

**TOWN OF EXETER
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
SEPT 2, 2026**

Meeting called to order by Caryl at 7 pm.

Members present: Denise Short, Jim Breeling, Sarah Koff, Sarah Dewitt, Julie Gaunt, Chris Zigmont, Caryl Olmstead, Dhruv Bhaghatyath

Staff present: Kristen Murphy

Public Comments:

Keith Whitehouse spoke about the Styrofoam densifier. He has been taking the lead on checking the styrofoam storage and densifying it. He has found that it needs to be densified every 2 weeks. Re: other towns using the densifier in the same model that Guilford does, Keith asks how to expand/encourage other towns. Ordinance currently that only EX residents can use transfer station. Today Keith, along with Caryl and Julie, processed 9 large bags and made 3 bricks. Biggest/hardest part is bringing it to the densifier. Having hooks is really key. Ideally 3 people would work it. Have made about 60 bags, approx 25 bricks (each one weighing 35 lbs) so far.

Q: Any businesses involved in dropping off foam, or mostly personal? A: Probably both. Q: How are we keeping track month to month? A: Log. Volunteering is easy; he asks for our help.

Approval of prior meeting minutes from the June 3 mtg: Chris moves, Jim seconds.

Dhruv's project update — he has been comparing Exeter against other 7 neighboring towns. Two main findings: since 2018 our cost has been up. Recycling down 22%, trash stayed same. Recycling cost has doubled. We rank 5th out of 8th on rate of diversion (in 2018 we were first). He and Caryl are going to keep going on this research; this is just an update.

Education/outreach:

Sustainable Certification Program Update: We don't have any new members and would like to keep spreading the word. All members are asked to go to town businesses and suggest they look into the certification program. A deadline was decided in order to create urgency. November 1 is first official deadline. If anyone needs postcards to bring to the businesses Kristen has them (and those also explain the program really well).

Legislative updates: none

Waste reduction/transfer station sticker update: Jim will look more into getting data about cars registered, etc

Compost : no updates

Budget: Kristen gave an overview on this. She feels that we're not ready to request additional Mr Fox bins; they don't seem consistently full. 35K is in DPW budget to look at tweaks and improvements in transfer station. We as SAC could write letter of support for this. Motion to approve a letter of support. Julie motions. Chris supports. All in favor, none opposed, motion passes.

Website: no update. Kristen suggests we look at what we have now and prioritizing what we want to keep for the new website.

Other business:

Styrofoam: Kristen feels that other towns should get involved with our densifier in the same way that Guilford involves others. We submitted an additional solid waste permit for the densifier, which we're waiting on official confirmation. In the meantime, we can be preloading educational resources. Caryl suggested if we should have a subcommittee. Kristen: DPW is flat-out. Keith is doing the styrofoam single-handedly. There are volunteer forms to sign up. Chris suggests we sign up to weekly check on the styrofoam. Kristen: we need to check weekly, need to come up with an idea for the hooks. We got a grant to fund a storage container; DPW is purchasing soon. Kristen will send out a weekly signup to check on the styrofoam at the transfer station.

Julie: Pedestrian/bike master plan committee being discussed at Select Board. Is there any way we could support this? Discussion ensued; in general it was decided it wasn't up to SAC to take this on but we will keep following it and see if we can support in some way as it materializes.

Sarah Dewitt: Halloween costume drive, would like to make it more accessible like the town hall. Kristen said either SAC or PTO could request use of Town Hall for this purpose.

With no additional business, Nina motioned to adjourn and Denise seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Submitted by,
Sarah Koff

Next mtg: October 7, 2026