

**Resource Recycling Advisory Commission
Meeting of September 24, 2018
Middletown Senior Center, 7 PM**

Members Present: Alison Johnson, Darrell Gagnon, Debbie Stanley, Bessie Bianco, Krishna Winston.

Members not present: Harold Panciera, Chantal DeArmitt, Christine Sherwood, Monica Belyea, Rebecca MacLachlan, Robin Hanson

Member of the Public Present: Raffie Bianco

Public Works Staff Present: Chris Holden, Kim O'Rourke

The meeting was called to order and opened with a discussion with the Deputy Director, Chris Holden. Members talked about the poor market conditions for recycling and higher prices for recycling. Ms. Winston explained the Commission is now focusing on source reduction programs to try to reduce the total waste stream. Ms. Winston asked about the spraying of pesticides in the City right of way in the Farm Hill Road area. She said a resident questioned this because it was in front of her home and because the City has an ordinance to not use lawn care pesticides. Mr. Holden said he was not aware of pesticides being used on these properties, but he would check into it. He also said the ordinance just pertains to fields, so pesticides would be allowed in other areas. Ms. Winston questioned that and Mr. Holden said he would get back to the Commission with clarification.

Ms. Stanley asked if the City could ask vendors to have reduced packaging when products are delivered. She asked if any other municipalities have done this. Ms. O'Rourke said she would follow up on this. Ms. Stanley also suggested the Mayor send out an annual notice on recycling to city employees.

Members discussed food waste composting efforts. Ms. O'Rourke explained that she and the Center for EcoTechnology were not having a lot of luck with restaurants. The cost for a private compost hauler is very expensive when you combine it with garbage costs. Although, the restaurants she spoke with were not interested in any additional costs. Mr. Holden suggested looking at nursing homes. They might be more inclined to separate food waste and see a reduction in their garbage costs.

Ms. Winston mentioned that she was coordinating a showing of a Plastic Ocean at Wesleyan's Fisk Hall on October 16th. She is having a panel discussion and hopes to have Joseph Hoydilla come speak about the potential for a plastic bag ban.

Mr. Gagnon brought up the concern about the lack of information sent to residents about recycling. All Waste customers only receive is a small postcard with no recycling information (other than being directed to their website). Members discussed and wondered if All Waste would agree to put at least something about plastic bags on the

postcard. Also they asked Ms. O'Rourke to do an insert with the tax bills. Ms. O'Rourke said she used to do this, but then at some point they didn't allow it anymore. She will ask again.

Members discussed the Repair Café. It was quite successful with 50 people coming and making (or attempting to make) over 100 repairs. Ms. Winston mentioned that there was not much business for the phone and computer repair. She felt with more advertising, more people would come for those repairs.

Swap Shack Schedule

9/26 Bessie

10/6 Bessie

10/20 Alison

10/10 Debbie

Ms. O'Rourke will reach out to other committee members for the other dates.

Ms. Winston discussed the Board Residency program. She said it allows a Wesleyan student to work with a non profit or Board throughout the year to work on different projects. She said she might have someone in mind to do this.

Mr. Gagnon talked about the composting at the Durham Fair. He said they were working with the vendors to collect food waste and it was quite successful. He felt we could do a similar program for the Open Air Market and Coleman's carnival. That might be more feasible than offering it to the public. Members felt there was also opportunity at these festivals to ask vendors to use compostable paper goods. This is something to be explored for next year.

Members discussed the draft petition to Wesleyan about the lawn care pesticides. Ms. Winston said she would pass on the comments.

Commission members thanked Chris Holden for staying and participating in the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim O'Rourke

Kim O'Rourke
Recycling Coordinator

