Merrimac Green Advisory Committee
Minutes of the meeting
6/22/26 6:30-8

Members present:

Kendra Bowker
Cheryl Leone
Martha Muehe-zoom
Liaison- Ed Davis
Liaison- Rob Gustison-zoom
Absent:
Andy Toomey
Mike Stevens

Discussion:

-Approved meeting minutes from 5/25/26
-Approved Agenda

- Rob discussed next steps to keep the Selectboard informed and up to date on the suggestion that Merrimac adopt the Zero Emissions Vehicle First Policy. Kendra will arrange a meeting with all Dept. Heads to inform and answer questions or concerns. Dillan Patel could be asked to attend to repeat the presentation he made to Selectboard in May. A template from the state of the document that would need to be signed by the board, should be presented so that Merrimac's Town council can evaluate it, before the Selectboard can sign it. Are there any grants for public EV chargers that could be presented at the same time.

-Kendra will ask Mary Usovicz for more info regarding an interview request from a Master's student regarding her thesis.

- The committee reviewed the Green Energy Survey results for the most notable/informative replies. Three main reasons stood out as to why more residents are not switching to more energy efficient or greener actions, products or systems: High cost, no need to replace items that are still working, and lack of faith in new technologies. Educating residents was discussed.

- 30% of respondents were unaware of the no-cost Homeworks energy assessments, so that is a potential area for further education.
- 4 respondents were renters. Ed will try to determine the percentage/number of renters in town since in this case landlords generally determine appliances/energy types they use.
- 14% of respondents still heat with oil. Kendra wondered if these could be lower income people. Switching from oil to heat pumps is more cost-effective than switching from gas to heat pumps. The state also has a program that offers zero-interest loans for heat pumps to low income people that we might promote.

- Over 60% said it's important to switch town-owned buildings and vehicles to green energy sources over time, which can be seen as some confirmation of our pursuing town policies like zero emissions first vehicles.
- 68% of respondents are interested in adding more solar capability. Kendra mentioned that there's a bill proposed this year at the state house that is being received favorably and that would allow people to buy small plug-in solar panels at local stores to offset their electricity cost. If that passes, we could educate about that (vote happens soon).
- As to additional topics of interest beyond green energy, recycling and reducing waste was the most popular, although several others were also indicated.

-Several people indicated they are willing to help the committee. The committee will send an email to everyone to further discuss how they can help the committee.

-The following agenda items were not discussed due to lack of time and will be added to the agenda for next meeting:

-Becoming an ACE ally: inviting a speaker to a future meeting.?
-Waste Management Workshop goals.
-Kendra's report on CELT's /second Municipal Fellows Showcase that she attended on 6/16/26

Next meeting July 20, 2026 6:30-8 Merrimac Police Dept. and zoom