or through the chair or to the public body as a whole. Matters presented by speakers during a public comment session will not be debated or acted upon by the public body at the time they are presented.
- All persons addressing the public body must conduct themselves in a peaceable and orderly manner. Such persons may not make true threats of violence or incite imminent lawless conduct by others. Additionally, speakers are encouraged to refrain from making any personal, impertinent, unduly repetitive, slanderous, or profane remarks. Speakers are further encouraged to respect the views and opinions of others (including members of the public body and the general public and to treat others as the speaker wishes to be treated.

V. DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION

- The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of these guidelines to all members upon its issuance and upon the subsequent appointment or re-appointment of any member.
- The Town Clerk shall maintain and distribute educational materials from the State Ethics Commission to members.
- The Town Clerk shall develop a schedule of training programs to educate the Board and members on the Conflict-of-Interest Law and ensure compliance with said Law.
- The Town Clerk shall educate the Board, members, and officials on the Conflict-of- Interest Law and ensure compliance with annual state mandated online training.

VI. APPROVAL

- Effective: Immediately, until revoked or amended by the Select Board.
- Adopted: this 19th Day of July 2023.

Public Participation

What public participation in meetings must be allowed?

Under the Open Meeting Law, the public is permitted to attend meetings of public bodies but is excluded from an executive session that is called for a valid purpose listed in the law.

While the public is permitted to attend an open meeting, an individual may not address the public body without permission of the chair. An individual may not disrupt a meeting of a public body, and at the request of the chair, all members of the public shall be silent. If, after clear warning, a person continues to be disruptive, the chair may order the person to leave the meeting. If the person does not leave, the chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person. Although public participation is entirely within the chair's discretion, the Attorney General encourages public bodies to allow as much public participation as time permits.

Any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of an open session of a public meeting. A member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment established by the chair so as not to interfere with the meeting. The chair is required to inform other attendees of any such recording at the beginning of the meeting.

If someone arrives after the meeting has begun and wishes to record a meeting, that person should attempt to notify the chair prior to beginning recording, ideally in a manner that does not significantly disrupt the meeting in progress (such as passing a note for the chair to the board administrator or secretary). The chair should endeavor to acknowledge such attempts at notification and announce the fact of any recording to those in attendance.