

KENT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Kent Town Hall
41 Kent Green Boulevard
Kent, Connecticut 06757

REGULAR MEETING
June 10, 2015 – 7:00 PM

MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
KENT TOWN CLERK
2015 JUN 22 P 3:02
BY *[Signature]*
TOWN CLERK

Present: Commissioners Liddy Baker, Melissa Cherniske, Carol Franken, Connie Manes, Wendy Murphy, Donna Sommers; Advisors Laurie Doss, Jos Spelbos; guests Jen Iannucci, Lindsey Kerr; reporter Lynn Worthington.
Absent: Rick Levy.

1. Call to order.

There being a quorum present, Chairperson Connie Manes called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm. Manes welcomed guests Lindsey Kerr – a member of the community, and Jen Iannucci – Executive Director of the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority. Members of the Commission briefly introduced themselves, as did the guests.

2. Accept/Amend Agenda.

Carol Franken made a motion to accept the agenda. Liddy Baker seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. Review, amend, approve minutes of Special Meeting May 13, 2015.

Jos Spelbos suggested a few changes clarifying dollar amounts contributed by the Kent Garden Club, the cost of services provided in connection with Arbor Day and the Kent Center School Arboretum, and the addition of information about temporary event recycling bins awarded to the Commission. Franken made a motion to approve the minutes with these amendments. Melissa Cherniske seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

4. Treasurer's Report.

Treasurer Liddy Baker provided an oral report and submitted a written report; two receipts for \$94.95 and \$341.06 were submitted in connection with the Town Clean Up; \$676.18 remains for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. The Kent Chamber of Commerce made a contribution to offset the \$341.06 for the Town Clean Up, which was credited to the Kuga Fund. The Commission directed Baker to replenish \$145 in funds from the Kuga Fund used for tree pruning at the Kent Center School Arboretum. The current Kuga Fund balance is \$7582.05.

The Commission directed Baker to order the printing of 10 additional Natural & Cultural Resources Inventories (Kent Riches) as supply is low.

The Commission discussed the printing needs associated with the Trail Maps drafted by Wendy Murphy and John Baker. Cherniske moved that Baker, John Baker and Murphy should come up with a plan for printing expenditures in connection with this initiative; and that any remaining funds should be directed to the Kuga Fund. Franken seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

5. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Campaign.

Jen Iannucci briefly discussed the history and role of the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority. She answered and discussed the questions sent to her prior to the meeting. Areas of discussion included:

A. Permanent (street) Recycling Receptacles. Grant programs could fund the purchase of these. Studies have shown that in order to be effectively used, they must be placed next to ordinary trash collection bins. Other towns have successfully used recycling bins in their shopping/eating districts. The Town of Bridgewater is currently looking into this as well. Bins can be used for only bottles/cans, or for all single-stream collectibles. If recycling containers would be emptied by the Town and taken to the Transfer Station, it would make sense for us to collect all single-stream materials. If materials were insufficiently cleaned (i.e., full cups of liquid), some intervention might be necessary at the Transfer Station. Ms. Iannucci can send photos of some designs that might work for us. If enough towns are interested, a group buy might be possible.

B. Reuse, reduce, recycling Education. HRRA has many resources for educating the public about recycling. HRRA makes an annual visit to Kent Center School's 3rd grade. Ane Starr is the point person within the School. Ms. Iannucci has not toured the School for the purpose of assessing its recycling practices, but is available to do this if asked. Implementing and continuing good practices within a school takes buy-in from teachers, administrators, parents, students, and especially school custodial staff.

Iannucci showed the Commission a prototype for a new child-focused booklet about HRRA and recycling. Iannucci is willing to do her presentation (or a variation of it) for a school-aged audience at another forum in Kent (e.g., the Library) in order to reach children outside of the 3rd grade.

HRRA can customize and print materials specific to recycling in Kent, such as information showing what is, and is not recyclable at Kent's Transfer Station. HRRA may be available as a partner to print notepads reminding shoppers to "bring the reusable bags". These notepads could promote the MyECO app as well.

C. Economics. Ninety-nine (99%) of single stream materials collected for recycling are recovered and reenter the market as new product. Winters Bros. has been successful in finding buyers for recycled materials. Some contaminated items are returned and processed as "waste to energy". Styrofoam, batteries, and glass are difficult markets. "Alternative stewardship" programs for non single-stream materials (like plastic film) are a good area of focus. The Commission discussed whether it could work with the IGA to eliminate use of Styrofoam in its meat and vegetable departments.

