



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 13, 2020 3:45-5:00 p.m.

Newton Free Library - 3rd floor rear arc area

**Attendance:** Erica Braman, Alicia Doung, Coral Lin, Kate Esbenshade, Becca Smillie, Jordan Schwartz, Jenn Martin, Erwin Chuk, Margaret Ford, Heather Tausig, Andrew Thompson, Anndy Dannenberg, Bill Kenneally, Christina Perez, Heather Friedman, Joana Canedo

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions.

### 2. Schools: Sharing Experiences.

#### a. Students for a Greener World (Margaret Ford).

- i. Bowen Science Day, Feb 9. SGW attended and brought their magic green energy bike. They made a map of the world and asked library patrons how to say “go green” or other green phrases in different languages to pin to the map
- ii. SGW will have its annual event at the Library on [May 18th](#). It will include three cases as an exhibit in the main hall. Each school will have half a case.. Schools that will be included are Peirce, Newton North, North South, and a TBD middle school. (probably Brown).

- #### b. Brown (Jordan Schwartz). Recently met with Brown administration, PTO, the head custodian, Erica and Waneta to discuss revamping and reinvigorating the recycling program. The administration is bothered by the amount of waste and wants to find a way to reduce it. The group worked to develop a plan, including tying in recycling to 6<sup>th</sup> grade Global Goals and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Generation Citizen. There was also discussion of launching a Green Team to coordinate the inventory of what they need to work on the educational outreach part of the program and inventory the bins. Administration is also concerned with shredding records and then not being able to recycle the shreds. Erica met with the head custodian at Brown this week. They will be adding recycling bins and signs to the cafeteria right after February break, then revamp recycling in the gym. They will then work with the Green Team to figure out the whole school. The head custodian is really on board! Request from Joanna - write blurb, take photos, send to Joana to share with the group to learn from.

#### c. Mason Rice (Christina Perez and Heather Friedman),

- i. Ecofest May 1, 5-7 p.m. The timing works to tag on to the after care program. Engage families in an interactive way – how can families reduce their carbon footprint, learn how to compost and recycle, sample vegan/vegetarian food. They will be contacting high school students to help run a few of the activities.
- ii. Green Team Club is underway as a monthly drop-in with different activities. Mason Rice is launching their Food Waste Diversion program the week after break with



DPW and Black Earth as the contractor. They made an educational video about lunchroom waste to distribute in classrooms. Last year they made a video on recycling. They will share the links with Joana to distribute to this group.

- iii. The biannual World Cultures Fair is right after break. Heather has been doing food diversion at that and aims for it to be as close to zero waste as possible.
- d. **Peirce** (Becka Smillie) is having its Sustainability Fair in school on March 18 from 8:30-3:00 p.m. The Green Team will have an upcycling table and a “what-happens-to-these-things-when-you-are-done-with-them” table that includes sorting activities. Jenn Martin expressed interest in attending as Safe Routes to School with both a walking activity and an anti-idling display. Peirce is also working on a bottle cap mural.
- e. **Newton South High School** (Andrew Thompson). Newton South held its Sustainability Day on Feb 12. It was a huge logistical undertaking with 300 students attending many events during the day and 21 speakers, some who are NSHS students or alums. Comments from students at this meeting – it was repetitive if you were already in Mr. Thompson’s class; otherwise it is a good introduction to sustainability. More engagement was needed in the panels. For example, they could do the carbon footprint calculator at home. Students were hoping for more diversity in what they were hearing, to bring it up to a high school level. It was also suggested to bring it to a larger school audience and kids would only go for a few blocks which would make it immediately more interesting. Andrew said they learned a lot of lessons and that one of the challenges was having a wide mix of students in grades 10-12, some who were very well-versed in sustainability and others for whom it was newer. Staff didn’t have much dedicated planning time which was a challenge. He sent a quick survey out afterwards to get feedback for a possible next time. He’d like to see the kids more knowledgeable about sustainability to help lead the sessions. Beverly Craig from Green Newton attended and had a flyer with some things that kids and families can do and included a QR code. [See here](#).
- f. **Bigelow** (Joana Canedo). Bigelow has a presentation on [March 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.](#) with Mothers Out Front for students and parents. The Bigelow Green Team will present first to students and Mothers Out Front will talk to parents. Erica and Waneta are going to work on recycling at Bigelow; Erica said one area of focus is bin pairing.
- g. **Memorial Spaulding** (by email). They are having their first STEAM Day on Sunday, May 17 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. and may reach out to other groups.
- h. **Zervas** (Jenn Martin). The student Green Team is now meeting monthly and is interested in doing Newton Serves on Wednesday, April 29 from 3-5 p.m. during their normal meeting time. Jenn emailed last year’s contact for Newton Serves to see if it was possible to have a Green Team-specific school project during their normal meeting time. Some ideas for Green Team projects – [Bigelow posted their recycling signs](#) last



year. Zervas did trail work next to the school, hauled trash, did an invasive pull, rehabilitated their garden soil in the school raised beds, and collected trash.

