



H·R·R·A
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HOUSATONIC RESOURCES RECOVERY AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Friday, December 11, 2015, 10:00 a.m.

Danbury Crowne Plaza Hotel - Onyx Conference Room
18 Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury, CT

Members or Alternates Present and Voting

Bethel, Matthew Knickerbocker	8
Bridgewater, Alan Brown	1
Brookfield, Steve Dunn	7
New Fairfield, Mike Gill	6
New Milford, Suzanne Von Holt	12
Newtown, Herb Rosenthal	12
Redding, Jeff Hansen	4
Ridgefield, Rudy Marconi	11
Sherman, Clay Cope	2
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	63

Others Present:

Sheldon Conn, Brookfield Alternate
Susan Chapman, New Fairfield First Selectman
David Gronbach, New Milford Mayor
Pat Llodra, Newtown First Selectman
Ruth Byrnes, Sherman Alternate
Lynn Waller, Public
Glenn Lockhart, Wheelabrator
Ken Vallera, All American Waste
Brian Creighton, All American Waste
Patty Oberg, All American Waste
Ryan Bingham, Winters Bros.
Will Flower, Winters Bros.
Glenn Nanavaty, Auditor
Tiffany Carlson, Recycling Educator
Jen Iannucci, HRRRA Director
Cheryl Reedy, HRRRA Assistant Director

Members Not Present

Town of Kent and City of Danbury

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gill at 10:07 a.m. with a quorum of 52 votes present from eight municipalities. R. Marconi entered the meeting at 10:14 a.m. during the Director's Report and before any votes were taken increasing the total votes to 63 from nine municipalities.

Public Comment: Lynn Waller wished all those present a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Hanukkah.

Chairman's and Members' Comments: Chairman Gill welcomed newly elected First Selectman Steve Dunn of Brookfield (who has been appointed as the Town's HRRRA representative) and New Milford Mayor David Gronbach (who will soon be appointed as the Town's HRRRA

representative). He also welcomed Selectman Alan Brown, who has replaced Curtis Read as Bridgewater's HRRRA representative and congratulated Selectman Herb Rosenthal on his return to the Board of Selectmen in Newtown.

The Chairman noted that J. Urice from Danbury is recovering from surgery and unable to attend today.

He thanked Glenn Lockhart and Wheelabrator for holding the MSW tip fee even for the 2016 calendar year at \$85.73/T.

Chairman Gill apologized to All American Waste for questioning where the companies' MSW tonnage collected from the region was all going at the last meeting when, in fact, the company was bringing more MSW tonnage into the region than in prior years.

Director's Report:

- a. Assistant Director C. Reedy also apologized to All American Waste for the error she made at the last meeting in claiming that the company's MSW collected in the HRRRA region that formerly went to the Watertown transfer station was going to some other unknown place in CT rather than coming into the White Street transfer station. Ken Vallera of All American asked Ms. Reedy to look at the tonnage again, and she did, finding not only that All American Waste brought more than 3,700 tons of additional MSW tonnage into the regional system during 2015 compared with the prior year but also that Winters Bros. MSW tonnage into the regional system was down almost 8,000 tons in 2015 compared to 2014.
- b. H. Rosenthal, M. Gill and R. Marconi gave a quick overview to the new members of what MSW stands for (municipal solid waste), why tonnage into the system is important (the put or pay contract with Wheelabrator), how HRRRA is funded (\$1/T from MSW tipped in the system and \$10/T now for recycling), and a brief history of HRRRA's finances (almost ran out of funding 10 years ago due to a disagreement between Wheelabrator and the then-owner of the Danbury transfer station which resulted in HRRRA not receiving its program fees). They stressed how R. Marconi turned the situation around by renegotiating the Wheelabrator contract and that the Authority has been in good shape financially ever since.
- c. J. Iannucci organized a one day e-waste and paper shredding event for the Town of Brookfield in the fall. NewTech, the e-waste vendor, anticipated using 12 pallets for the day. Instead, 47 pallets were needed and it took two days to get all the e-waste cleaned up and out of the Brookfield public works' space. 3.7 tons of shredded paper was also collected that day by Winters Bros. Residents did not know that they could dispose of e-waste for free any time during the year by going to the New Milford Recycling Center or they didn't want to go.
- d. C. Cope noted that Sherman wants to do a one day e-waste collection as well.
- e. S. Dunn said he would like to put recycling information for Brookfield on the Town's website, and S. Conn noted that he is doing that current. C. Cope said that having a very involved person in the Selectmen's office, as he has with R. Byrnes, is crucial to getting the word out to residents on how and where to recycle.