D. Organics (Composting). In January 2014 a new law became effective in the State of Connecticut requiring commercial food wholesalers/distributors, industrial food manufacturers/processors, supermarkets, resorts or conference centers that generate an average projected volume of not less than one hundred four tons per year of organic waste material must send it to a processor rather than disposing of it with its regular trash. By 2020, the law will apply if these places generate 54 tons of organic waste. Residential composting programs require partnership with a hauler/processor. Having an organics collection container at Kent's Transfer Station would require a separate permit. There is a slideshow about Bridgewater's organics program on the HRRA website.

E. Municipal Recycling Ordinances. Many towns have good ordinances. Ms. Iannucci can provide examples. The ordinances generally express the town's recycling policies and programs. Kent's ordinance is within Ch. 16.

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

F. Plastic Film. Film collected for recycling does get recycled into new product. One example is Trex composite lumber. Winters Bros. collects plastic film for sale; it is not processed on site.

G. Pay-as-you-Throw. Other towns have successfully implemented pay-as-you-throw systems (PAYT). For example, New Milford residents pay to dispose of regular waste, but there is no charge to dispose of recyclables.

HRRA coordinates a monthly meeting each 1st Thursday of the month at 10:30 am in Brookfield. Representatives from each of the towns served by HRRA attend and members from the Commission are welcome. Ms. Iannucci will send a copy of her notes in answer to the Commission's questions to Manes. The Commission thanked Ms. Iannucci for her time and expert counsel.

Ms. Iannucci left the meeting.

Manes briefed the Commissioners about a new grant program administered through the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. There are three programs, two of which may be helpful to the Town of Kent. Manes will write up the notes from this meeting and outline a few options, with budget, for grant application, for circulation among the Commissioners.

Donna Sommers will meet with Ane Starr regarding Kent Center School recycling programming and internal systems.

6. Open Space Plan. Tabled.

7. Kent Land Trust Memorial Day Community Conservation Picnic Debrief. The Picnic went very well and Commissioners were pleased with the reception to the recycling display and activity. Murphy reported that Bruce Bennett is interested in helping with the idea of replacing trees on Elizabeth Street. The Kent Greenhouse would likely provide bargain-priced inventory for planting rather than overwintering it onsite at the garden center. Bennett's offer would also likely be helpful in the initiative to improve the aesthetics of the streetscape along Rte 341 heading eastward out of Kent where businesses along Maple Street Extension have backlots visible from the road.

The Commissioners discussed ways to improve recycling at the KLT Picnic.

8. CT Trail Days Debrief. Manes reported that Trails Days went well, with about 10 people attending each hike.

9. Old Business.

- A. Trail Brochure/Guide. Murphy reported that three trail maps are available on the Town website.
- B. Town of Kent Annual Report. Tabled.
- C. Hatch Pond Watershed Implementation Committee. Franken attended a recent program at the South Kent School. The programs are geared towards the school's students, and are very well done and interesting.
- D. Roxbury Conservation Commission Well Testing Program. Tabled.
- E. P&Z Regs Review. No report.
- F. Macroinvertebrates & HVA. Many visitors to the KLT Picnic were interested in the macroinvertebrates. Manes ran into Mike Jastremski of the Housatonic Valley Association, who would like to coordinate better with our fall sampling, as well as speak with the Commission about HVA's culverts project. Manes will invite Jastremski to the July meeting.
- G. Fracking Waste Ban Ordinance.

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

10. New Business.
 - A. Elizabeth Street and Maple Street trees. Discussed previously in #7.
 - B. State Legislative Session Recap. Tabled.
11. Correspondence. None.
12. Adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Manes
June 22, 2015

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

Intro – Kent Conservation Commission's vision, and program – Kent Recycles

Kent Recycles is an ambitious project that the Kent Conservation Commission is spearheading in collaboration with the Town, its Transfer Station, and civic groups and schools in the town. This is a multi-tiered project with its ultimate goal of educating citizens and maximizing our town's recycling contribution while minimizing and reducing the waste created.

Our goals:

1. Public awareness: Educating our youth and our community.

Examples: we have hosted information sessions at our Transfer Station, sent Press Releases regarding our Village Clean-Up, and promoted HRRRA's grade school poster contest. We have a new Facebook page which provides information and shares relevant links from local, state and nationwide programs

2. Increasing reduce, reuse, and recycle: via incentives, process implementation, making new programs and opportunities available, awareness etc.

Examples: we borrowed temporary event recycling containers to our town's annual Sidewalk Days festival, to provide an option for recycling on our Main Street throughout the three-day celebration.

3. Measurement: Evaluating the performance of our programs and of facilities and other programs within the town.

One significant aspect of our project is adding five permanent recycling receptacles to the business district of Kent to make it just as easy to recycle as it is to add to the trash landfill. Currently only standard refuse bins are available on Kent's main street, although some eating establishments maintain their own recycling receptacles. As Kent is a major tourist destination we feel that our recycling efforts and promotion will have a positive impact beyond our local environs. We aim to pave the way by inspiring other towns in the Housatonic Corridor to reassess and improve their recycling efforts. Our preliminary research shows that receptacles that fit into our town aesthetics range in cost between \$1200-1500 per container. We are researching private and public match funding sources to help offset this expense to the town.