- i. **Boston Earth Day (Andrew Thompson)**. Green Newton is now officially a sponsor for the week, which will kick-off on April 18, 2020. Website is [www.EarthDay2020Boston.org](http://www.EarthDay2020Boston.org). Organized by Newton South teacher Michael Kozuch.
- j. **Idling initiative (Jenn Martin)**. Newton Police, Health and Human Services, and others have signed off on an official no idling flyer. Newton Police and other departments now have these and they can be distributed to parents. **NNHS Graphics shop ([nnhs\\_graphics@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:nnhs_graphics@newton.k12.ma.us)) can make bulk copies for 10 cents each if your PTO wants to print them**; otherwise perhaps Green Newton can print them. There is also a new draft [www.idlefreewton.org](http://www.idlefreewton.org) website with the flyer, the hand card, and more. Yard signs are available from MassDOT SRTS. Contact Jenn at [jennmartin.srts@gmail.com](mailto:jennmartin.srts@gmail.com) if your school would like to borrow some; right now Memorial Spaulding, Zervas, Ward, Bigelow and Mason Rice have the signs.

3. **School Committee meetings (Joana Canedo)**. The School Sustainability Working Group update was January 13. On Feb 10, Kate, Marcia Orkin (History teacher at Newton South) and Joana spoke during public comment about climate education. It's one thing to have on the curriculum, another is how to allow the teachers to do more. Sustainability is a city-wide goal; next natural step is to add climate education to goals. During the School Committee discussion of city-wide goals Mayor asked about climate education. Other items discussed at Feb 10 meeting: policy updates on facilities and wellness that prioritize walking, biking and taking the bus and update on timing of solar panels. The School Committee has also now approved the revolving account for textile bins; the city still needs to approve. Still hopeful these will be implemented by summer

4. **Climate Education in Schools (Christina Perez)**. The state science standards don't mention climate change explicitly until Grade 8. She met with Jenny Craddock, the K-8 curriculum coordinator, who mentioned the Global Goals project in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and social studies focus on climate education in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and mentioned there is already a lot happening. Christina is concerned that teachers aren't taking it the next step. Heather F discussed attending NPS in the Carter era and having a very intense, comprehensive curriculum on energy and conservation. Heather T suggested looking to other towns to see where else it is successful, and also helping teachers make the connection to what IS being taught in the elementary school curriculum now that are the building blocks that will help them understand climate change in middle and high school. Christina thinks we are not giving elementary kids enough credit and referenced a [grant in the Cape Ann](#) area across a scattering or grade that helped them develop the right lesson plans with climate change as the language. GN School Connections sent a letter to School Committee last week, and are looking into asking for a grant from Newton Schools Foundation



for professional development around climate change. Coral Lin mentioned that elementary school isn't too early and unless we frame it in a scary way, we won't scare kids. Alicia Doung (South student) mentioned that the idea may be more accessible to kids using an example like how climate change impacts turtles, an approach that the New England Aquarium used. Kate mentioned that kids already learn about hard topics in elementary school. Becka Smillie talks with her Green Team students about climate change and constructive things they can do. Andrew Thompson reached out to the NTA and it was recommended that he attend an upcoming representative meeting to suggest climate change education to the broader teacher's union. It was also recommended to incorporate climate change education into all subjects in order to empower students. Joana mentioned that the BU and Globe student journalist program reached out and were interested in writing about climate education. She will follow up with some students and GNSC members for the article. Coral is working with a student led state group about creating a resource for social studies teachers in 8th grade to use for the Civics project.

5. **PTO Council Meeting.** Joana Canedo attended the Feb 4 meeting with Waneta Trabert to present Green Newton School Connections to PTO presidents. Matthew Miller, who is also on the School Sustainability Working Group, was also at the meeting to talk about the Food Service Advisory Group. Joana followed up with an email to PTO Council including a form for PTO Co-Presidents to complete with what green initiatives their school is already undertaking.

6. **Green Newton's High School Essay Competition.** For the 30th anniversary of Green Newton, which is being celebrated June 9, 2020, Green Newton is welcoming high school students to submit essays, videos, or quilt squares for the celebration, due by April 27. Members in this group expressed concern about the motivation for students wanting to participate at this busy time of year. More here: <https://schools.greennewton.org/2020/02/essay-competition-students-take-climate-action/>

## 7. Open Agenda

**[Webinar about Green Teams.](#)** Jordan Schwarz participated and said it was more geared for teachers and was about curriculum-based things.

Heather T. is working on a **restaurant take-out container project** and is interested in assembling a team to investigate take-out container options other than the black plastic take-out containers that can no longer be recycled. They will reach out to restaurants with options. Christina mentioned a collapsible silicone reusable container that patrons can bring for their leftovers at restaurants. Please contact Heather if interested: [htausig@aol.com](mailto:htausig@aol.com)

Margaret Ford said that Green Newton will once again do their **sneaker drive** as part of Newton Serves. Sneakers will be reused as they can; otherwise they will be repurposed. [2020 Sneaker Reuse & Recycling](#)