



LUKE BRONIN  
MAYOR

**CITY OF HARTFORD**  
**ADVISORY COMMISSION ON THE**  
**ENVIRONMENT**  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103  
[WWW.HARTFORD.GOV](http://WWW.HARTFORD.GOV)



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> 2019**  
**Green Room, Room 100, City Hall**  
**550 Main St., Hartford, CT 06103**

**Commissioners**

**Chair:**

*Kerri Provost*

**Vice Chair**

*Alex Rodriguez*

**Secretary**

*Tom Swarr*

**Members :**

*JoAnne Bauer*

*Sam King*

*Mark Mitchell*

*Edith Pestana*

*Russell Williams*

**Staff:**

*Shubhada Kambli*

*Grace Yi*

**Commissioners attending:** JoAnne Bauer, Sam King, Mark Mitchell, Edith Pestana, Kerri Provost, Alex Rodriguez, Tom Swarr

**City Staff:** Grace Yi

**Public:** Nancy Bowden, Anthony Cherolis, , Jillian Huey, Thomas Kenney, Henry Link, Gannon Long, Andrew May, James Parsley, Mary Sanders, Tom Gaffey

**I. Meeting was called to order at 5:56 PM.**

**II. Meeting Notes**

JoAnne B. noted some minor typos in the minutes. Alex R. moved to approve the June minutes as amended and Sam K. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Regular Business**

**Recycling Update** – Tom Gaffey, Director of Recycling and Enforcement, MIRA gave a presentation on the challenges of single stream recycling following the China ban on importing waste materials- The Good, the Bd, and the Ugly. A copy of the presentation slides is available online under the July meeting - <https://www.meetinginfo.org/meetings/456>.

MIRA currently charges contracted communities no tipping fee for their recyclables, and \$30/ton for non- participating communities. However, the tipping fees for recyclables will likely rise in the future due to the collapse of commodity prices since the Chinese ban. Single stream was promoted by haulers that realized significant cost reductions in switching from dual stream, which required two workers per truck. While quantities collected have increased, so has contamination levels.



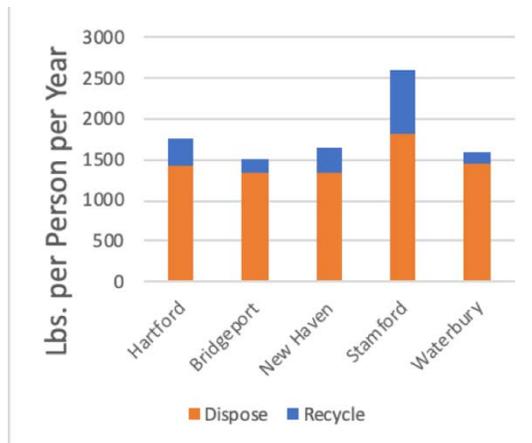
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Plastic bags are a particular problem, as they wrap around the automated sorting equipment, causing frequent shutdowns for cleaning. Glass is another problem. Glass containers are shattered during compaction in the collection trucks, contaminating mixed plastics, paper, and cardboard and degrading the value of those materials. The recovered glass is too contaminated for reuse and is currently shipped to western PA for further treatment at a cost of \$65/ton. The single stream is also contaminated with dangerous and hazardous materials that pose a safety risk for workers – hoses, propane tanks, knives, etc. There is a need for significant education to improve the quality of recovered materials. One program that has proved effective in other communities is placing an “Oops tag” on totes containing improper materials that are not recyclable. More information on what is and is not recyclable is available at [www.recyclect.com](http://www.recyclect.com).

**Report by Waste Work Group** – A planned presentation by Mike Looney, Deputy Director of Public Works had to be cancelled due to a last-minute conflict. He will be rescheduled for a future meeting. Review of state data collection on recycling rates revealed that the 2014 was the last year towns were required to report recycling data. The new system collects data from the



receiving organizations that recycle the material. This can make it difficult to trace quantities back to specific towns. It was also revealed that weight data are not collected on deposit containers. This suggests that ACOTE may want to set goals strictly in terms of pounds sent for final disposal (landfill or incineration.) Benchmark data comparing Hartford to other CT cities was presented. The 2014 data

indicated a 19% recycling rate and nearly 1,500 pounds of waste disposed per person.

Tom S. provided an update on the Sacyr Rooney – MIRA negotiations to modernize the trash-to-energy plant. The MIRA board approved a MOU (memorandum of understanding) defining the framework to conclude the negotiations. The MOU calls for development of a term sheet by



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November 15, 2019 and a comprehensive development agreement by October 15, 2020. Failure to meet these deadlines will terminate any further negotiations with no recourse to either party. The basic challenge is that no public money is being invested in the project. Funding will be revenue bonds, requiring tipping fees that generate sufficient cash flow to cover all interest and principal payments. There are many uncertainties remaining, but it is clear tipping fees will be in the \$100/ ton range, and towns would be required to commit to 30- year contracts which could include “put or pay” provisions.

**Report by the Energy Workgroup** – Alex R. & Sam K. reported on continued effort investigating the opportunity for referral stipends through Eversource for enlisting residents to have home energy audits. There was some concern about how the various workgroups should be organized and expectations for their work products. The consensus was to allow the groups to self- organize, and that each group could contact other organizations on behalf of ACOTE to gather information needed to develop their plans. It was also noted that a practical way to start would be to develop a specific action that could be presented to the full commission for endorsement. It was not considered a requirement that each workgroup develop some comprehensive and overarching plan for their area of focus. It was also emphasized again that all were welcome to serve on work groups and it was not necessary to be a commissioner.

**Report of the Transportation Workgroup** – The group defined a goal to cut emissions of the transportation sector in half by 2030 through heavy promotion of multimodal transportation services to city residents. A number of tactics and potential resolutions were proposed for further consideration. A copy of their report is available online under the July meeting (see link above.)

Several attendees volunteered to serve on various workgroups. Alex R. also called for volunteers for a Water workgroup. Membership in each group was reviewed.

Energy – Alex R., Sam K., Mark M., Nancy Bowden

Waste – Tom S., Edith P., JoAnn B., Mark M., Andrew May, Jillian Huey, Henry Link



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Transportation – Kerri P., Alex R., Tony Cherolis

Water – Alex R., Kerri P., Tony Cherolis, Jillian Huey, Grace Yi, James Parsley

#### **IV. Other Business**

**Office of Sustainability Update** – Grace Yi reported on a presentation by Kristina Wagstrom, the Eversource Energy Assistant Professor of Environmental Engineering Education at the University of Connecticut who will be conducting a study of the health impacts of transport emissions in Hartford. Sensors will be placed in 1 - 3 locations this year to verify the procedures for placing sensors and checking out any equipment hiccups. Once equipment and procedures have been firmed up, the study will be expanded in the second year. They will be looking for recommendations on where to place sensors.

The recycling outreach project in Frog Hollow is in process. The first phase of the Retain the Rain program is winding down and proposals have been submitted for additional funding to continue distributing rain barrels.

**Announcements** – Please visit the [Hartford Climate Stewardship Initiative](#) web page and [ACOTE's FB group](#) page for the latest announcements.

Nancy Bowden announced a local group is planning for a local effort to support Global Student Strike Day scheduled for Friday, September 20. The next meeting will be July 14, 1-3 PM at the Unitarian Church.

Tom S. announced there is a group working on developing a comprehensive tree plan for the City. It is led by the Tree Commission and joined by volunteers from the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission.

#### **V. Next Meeting** – August 6, 2019

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Swarr, Secretary