This could be addressed in your grant to DEEP. If you are going to make this effort, studies have proven that it only works when the garbage and the recycling containers are next to each other.

Goal in meeting with Jen/HRRRA

We are hopeful of gaining insight into what strategies have worked in other towns, to help us set priorities and focus our programs. There are so many directions we could go, and limited resources/time. We know whatever we do will have a positive effect, but wish to go about this in a strategic way rather than pepper our efforts in a dozen different places. We hope to seek funding through the recent DEEP grant programs and want to ensure that our application is very competitive. We also wish to learn of additional funding sources.

Below, in no order of priority, are topics we hope you will address on Wednesday:

Education

1. What has worked best with regard to programming in area schools? **Annual visits from HRRRA along with everyday practice in the Classroom, cafeteria etc. You need people within the school to be on board (Students, Teachers, Principal, Parents and most importantly Janitorial staff)**
2. How do different age groups respond, and how might we implement programs accordingly? **Start small, work with one grade like the 3rd grade, then build on it using the student council.**
3. We would like to institute programs in our elementary school and believe that 2nd and 5th graders would be a good place to start – what role can HRRRA play in this? **We provide in classroom programs to any school in the region. We have been to Kent School and worked with the 3rd Grade. This is based on state curriculum.**

Economics (Answers in Blue came directly from Winters Brothers representative Ryan Bingham)

1. What proportion of what is currently collected for recycling actually reenters the market as a new product? For single stream- about 99%. For the 275 tons that we receive daily we dispose of 1.5 tons because it's non recyclable items.
2. How much and which types of recyclables get returned to the waste stream following collection because there is no market for them? Contaminated items (wet or soiled), hazardous materials, batteries, and Styrofoam come in but not in large quantities. Glass is the biggest problem that we have because there is no real market for the recyclable.
3. What, if anything, can we do to help grow the markets, or open new markets, to improve the rates? Buy more oil. Typically commodity markets for recyclable items follow a close trend line to the price of oil. When oil falls so does recyclable commodities. Also, demand in the market plays a role, if people are requesting more items made from recyclable materials it can have an impact as well.
4. How can we reduce unnecessary collection or duplicative sorting processes for recyclable items that are not currently being recycled (if any)? Styrofoam can be recycled, just not single stream. Also, film plastic (plastic grocery bags). These are items that are better recycled separately from the single stream because they are hard to remove from the stream. Paint, mattresses, batteries, electronics, textiles and other stewardship programs are also helpful to recycle items that may not typically be recycled in a single stream recycling program.

Plastic film – in particular the plastic bags we get from purchases at the stores. There is conflicting information about whether the bags are actually being recycled in the facilities available to us. At our transfer station we separate them into a somewhat small flimsy container. How much of our trash is plastic film; how much of the Pacific garbage patch is made up of plastic bags?

1. Are plastic bags and the stuff placed in those collection bins actually getting recycled or are they just being separated so as not to clog the machines at Winter Brothers where Kent sends its recyclables? **Yes, they do get recycled. They have value and are being sent to companies like TREX. They are also used to making other plastic items including new plastic bags.**
2. When they are separated at Winter Brothers are they then recycled? **Yes, but Winters sells the film they don't process it.** Manufacturers make it into what types of products? **Plastic film is used for composite lumber, new plastic bags etc. Go to <http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org> or visit TREX website. There are also lots of YouTube videos on this kind of stuff.**
3. What can we do in Kent to improve the rate of recycling of plastic film, and diversion of film into landfills (**Note: we don't use landfills in CT although your hauler may be taking it out of state to a landfill, ask them where it goes**). Regarding increasing the rate, promote it; educate the public where plastic film should be taken. Use the **HRRA recycling flyer that gives information on plastic film.** and the natural environment? **EDUCATION is the key to all of this!**
4. What about store collection programs and facilities? Should we work with our grocery here in Kent to have it listed as a collection site and otherwise promote film recycling there? **Yes, it doesn't hurt.**
5. And what about legislation in Connecticut that would make stores charge for plastic bags at the store (or ban plastic bags)? **The bills this session regarding plastic bags died. But next year, be active in writing to your state representatives and don't be afraid to go to a hearing and speak about your feelings on the subject.**

