

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION

Town of Newington, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2021

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Town Clerk

1. The regular meeting was held using Zoom platform and was called to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. Roll Call- Commissioners present: Joyce Boncal, Patty Foley, Karen Serio, and Joe Trombetta
Town Council Liaisons: Gail Budrejko arrived at 7:02 and Chris Miner left at 7:30
Staff present: Robert Hillman and Renata Bertotti
Assistance with Zoom meeting provided by James Krupienski, Town Clerk
3. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. Approval of minutes- Motion by Commissioner Boncal to accept the January 14th minutes as presented with the correction of the date in title should be 2021, seconded by Commissioner Trombetta, and approved as amended unanimously.

Motion by Commissioner Boncal to accept the February 11th minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Serio, and approved unanimously.

5. Public Participation- None

6. Old Business-

- A. Sustainable CT- Chairperson Foley is currently working on eight actions items that could possibly add up to 100 points. They include an equity policy that will be presented to the Town Council, C-PACE, training of the commission members for those that attended equity meetings, and community growing space which the Chair is working on with Parks and Recreation. She is also working on a pollinator pathways program that may include students.

Mrs. Bertotti received notification from the schools that they cannot commit to the program at this time due to the timing. She met with the directors of Human Services and the Senior Center to discuss programs that may quickly earn points.

- B. Facebook- Chairperson Foley mentioned there were 117 followers on the business page and 229 on the group page. There were 11 posts last month on the page. The Chair also posted a poll on people's points of view on bulk food, zero-waste store. There were over 180 comments in total on the topic with a majority number of people liking the idea.
- C. Upcycling Contest- Commissioner Boncal mentioned the start date is set for April 12th and will end on June 12th. The final day to submit applications is June 1st. The letter to Lowes has not gone out and at this point it is probably too late to get them to be a

sponsor. The chairperson will provide Boncal with the materials to advertise on the Parks and Recreation board in the town center.

Scott Hoagland, of the IT department, had drafted a landing page on the town website for Sustainable CT and the Upcycling contest. With the assistance of the Town Clerk the commission updated the pages.

Commissioner Boncal noted next week is the deadline to advertise the contest in Newington Life and hopes to have something in by then. She asked for volunteers to help put up posters for the event. Commissioner Serio will help with businesses on the Berlin Turnpike, Councilor Budrejko will work in the Market Square area, Commissioner Trombetta will work on Main St north and Boncal will work in the Fenn Rd area. The Town Clerk will look into whether the poster can be printed in the town hall using the Town's color printer. Once printed, the Chair will deliver the posters to those who will put them up. Commissioner Boncal will send out instructions/script on how to ask businesses to post the poster. She will email the poster to the fire chief and EMS.

There was discussion on posting a newsflash from the Town for this event. Commissioner Boncal will write up a short notification. The newsflash will be posted on the webpage and sent to those who subscribe. Town Clerk will get back to the Chair about the number of people subscribed.

D. Condominium letter- Commissioner Serio has written the letter and it has been proofed by the Chair. She will send the letter out to the condominium contacts this coming week.

E. Positions open on Commission- Chairperson Foley mentioned there is nothing to report

F. Girl Scouts- The Chairperson attended a meeting with the girl scouts of which 11 were in attendance. Currently they are working towards their Bronze award. The Chair mentioned the girls were very excited to do a video. The girls will each do a short clip with props to explain the proper ways to recycle. The clips will then be put together to create a longer video. The video will then be posted on NCTV and social media.

G. School Poster Contest- Earth Day is April 22, 2021- The Chair will provide Commissioner Serio with the information for the contest.

H. Talk to the Mayor Clip 02-08-2021- Chair Foley will get the clip. The EQC was on the Agenda for the Town Council meeting held on February 23, 2021. Commissioner Foley attended to give the Council Members an update on the Commission's activity, especially with Sustainable CT. Unfortunately, the meeting ran late and there was little discussion had about the status.

7. New Business-

A. Communications/ Education on Reducing, Reusing, and Recycling- the Chair emailed a Glastonbury group that is working on the Pollinator Pathways program to get information on their program and hopes to get Wethersfield involve connecting the three towns. The program is designed to build a pathway for native species of pollinators.

B. Highway Dept. Sand and salt availability- Mr. Hillman explained the material is available is still available at the main entrance in 55 gallon barrels.

The Chair asked Mr. Hillman to discuss mandated vs. non-mandated recyclables. He stated mandated recyclable as those items that by state law must be recycled and not allowed to be placed in the trash. Some examples are glass and metal food and beverage containers, plastics #1 and #2, newspaper, magazines, cardboard, grass, leaves and waste oil. Non-mandated items such as plastics #5- #7 are able to be recycled but not required by state law. He also mentioned the product stewardship programs for electronics and mattresses in which these items can be recycled free of charge for residents at the town's transfer station.

8. Public Participation- None

9. Commissioner Comments-

Commissioner Trombetta commented he was pleased the commission was moving along considering the circumstances.

Commissioner Boncal said she can now finish the poster seeing she has the URL and QR codes and will talk to the editors of the newspapers to get the displays out for the Upcycling contest.

Commissioner Serio is excited for the Upcycling contest and believes interest will improve as the advertising gets out.

Chairperson Foley asked Councilor Budrejko to give the commission a plug at the Council meetings whenever possible.

Councilor Budrejko commented when there are major events she would mention them at the Council meetings. She commended Commissioner Boncal on her efforts with the contest.

10. Staff Comments-

Mr. Hillman – Mentioned he hopes to have the mattress recycling program up and running within the month.

Mrs. Bertotti- No comment

11. Adjournment- Next regular meeting is scheduled for April 8th at 6:30 p.m. **Motion** made by Commissioner Boncal to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Trombetta, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Robert Hillman

Highway Superintendent