- f. J. Iannucci attended the Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy (CMMS) roundtable meeting at DEEP in October to provide input on behalf of HRRRA. A full draft of the CMMS is due by February 1st, and then DEEP will hold two listening sessions in different parts of the state in February and/or March.
- g. 60 companies have expressed interest in the MIRA RFP put out by DEEP. Proposals are due by March 1, 2016. For more information go to www.ct.gov.deep/resources/rediscovery
- h. The poster contest has been renamed as a billboard contest this year to more accurately reflect what the winner produces. The theme involves plastic bags and how and why to keep them out of the single stream recycling. For the first time ever, TREX, the company that makes artificial "lumber" in part from recycled plastic bags, has donated \$5,000 to the contest. HRRRA staff will request at the February meeting that some of those funds be used to pay for a student intern to manage this year's contest.
- i. J. Iannucci attended the Product Stewardship Institute's annual meeting in Boston in early December. She noted that the most interesting aspect of the meeting was learning more about packaging EPR (enhanced producer responsibility) as now practiced throughout Europe and in Russia and Australia as well. She asked members to keep an open mind when thinking about packaging EPR in the future. It would cover all the items currently in the blue bin/tote in single stream recycling. Everyone would keep their jobs but the flow of money from municipalities and residents would stop with product manufacturers picking up the cost of the end of life management of packaging for their products. DEEP has a three year plan to introduce a packaging EPR bill in the legislature. C. Cope noted that the cost would have to be imbedded in the product by the manufacturer.
- j. The Newtown and Ridgefield food scrap drop off program at the local transfer stations are up and running, having kicked off on November 14th, the day before America Recycles Day. Redding and New Milford may be interested next.

Administrative approvals:

- a. **Motion** by M. Knickerbocker, second by H. Rosenthal, to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2015 annual meeting as presented. **Vote:** A. Brown, S. Dunn, J. Hansen, R. Marconi and C. Cope abstained. All else in favor. No one opposed (Vote tally: 38 in favor and 25 abstain.)
- b. **Motion** by H. Rosenthal, second by R. Marconi, to approve the HRRRA financial statements through November 30, 2015 as presented. **Vote:** All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.)

Old business:

- a. **Update on MSW Associates VRF DEEP permit intervention:** J. Iannucci reported that briefs appealing the proposed ruling by DEEP were filed by all parties on October 30th. DEEP has not ruled on the issues raised in those briefs or issued a final ruling yet.
- b. **Motion** by M. Knickerbocker, second by S. Von Holt, to move item b. under new business, Update on Recycling Agreement with Winters Bros., to the end of the meeting since an executive session is anticipated. **Vote:** All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.)

- c. **DEEP Grant Awards and Applications** - Bridgewater was awarded \$8,000 and Ridgefield \$13,000 under two different DEEP grants. Applications for the waste reduction grant can be filed at any time and for the recycling rewards grant the next deadline is February 1, 2016. Please contact the HRRR staff if your municipality would like to apply for one of these grants.
- d. **HRRR Office Location Status** - M. Knickerbocker reported that WestCOG will possibly be leaving its current location in the spring of 2016 and could possibly have room for HRRR in its new quarters if that is what HRRR wants. S. Dunn said he is open to having HRRR stay in the Old Town Hall in Brookfield. J. Iannucci said the Brookfield location is preferable because it is centrally located for haulers and has a parking lot big enough to fit the trucks that come to obtain permits. In addition, HRRR could use a little extra room which might be available in the Old Town Hall when WestCOG moves out.

New Business

- a. **2014-15 FY Audit** - Glenn Nanavaty, from Nanavaty, Nanavaty and Davenport in Newtown, HRRR's auditor, passed out an executive summary showing the Authority's financial position at fiscal yearend in the last three years as well as his comments on maintaining the existing internal controls that are already in place. According to Mr. Nanavaty, the audit went very smoothly. Good controls are in place for a small office, and no formal letter was issued or needed. Twice a year he tests the recycling tonnage against the weigh tickets at the Winters Bros. scale house, a practice adopted two years ago. At year end the unassigned Fund Balance for HRRR was \$731,000, or enough to sustain the organization's operation for two years without any revenue. Mr. Nanavaty asked whether the Authority had a policy on the size of the fund balance the organization wants to maintain. M. Gill noted that a number of years ago, HRRR set a policy that it would retain at least one year of operating expenses in its fund balance. H. Rosenthal noted that occurred after the Authority almost ran out of money to operate ten years ago. R. Marconi said he wouldn't be too quick to set a cap on how much can accumulate in the fund balance since the recycling and solid waste markets are volatile. P. Llodra suggested having a policy that commits to review the fund balance each year to make sure it is neither too high nor too low. G. Nanavaty thought it was a great idea to have a policy that also explained the reason for the policy. He was asked to work with Treasurer H. Rosenthal and the Director to develop a policy to bring before the Executive Committee for review prior to the next HRRR meeting in February. H. Rosenthal also noted for the record that he may want to move some of HRRR's fund balance from the three Vanguard bond fund accounts (originally recommended by CIRMA) to bank CDs or the STIF account if the Federal Reserve starts raising interest rates. **Motion** by C. Cope, second by M. Knickerbocker, to accept the 2014-15 FY audit as presented. **Vote:** All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.) All present were given a hard copy of the completed audit to take back to their respective town halls and put on file with their Town Clerk. An electronic version of the completed audit is available on the HRRR website.
- b. **Recycling Educator Six Month Contract** - Based on discussions with the Executive Committee about the use of interns and then follow up with the Chairman about the problems with using interns for the HRRR school recycling program offered to third grade students throughout the region, an RFQ was put out for a Recycling Educator to work as an

