

## **SASD - Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development**

### **MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors on Tuesday December 8th, 2015**

4:30 PM at the home of Board Member Dick Riseling in Callicoon Center, NY

#### **ATTENDANCE**

**Board members in attendance:** Kathie Aberman, Michael Chojnicki, Isaac Green Diebboll, Bruce Ferguson, Peggy Gans, Ari Mir-Pontier, Sandy Oxford, Linda Reik, Dick Riseling, Carol Ryan, Roy Tedoff.

**Board members absent with notice:** none.

**Board members absent without notice:** none.

Also present: SASD Co-Executive Directors Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart

A meeting notice was sent to all board members in accordance with the Bylaws.

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 PM. The attendees constituted a quorum.

Board President Michael Chojnicki outlined the agenda for the meeting.

Minutes for the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved, with the correction that Linda Reik should be listed as "not present."

Moved by Bruce Ferguson, seconded by Roy Tedoff. Unanimously adopted.

#### **Order of Business**

##### 1. Board.

The Board stands at 11 members; bylaws allow up to 15 Board members. Several potential new Board members were discussed. Roy, Dick and Isaac will follow up with prospects.

##### 2. Officer Positions.

Roy Tedoff has agreed to serve as Treasurer. Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary need to be filled.

##### 3. Bylaws, Committees Restructuring and Updates (In Compliance with the Bylaws):

Attorney Laurie McFadden has drafted an update of the SASD bylaws to assure compliance with new provisions of NYS laws governing non-profit organizations like SASD. Michael Chojnicki and Carol Roig asked Laurie to help us streamline the committee structure and advise on what officer positions are required by law, any questions Board members may raise. Laurie will provide the draft in time for the January Board meeting, and more detailed discussion at the Board Retreat anticipated for later in the spring.

##### Discussion:

- Officers comprising the Executive Committee will be President, Vice President for Operations, Vice President for Communications, Secretary and Treasurer. Bruce Ferguson volunteered to serve as VP for Operations, but no formal vote was taken.
- Small committees of approximately 3 members can facilitate quick decisions (Linda)
- A flat structure allows everyone to be involved in decisions (Bruce).
- We need a structure/procedure for decisions regarding sign-on letters and letters of support.

- Working groups could be established for certain projects that don't require an official committee (Michael). The volume of e-mails among the board members makes it difficult to keep up. Perhaps some e-mails could be flagged as requiring a decision (Sandy).
- New e-mail threads should be introduced for new topics, to help alleviate confusion (Bruce).

Action: Isaac will convene a meeting to address communications issues. Carol Roig, Bruce Ferguson, Dick Riseling, Carol Ryan, Stephen Stuart and Linda Reik will participate.

#### 4. Board Retreat

2016 board retreat will be scheduled for mid-April. Several possible facilitators were discussed.

Actions:

- Ari will reach out to Helen Budrock of Sullivan Renaissance, who facilitated the 2014 retreat, to see if she is available and whether Sullivan Renaissance can donate her services for this purpose.
- Board will consider a "boot camp" for new board members to bring them up to speed on organizational history and current mission and projects.

#### 5. SCCA

- Staff and Board members continue presentations and requests for letter of support from county organizations and town and village officials.
- SASD staff and board members suggested to serve on the Advisory Board include Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart, Dick Riseling, Bruce Ferguson Carol Ryan (representing public health issues) and Sandy Oxford representing labor issues).
- Additional individuals are being contacted to serve on the SCCA Advisory Board.

#### 6. NY Prize Microgrid Projects Liberty and Monticello

Villages of Liberty and Monticello still need to provide requested data to Booz Allen Hamilton.

Actions:

- Carol and Stephen will follow up with the villages.
- Sandy will follow up with Village of Liberty if needed to encourage them to complete their data.

#### 7. Budget and financial report – Stephen Stuart

Stephen provided a written report on income and expenditures.

SC preliminary budget includes \$60,000 for SASD in 2016.

#### 8. SC Climate Action Plan and Climate Smart Communities (CSC) outreach to towns and villages

The County has begun tree clearing for 2MW solar installation at the Liberty Health Complex. Staff has provided the county with information about the net GHG reduction that will be achieved by the array, compared with GHG reduction achieved by the trees that are being removed. Solar City estimates that the array will provide the County with energy cost savings of \$2.1 million over 20 years/\$91,907 per year.

The third CSC roundtable, hosted by the Town of Bethel, took place in October. Carol provided details on the extent of GHG emissions from private septic systems and the need for public information to educate property owners about affordable retrofits that will reduce methane emissions from septic systems.

Heather Brown of the SC Office of Management and Budget has asked Carol and Stephen to work with her in 2016 to update the Climate Action Plan adopted in 2011. We will:

- Add information about ongoing initiatives recommended in the plan;
- Quantify the GHG reductions and cost savings associated with these projects;
- Broaden the focus to include new focus on waste reduction, purchasing policies and informational outreach to communities.

#### 9. Water Symposium

Symposium panel discussions were postponed to spring 2016. Liberty HS students are working on videos projects.

#### 10. Other Outreach efforts

A number of opportunities for collaboration, informational outreach and regional leadership were discussed.

The SC Human Rights Commission is through a project called "Everyday Democracy" to examine poverty in the County. They are looking for conveners in each of the County's 9 electoral districts, who will be trained to lead community conversations, and for venues for these discussions.

Stephen Stuart circulated an invitation from the Northeast Biomass Heating Expo in March 2016. Discussion: Board members posed a number of potential concerns associated with biomass including fine particulate emissions, "trash to ash" generation of electricity at a utility scale and for combined heat and power (CHP), efficacy of wood pellets, irresponsible stripping of forests for pellet manufacture, and concerns that the industry is not sufficiently regulated.

Actions:

- Carol will reach out to NACL Theatre regarding potential collaboration on "Courage."
- Kathy Aberman, Dick Riseling, Sandy Oxford and Isaac Green Diebboll will pursue possible participation in "Everyday Democracy" on behalf of SASD.

Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart left the meeting at 6:00 to get to another scheduled meeting.

Per notes provided by Isaac Green Diebboll, the following topics were discussed and actions taken:

Discussion topics:

- EMG sensitivity and research on possible health impacts of smart meters
- Catskill Mountainkeeper's Solarize Project in the Mid-Hudson Region and potential for SASD participation in Sullivan County.
- Strategies to encourage more energy audits
- FarmShare
- Board discussed and decided not to co-host the Northeast Biomass Heating Expo at this time. Further research is required in order to form a policy on Biomass heating and its endorsement.

Actions:

- Various Board and staff members will further research the biomass issue.
- Isaac will arrange for a presentation to the Board regarding FarmShare
- Isaac, Peggy, Carol and Stephen will meet to organize discussions with Catskill Mountainkeeper

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM. Motion by Peggy Gans, seconded by Sandy Oxford. Unanimously agreed.

Next Board Meeting will take place January 26, 2016 at 4:30 PM and will be a pot luck dinner at Apple Pond Farm.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Roig, acting as Secretary for this meeting, supplemented by notes provided by Isaac Green Diebboll.