

**Approved Meeting Minutes of the
Resilient Hartford Meeting
June 28, 2023**

Resilient Hartford Members Present: Earl Hatley (4/4/25) Michaela Lavelle (6/27/26), Laura Simon (11/30/23) and vice-chair Dylan Kreis (11/30/23).

Resilient Hartford Liaison Members Present: Ally Tufenjkian (Selectboard).

Staff Present: Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

Others Present: Lyrica Stelle, Vermont Department of Health.

A hybrid Resilient Hartford Meeting was held on Wednesday, June 28th. Vice-chair Dylan Kreis called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. He read the script for hybrid meetings followed by a roll call and introductions. Dylan welcomed new member Michaela Lavelle to RH.

1. **Meeting Notes of May 24th:** Dylan asked if there were any comments regarding the meeting notes of the May 24th meeting. Since there were no corrections, the meeting notes of May 24th were accepted as written.
2. **Vermont Department of Health:** Lyrica Stelle, Chronic Disease Program Specialist for the Vermont Department of Health was present to talk about working together with Resilient Hartford on issues that are mutual such as the food forest (access to healthy food) and walkability/multi-modal transportation. Lyrica is assigned to cover 22 towns in our region. She noted that three behaviors (no physical activity, poor diet and smoking) lead to four diseases (cancer, heart disease & stroke, type 2 diabetes and lung disease) that are responsible for over 50% of deaths in Vermont. The Vermont Department of Health focuses on key strategies for healthy communities. Matt noted that Hartford has a Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan that was developed in 2009. He stated that he hopes to apply for a grant this fall to update the Plan. The process would include the formation of a Steering Committee. Matt thought it would be helpful to have Lyrica or another staff person for from the Vermont Department of Health to participate on the Steering Committee. Lyrica mentioned that she has worked with AARP of Vermont on walk audits. Walk audits are used to observe and document the need for walking infrastructure. Dylan suggested working with the Bugbee Senior Center, Haven and Listen. He thanked Lyrica for attending the meeting.
3. **Public Comments:** Dylan asked if there are any public comments. There were none.
4. **Food Forest Update:** Matt reported that the June 25th workday went well. The following items were accomplished:
 - Planting potatoes and seeding the rest of the Abenaki garden with a multispecies cover.
 - Broad forking the planned tree nursery.
 - Adding a few perennials each to the 5 pear tree guilds
 - Weeding and freeing up healthy baby trees.
 - Fertilizing all of the trees and guilds.
 - Broadcasting dandelion and mullein seed all around.

Matt noted that Dylan installed an overflow prevention mechanism for the water tank. Matt reported that Gardeners Supply has provided the Food Forest project with a 25% discount. He received approval to order a Vermont garden cart. Matt reported that Cat Buxton requested that we establish a no-cut zone for the food forest. In response, Matt spoke to Parks and Recreation Department Director

Scott Hausler who is supportive of the idea. Scott requested that the no-cut zone be staked out. Matt stated that he will do that by the end of this week.

Laura Simon expressed concern that that the water pump should be a top priority to create a better water delivery system. Matt responded that we had planned to purchase a pump this spring, but the cost was higher than what the RH budget had available. Laura reported that she completed a draft application for a New England Grassroots Environmental Fund (NEGEF). Matt noted that before applying for a grant, we need to submit a memo to the Finance Director/Town Manager for approval. In some instances, the request may have to go to the Selectboard. Matt suggested obtaining a cost estimate for the pump and accessories. Dylan responded that he is working on it. Matt asked if the NEGEF grant is a seed grant or grow grant. Laura responded a seed grant. Matt noted that RH received a seed grant from NEGEF for the RH workshop series a few years ago. Matt suggested contacting NEGEF to get a determination on which grant is most appropriate for RH. RH agreed. Earl Hatley made a motion to move forward with a grant application. It was seconded by Laura and unanimously approved.

Earl reported that the Saturday workday included finish planting the cover crops and potatoes in the Abenaki Garden. He noted that a critter dug up some of the potatoes and that we might need a fence.

5. **Quechee Abenaki Garden Update:** Earl reported that the Quechee Lakes Landowners Association (QLLA) and the QLLA Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council have been working on a revised land use agreement. Earl noted that he has received assistance from John Reid, Planning Commission chair, liaison to RH and a QLLA member. Earl is waiting for approval by the QLLA Trustees. Earl reported that last year, they planted oak, butternut and elderberry. They all look healthy in spite of the May 18th hard freeze. Earl noted that the QLLA Trustees will not permit a food forest. In place of it, they plan to have a marsh herb garden. Earl stated that the Quechee site is a very sacred place. He plans to bring down an Abenaki elder to do a walk-through of the marsh plants and herbs. Earl concluded that working with the QLLA Trustees has been a long process. QLLA recently approved the fire circle which is a key component.
6. **Wilder School Food Forest Project:** Matt reported that Carolyn informed him that the Hartford School Board denied the request to Wilder School Food Forest Project due to the staff shortage for custodial and maintenance positions. The School Board is wary of any changes to any school grounds that might change maintenance routines. Carolyn will continue to work with Principal Heavisides on a revised proposal.
7. **Resilient Hartford Opening:** Dylan reported that with Michaela's appointment, RH is down to one opening. He asked members to spread the word that we are looking for a member.
8. **Announcements:**
 - a. URI Survey on Native Plants: Matt reported that earlier today, he was contacted by Nikki Hagan, a PhD student from the University of Rhode Island about a survey on native plants. Nikki heard about our food forest and is looking for a RH representative fill out the survey. Matt asked for a volunteer. The consensus was to ask Ruth Fleishman to fill out. Matt agreed to contact Ruth.
9. **Next RH Meeting:** Dylan noted that the next RH meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 26th.
10. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.
11. **Date RH Member Terms Expire:** Laura Simon (11/30/23). Carolyn Hooper (10/17/25) Earl Hatley (4/4/25), Michaela Lavelle (6/27/26), chair Kye Cochran (11/30/23) vice-chair Dylan Kreis (11/30/23),