independent consultant for HRRRA setting up and conducting 30 school recycling programs between January 1 and June 30, 2016. This is needed in order to reach more classrooms each year and because paid staff time this year was reduced from 65 hours a week in 2014-15 to 47 hours per week in 2015-16. An independent consultant is the most cost effective way to regain some of the productivity lost when those hours were reduced.

Three responses were received to the RFQ, and after interviews with two and reference checks, the Director recommends Tiffany Carlson from Ridgefield be chosen. **Motion** by R. Marconi, second by M. Knickerbocker, that HRRRA enter into a contract with Recycling Educator Tiffany Carlson to provide the HRRRA recycling education program to 30 classrooms, as more specifically described in the RFQ for Recycling Education Services dated November 25, 2015, commencing January 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2016, for \$6,000 as long as such services can be paid from the public education budget line with no additional funding necessary. P. Llodra questioned whether third grade was the right level for the HRRRA recycling program. J. Iannucci explained that recycling is part of the statewide third grade curriculum and the HRRRA program complements that nicely. **Vote:** All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.)

- c. **Waste Oil Contamination** - J. Iannucci went through the DEEP presentation on PCB Contamination of Waste Oil Collected by Municipalities that was part of the agenda packet. The purpose of the presentation was to alert municipal officials that a municipal transfer station in CT had unknowingly received and then passed on PCB contaminated waste oil that eventually cost over \$100,000 to clean up and dispose of properly. PCBs cannot be determined by the onsite testing that most transfer stations are now using. The best way to protect the town's liability is to test a sample of the waste oil in a lab offsite (cost about \$100), not allow any additional waste oil into the tank while the sample is being tested, and then keep a copy of test results AND some of the sample until it is all properly disposed of. None of this is required by DEEP, but is being recommended in order to protect municipal liability. H. Rosenthal noted that for the same reason it is important that MSW from towns go to either a licensed waste-to-energy facility or an EPA licensed landfill because a municipality can be held financially liable for cleanup of any polluting MSW generated within its borders years after disposal.
- d. **Workshop on HRRRA Future Beyond 2019** - Members agreed to hold a special meeting with all non-member chief elected officials as well as HRRRA members and alternates in early 2016 to discuss how the eleven municipalities that make up HRRRA want to dispose of their MSW and recycling after March of 2019 when both contracts will end. There is no sunset on HRRRA membership in the ordinances creating HRRRA even though the contracts end. But, the municipalities need to decide whether they want to continue to work together on solid waste disposal and recycling as well as hauler licensing, HHW, recycling education, etc., whether they want to ask more towns to join the group, e.g. other members of the COG, or whether some or all municipalities would like to go it alone, make their own deals and take back their own responsibilities for solid waste and recycling. C. Cope suggested forming a committee to make a recommendation to the Authority for consideration. P. Llodra suggested forming a committee to help member towns look at all the options and the pros and cons of each. The Chairman thought at least one meeting of the decision makers from

the member municipalities was necessary to get started and directed J. Iannucci to set that up in early 2016 before the next HRRRA meeting in late February.

Old Business Revisited

b. **Update on Recycling Agreement with Winters Bros. - Motion** by M. Knickerbocker, second by S. Von Holt, to go into executive session to discuss negotiating strategy on the recycling agreement and invite in all municipal chief elected officials, HRRRA members and alternates and HRRRA staff. **Vote:** All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.) The HRRRA and those invited entered into executive session at 11:40 a.m. and came out of executive session at 11:50 a.m. No votes were taken during the executive session and no decisions were made.

Adjournment

Motion by H. Rosenthal, second by M. Knickerbocker, to adjourn the meeting at 11:51a.m.
Vote: All in favor. (Vote tally: 63 in favor.)

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl D. Reedy
HRRRA Assistant Director