

Resource Recycling Advisory Commission
Meeting of February 25, 2019
Middletown Senior Center, 7 PM

Members Present: Monica Belyea, Alison Johnson, Darrell Gagnon, Robin Hansen, Krishna Winston.

Members not present: Bessie Bianco, Izzy Guy, Rebecca MacLachlan, Harold Panciera, Chantal DeArmitt, Debbie Stanley, Christine Sherwood.

Member of the Public Present: None

Public Works Staff Present: Kim O'Rourke

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm and started with approval of the minutes of the January meeting. Darrel Gagnon requested that his comments of being opposed to the plastic bag ban be noted in the minutes. He is opposed to the mandatory ban and supportive of a thoughtful public education campaign to reduce the use of plastic bags.

Recycling Coordinator's Report

Kim O'Rourke reported that the State is requiring municipalities to submit a compliance report and plan as to how they will reduce waste by 10% in the municipality. Options to reduce waste include: implementing SMART programs, implementing curbside collection of food waste, collecting food waste at the transfer station, collecting textiles curbside, adopting the What's In, What's Out campaign, and implementing EPR programs. The City is already doing many of these. The Director has agreed to a food waste drop off at the transfer station. Other programs that will be submitted for compliance: reusable bag ordinance (if it passes), a new multi-family ordinance to improve communications between the City and apartments and condos, collecting food waste composting in schools, and promoting education on how to reduce food waste at home. Monica Belyea said there is also an effort in the schools to require all the elementary schools to follow MacDonough Schools' lead with breakfast to reduce food waste. They will be required to change procedures to have the children come down to the café and choose their items. At MacDonough this has resulted in a better breakfast and less food waste.

Kim said she is completing the compliance report which DEEP has asked for the last few years. There are two areas of concern. 1) public space recycling. Not all the parks have recycling bins. We do have some in storage to go out. Billy did agree to purchase bins for the others. There are over 100 containers in the parks. 2) Registration of haulers. According to state law, haulers must register with every municipality. Most haulers comply, but not all. Kim is going to update the city ordinance to reflect this and add some enforcement.

Kim said she attended the annual conference of the CT Recyclers Coalition. She said they had a few different speakers: Susan Collins from Container Recycling Institute,

Katie Dykes, the new DEEP Commissioner, a markets update from folks from WasteDive and Waste360 and a panel to discuss glass recycling. She said the Housatonic Region is taking glass out of their curbside collection and only collecting it at a drop off.

Kim announced she is collecting toothbrushes and toothpaste and its packaging as part of the Terra Cycle/Colgate collection. Members were very excited about this. Kim said right now she is just advertising it by word of mouth. But once she has a good system in place, she can promote it more. Darrel suggested contacting dental offices.

Chairman's Report

Krishna Winston said she has had some excellent discussions in her Simple Life Class at Wesleyan. She is going to pass along some helpful links to products with little or no packaging and a very simple toothpaste recipe.

Swap Shack Schedule

March 2 - Krishna

March 6 - Debbie Stanley

March 16 - Izzy

March 13 - Monica

March 20 - Krishna

The Reusable Bag Ordinance will be considered on March 13 at the Public Works at 6:30 and by the General Counsel Commission on March 14. Krishna said she will not be able to attend to speak on behalf of the Commission. Someone else will have to do that.

Upcoming Events:

March 18 Composting Workshop at Senior Center 7pm

March 23 Last Day to order Compost Bins and Rain Barrels

March 30 Distribution Day for Compost Bins and Rain Barrels

April 7 Repair Café in Old Saybrook

April 13 Shred Event at Pat Kidney Parking Lot

Sept. 22 Repair Café at Dekoven House

As the time gets closer, Kim will ask for volunteers for the Middletown events.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim O'Rourke

Kim O'Rourke, Recycling Coordinator