

Resource Recycling Advisory Commission
Meeting of January 28, 2019
Middletown Senior Center, 7 PM

Members Present: Bessie Bianco, Alison Johnson, Darrell Gagnon, Izzy Guy, Rebecca MacLachlan, Robin Hansen, Debbie Stanley, Krishna Winston.

Members not present: Harold Panciera, Chantal DeArmitt, Monica Belyea, Christine Sherwood.

**Member of the Public Present: Maria Madsen Holzberg, Middletown Garden Club
Public Works Staff Present: Kim O'Rourke**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm and started with approval of the minutes of the November meeting. Izzy Guy requested that she be listed as "not present". The minutes were approved with that change.

Maria Madsen Holzberg gave an update on the reusable bag ordinance. She said she and John Wareham from the Garden Club have spoken to businesses on Main Street, in Tradewinds Plaza. She plans to reach out to Price Chopper, Stop and Shop and Home Depot. Darrel Gagnon said he spoke with Stop and Shop and they have not heard of this proposal. Many businesses already use paper bags, but some, especially restaurants, still use plastic bags. A couple use paper bags as part of their product (jewelers) and they are very against having to charge for the bag. Because of that, she met with the City Attorney and decided to include an exclusion for "gift bags". She said the results of the survey will be made available once they are compiled.

Maria reviewed the draft ordinance. There will be a meeting on Jan. 31 at 9am at Perk on Main to discuss the public education aspect of this program. Other important dates: 3/13/19 Public Works Commission; 3/14/19 General Counsel Commission; 4/1/19 Common Council. Other ideas for public education include advertising on city buses and in the schools. Rebecca Mac Lachlan asked if a friendly amendment could be added to improve the wording of the mandatory sign stores must have.

Darrel Gagnon expressed his opposition to the reusable bag ordinance. He said he is opposed to a mandatory ban on plastic bags. Although he is in favor of a thoughtful education program to reduce the prevalence of the bags.

Members discussed the possibility of something passing at the statewide level. There are several bills in the legislature pertaining to plastic bags.

Darrel raised the issue of the exemption for drycleaners. Rebecca asked if we could include, and not exempt, drycleaner bags with this proposal. Maria said she would talk to Best Cleaners about what options they may have instead of plastic bags.

Recycling Coordinator's Report

Kim O'Rourke discussed the status of milk carton recycling in the schools. She said all the schools (except the High School) are collecting milk cartons during lunch. The elementary schools are trying to collect during breakfast – some doing a better job than others. The High School has recycling bins in the café but doesn't have much of an education program. MacDonough School recently changed the breakfast procedures to offer a healthier breakfast to all the students, reduce food waste and they are able to recycle the milk cartons. Members felt they should really be spotlighted.

Kim O'Rourke said the Public Works Department does not want to consider putting together a task force on the SMART program until they know what they are doing with the waste in the future. Members suggested that the negotiators make sure there is no tonnage requirement for any facility they decide to work with.

Results for the Simple Recycling Program: Oct. 32 lbs, Nov. 4129 lbs, Dec. 3446 lbs. Krishna suggested that when the company leaves bags for customers, they should not leave them on the recycling carts because sometimes the carts are full and still need to be emptied. Wesleyan will be commencing the textile collection in the next few weeks as well.

Swap Shack

The circular rack has disappeared from the Shack. They also found roofing tar and a 5 gallon container of some other product. Members suggested making signs that say: "You are on Camera, Don't make a mess" or something like that.

Jan. 30	Krishna
Feb. 2	Robin
Feb. 6	Debbie
Feb. 13	Izzy
Feb 16	Chantel
Feb. 20	Bessie

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 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim O'Rourke
Kim O'Rourke, Recycling Coordinator