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*By Darlene Brady at 8:43 am, Feb 26, 2021*

KENT CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Kent Town Hall  
41 Kent Green Boulevard  
Kent, Connecticut 06757

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

January 20, 2021

Present: Commissioners Connie Manes (chair), Liddy Baker , Melissa Cherniske, Carol Franken, and Wendy Murphy; advisor Jos Spelbos, visitor Mike Benjamin.(arrived and welcomed at 7 pm), First Selectman Jean Speck @7:30.

1. Call to order

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Connie called the meeting to order at 6.38 pm.

2. Accept/amend agenda

The agenda was amended by Melissa and accepted upon a motion by Liddy

3. Review, amend, approve meeting Minutes

The draft December Minutes were approved after a motion by Melissa and a second by Liddy.

4. Treasurer's Report. Liddy said two checks had gone out to Wendy and Jos for expenses incurred on behalf of the Commission.

5. Public comment

None

6. Old Business

6A. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle . Connie reported that a Sustainable Waste Mgmt Town Meeting was held on Jan 12 to discuss a new ordinance (Ch. 16 Solid Waste and Recycling). The ordinance actually **dates to 2017 but had never been brought to public discussion. Connie and Jos attended the hearing but there was very little discussion. She thinks that the ordinance is now being passed as part of an effort to standardize the practices of all the towns under an existing Oak Ridge contract. That contract goes to 2029 so the changes proposed are primarily to drop outdated language and to emphasize certain features that have become essential to managing waste more efficiently. Connie said a vote would be taken on the amendment on Thursday, January 21. As always the crux of the problem comes down to reducing the quantity of waste that the town and then our waste contractor must handle. State landfills and the Hartford incinerator are due to reach maximum capacity in a couple of years. Melissa commented that the Pandemic has had a major impact on the way people shop, with many retail items now arriving by Fed-X, UPS and USPS in wasteful cardboard and Styrofoam packaging.**

**Connie explained that a recent letter from the Selectmen's Office explained the turnover of staff at the Transfer Station including the painting of traffic lanes, the temporary closing of the Swap Shop. A new manager was slated to be interviewed immediately. Glass recycling guidelines will be issued as soon as specifics about separating colors are decided. Also discussed was the interest in handling organic waste more efficiently and with environmental considerations in towns like ours.**

**"Pay as You Throw" is not a popular option (users being billed per waste bags dropped at the Transfer Station) but it does work to make people more conscious of how much trash they are producing; the state may eventually mandate this method. Banning PFAs and single-use bags and containers are also under consideration. A full report from CCSMM Connecticut Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management is due out sometime after February 1. As this issue is going to play a major role in town finances and management for years to come Melissa suggested that we ask Maria Horn and Craig Minor to speak to us.**

**Jean Speck having arrived from another meeting, she answered questions relating to continuing discussions with HRRRA as to reduce tonnage. Aerobic digesters which are used in large communities are too expensive for small towns like ours. Jos added that the ordinance will include fines if individuals fail to separate refuse according to clearly stated rules.**

**6B Kent Trail Guide and Kent Chamber Initiative Discussion focused on an additional number of Trails Books (as many as 70 on top of the original 39) which the Chamber of Commerce wishes us to provide and partially pay for. Melissa said she had vetted the new list as well as the old and felt that the Chamber was being appropriately selective in the Welcome bags it was distributing. After some discussion we agreed that the purpose of our Trail Books was to get our citizens out enjoying Kent's recreational offerings and that we were thus willing to pay our share of printing costs as before. Over 700 copies have been circulated to date according to Liddy. We have also places 30 copies for sale at the House of Books and 10 at the Library's front desk.**

**6C. Update WCCAA. Wendy said that the instruments used for collecting data were currently undergoing recalibration and the replacement of old sensors and should be back on line in early February. She said she hoped to have some kind of brief report on WCCAA's activities prepared for the Selectmen by their next meeting on February 9. She added that the Cricket Valley Plant was reported by the citizen's group in Dover Plains to be running at half power which is a factor to evaluate when the air quality scientists at UConn do their longitudinal study of air quality in our six member towns.**

6D Update Green Bank Municipal Assistance Solar Program. Wendy reports that the Board of Education is proceeding nicely with the Green Bank people on developing the school's solar program in line with plans for other remodeling and repair schedules.

6E. Update on Siting Council and Tower. Jean Speck reported that the town decided not to participate further in the citizens' appeal to deny ATT's right to construct a tower on Richards Road. Considerable monies have already been expended and the Selectmen have decided to form a committee to look into broadband as an alternative

6F. Connie discussed GC3 The Governor's Council on Climate Change which she attended

7A. New Business.

Looking ahead to the 2022 scheduled revision of the POCD, Connie noted that one of the many items notably absent from the current document is any discussion of Communications. Previous regulations did not address such matters as cell towers when they came along. Jean spoke about Climate Change

issues, also not mentioned then; she said the State Legislature is developing policy. Climate Justice is another topic to be developed.

7B. April Programming. Carol discussed possible themes for our April 2021 Library program timed to Earth Day. She suggested tying in the History of Trail Use in Kent to the Library's Centennial but will contact Laurie Doss about reviving the Bat presentation which was dropped due to the Covid Lock-down in 2020. The hour being late and the future of the Pandemic still very uncertain, we decided to postpone discussion until our February Meeting.

8. Correspondence  
None

9. Adjourn.  
There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8.50 pm by Connie.

Respectfully submitted  
By Wendy Murphy  
January 31, 2021