

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
November 2, 2017**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: Eric Brower, Urling Searle, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Theodore H. Walworth III, and Skip Parker.

Staff present: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: n/a

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Brower

- 1) **Seating of Alternates:** Walworth was seated for Rutherford and Parker was seated for Henrey.
- 2) **Review and approval of minutes** for October 5, 2017 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Searle to approve the minutes as presented.
- 3) **Review of Correspondence:** no correspondence
- 4) **Chairman's Report:** no report
- 5) **Staff Report**
 - a) **Administration**
 - i) **FY2019 Budget:** Savageau presented the FY2019 Budget. She explained that the deadline is in November this year and that the new guidelines were just recently provided. They allow for up to 2% increase. She presented two scenarios, one with an upgrade for the Conservation Resource Manager I to full time and the other with no changes to staffing. A motion was made by Brower and seconded by Dickinson to approve the budget with the full time position. Motion passed unanimously.
 - ii) **FY2019 Operational Plan:** Savageau stated that the plan was requested by the First Selectman to be submitted in October. The narratives contain all the primary services provided by the Conservation Commission staff, which include emergency preparedness, water conservation, preservation of the cultural resources, wildlife management, etc. A copy of the document was provided to the Commission members for their review and comments.

b) Water supply

- (1) **Update on water conservation restrictions:** Savageau stated that a call for voluntary water conservation was put in place. Even though there was some rain, the total amount was less than the monthly average. An update on the water situation will be provided during the weekly call conference on November 3rd. The water conservation efforts this year that restricted outdoor watering to two days per week has helped tremendously. The reservoirs are in better shape than last year, without the restrictions, we would have been in drought conditions in September. Basically the restrictions did what they were supposed to do. Although reservoir levels are better, ground water levels remain as a concern.
- (2) **Water conservation outreach/education – Healthy Yards Workshop:** Savageau reported on a great program with great attendance. Ms. Moch coordinated the workshop and speakers with help from the other Conservation staff. The focus of the workshop was on healthy soils, organic yard management and water conservation.
- (3) **State Water Plan -** Savageau stated that one out of three public meetings on the state's first ever State Water Plan was held on October 30, 2017. At the meeting, Savageau heard several concerns about the state of the ground water. The concerns were coming not only from the public, but from the professionals as well.

c) Long Island Sound/Watershed Management

- i) **UConn/Greenwich initiative:** Savageau reported that a research position will be created to work with the Town. Office space will be provided at the Innis Arden Cottage. Conservation and Shellfish Commissions will be participating in the fund raising to cover the cost.
- ii) **Long Island Study – Citizens Advisory Committee:** next meeting in December

d) Sustainable Greenwich

- i) **Sustainable CT – CMM Lunch Nov. 28:** Savageau will attend the lunch and associated educational program. Following this event in January, the Sustainable Greenwich group will meet again to structure a new organization which would work on the local initiatives.

e) Education/Outreach

- i) **Composting:** Moch reported that the composting will expand to include the International School of Dundee, Cos Cob, North Mianus, Julian Curtiss and hopefully Western Middle School. All outdoor bins at schools will be filled with leaves to provide adequate mixing material for the cafeteria scraps. A compost club will be organized at Greenwich High School to tackle the composting there and provide a stable group of volunteers to manage the composters in other schools. In addition to the assistance with composting, Parks and Recreation announced a pilot program of mulching mowing leaves on public grounds. No leaf will be picked up from these areas, but they will all be shredded to the lawn when mowing. This combined approach of mulching mowing and composting would take care of most of the

organic wastes generated on town properties.

- f) **Eversource Substation Update:** Savageau stated that the last meeting took place on October 26th. The Town was represented by Amy Siebert and one of the town's attorney. The comments submitted at the meeting were not very favorable for the project. The final decision expected to be made on November 6th.
- g) **Greenwich Point Master Plan:** Savageau and Rutherford met with the consultant on the project regarding the proposed master plan. Comments were well received. On November 6th a public meeting will be offered on the plan by the Department of Parks and Recreation at Western Civic Center.

6) Committee and Liaison Reports

- a) **Parks and Recreation Board:** Baker did not attend the meeting, but she understands that the Greenwich Point Master Plan was one of the major highlights.
- b) **GRAB (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board):** Dickinson reported that the single-stream recycling may be challenged by the new restriction on exporting recycling material to China. Most of the recycling material sold abroad consists of paper while metal, glass, and plastic are mostly processed and utilized in US.
- c) **Harbor Management Commission:** Baker stated that the Harbor Management Plan was approved by RTM at their October 30th meeting.
- d) **Cemetery Committee:** Brower reported that a lawsuit has been filed that in essence challenges the ownership of part of the cemetery and the right of the Town to acquire. This is being handled by the Law Department.
- e) **Energy Committee**
 - i) **Strategic Energy Plan:** Savageau reported that the strategic planning is moving ahead. As part of this effort, the Town and Eversource have agreed to do assessments of the Town facilities three biggest energy users: Town Hall, Sewage Treatment Plant, and Greenwich High School. Once the assessments are done, implementation will be added to the strategic plan.
 - ii) **Community Energy Panning – Home Energy Solution – Light bulb swap:** Nahabedian is handling the coordination of the residential audits and light bulb swaps planned for December 16th at the Town Hall.
 - iii) **Commercial Users**
 - (1) **Small Business Advantage Program:** Savageau reported that vendor selection was completed. They will be used to conduct the audits of commercial sites. The proceeds from the program would go to the United Way.
 - (2) **Large energy outreach:** The energy team is also looking at an outreach program to large users including some of the NGOs. Suggestions include hosting a get together where the program will be presented to them. One institution that has taken advantage of the Energize CT programs is the Boys & Girls Club of

Greenwich and we are looking at how to possibly include them in the program.

7) **Old Business:**

- a) **Waste Ordinance –status:** Savageau reported that the Ordinance Prohibiting Waste Associated with Natural Gas and Oil Extraction is scheduled to be heard by RTM in December.
- b) **Plastic Bag Ban – status:** Savageau stated that Bring Your Own (BYO) initiatives are scheduled for the vote at December RTM’s meeting. Savageau explained that the one issue that has been brought up by the RTM is enforcement of the ordinance. She presented a spreadsheet looking at how other towns handled this and projected workload. In Westport, the Conservation staff handled the enforcement, which took only a few hours per year. After some discussion, a motion was made by Baker and seconded by Silberberg that the Conservation Commission, through its staff, would provide enforcement for the bag ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.
- c) **Mylar balloon – status:** Silberberg has contacted State Rep. Fred Camillo to create a state-wide initiative. This is a work in progress.

8) **New Business** – none

9) **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Dickinson to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch
Environmental Analyst