Organics/Compost

1. Can you provide details on the Bridgewater pilot program? **Visit www.hrra.org for the organics PP presentation.**
2. How could Kent try something like this at zero or low cost to residents? **Partner with a Hauler and a Processor**
3. How was the program marketed in Bridgewater in order to get residents to participate? How could we build on these strategies to ensure sufficient participation here? **Town Newsletter, Newspaper, Social Media, flyers, hauler invoices, fairs, and events any where you can reach people.**
4. How do programs focused on organic waste from landscaping, lawn, and garden care (e.g., mown grass, weeds, and leaves) work? How could we determine if this would be feasible in Kent? **Talk to other Transfer Stations in the region how they are doing it. Take field trips.**

Styrofoam

Kent's Transfer Station is no longer able to accept Styrofoam for recycling. There wasn't enough for regular collection and it blew around too much. Is it worth trying to revive this materials collection and how might we assist? **No, not at this time. It has little value and not worth the transportation cost.**

Transfer Stations

1. How flexible are transfer stations to respond to innovation and change in the collection of recyclables? **Depends on the TS.** How does Kent's Transfer Station comport with this? How can we help bring some of the innovations to Kent and help the Transfer Station manage transitions? **Kent should be participating in our Regional Recycling Task Force. Send a representative every month. Know and understand what everyone else in the region and state are doing.**
2. What is the feasibility of having a Transfer Station program where it is free to residents to drop recyclables and pay only for garbage? Are any other communities in our area doing "pay as you throw"? **A lot of communities do that. New Milford has a similar structure. Talk to other TS operators. Go on fieldtrips. We discuss things like this at the RRTF meetings.**

Advocacy

1. Are there state bills we should be following/taking action on behalf of, such as the plastic bag bills referenced above? Water bottles? **The session has ended this year but look out next year and write your representatives when you support something.**
2. Can HRRRA help us with some persuasive numbers and facts – most of all those specific to Kent and its rate of recycling, trash production, potential savings due to improved recycling, etc. - that we can use in our PR and advocacy? **We do track tonnage rates for all our towns. We could share that information with you. E-Waste, Recycling rates, MSW rates etc.**
3. The DEEP RFP mentions municipal recycling ordinances – can you provide some forward-thinking examples? **PAYT is an example of a town passing an ordinance, no organics in your MSW would be another one, Landlords must provide a recycling container to all residents etc.**

Recycling Rewards (award \$2000):

Permanent Street Containers (4x \$500)

Town: bags for containers (est. 200/year??)

In-Kind: Town pickup of full bags and delivery to Transfer Station (weekly)

Waste Reduction Initiatives (up to \$20,000): (\$13,700)

A. Transfer Station (\$12,400)

1. Feasibility study – Pay as you Throw (PAYT) (also could set up UBP grant, next year)
 - a. Education & Research (in-kind, Conservation Commission)
 - b. Visits to other towns implementing PAYT(2) (In-kind, Conservation Commission)
 - c. Meetings with Town government and Transfer Station staff (\$500)
 - d. As part of feasibility study, assess potential to open transfer station to all recyclables
2. Improve signage (\$1000)
 - a. Single Stream – what’s allowed, what’s not
 - b. PR – economics of recycling, what’s happening at our Transfer Station, what recycled products are important to our area? What could we improve upon?
 - c. Other signage for streamlined use
3. Education (\$0 – all in-kind)
 - a. Transfer Station on-site education (in-kind, Conservation Commission)
 - b. Children and young adult program, Kent Memorial Library (or outdoor event?) (in-kind, Conservation Commission and HRRRA)
 - c. Meetings with school administration to enlist buy-in, establish plan for increased reduce, reuse, recycle program (elements to include purchase of environmentally preferred products, disposal alternatives, decrease use of paper/recycle & etc. Could someone at the school be paid to take this role?)
4. Compliance (funding Town personnel) (\$5000 for spot-checks?)

(this would qualify as “mini-disposal audit” to qualify for Recycling Rewards in subsequent rounds)

5. Organics (\$10,900)

- a. Feasibility study – including outreach to hauler/processor (in-kind, Conservation Commission)
- b. Meetings with Town government and Transfer Station staff (\$500)
- c. PR/enrollment (\$400)
- d. bins for participants (\$1000)
- e. facilities at Transfer Station (\$4000)
- f. additional staff, Transfer Station (\$5000)

B. Business education and partnership initiative (\$1,300)

1. IGA – plastic film recycling, phase-out of Styrofoam, reusable bags

- a. PR, plastic film recycling, signage (\$800)
- b. Reusable bags (\$500) (in-kind, Chamber?)
- c. Notepads (\$350) (in-kind, IGA, HRRRA)
- d. Series of meetings with store management (in-kind, Conservation Commission)

2. Other businesses – recycling procedures, instore design to encourage recycling

- a. Presentation to Chamber of Commerce (in-kind, Conservation Commission, HRRRA)

C. Conservation Commission updates Municipal Ordinance (in-kind, Conservation Commission)