



REGULAR MEETING – AD HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE AGENDA

AUGUST 13, 2025, 6:00 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Jodi Trendler at JTrendler@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- IV. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Regular Meeting: July 9, 2025**
- V. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Updates: Support for LEEF Reinstatement, ICLEI Membership**
 - B. **Review: Mayor's Proclamation to Establish Norwalk Sustainability Task Force**
 - C. **Global Covenant of Mayors Commitment**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD-HOC SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 9, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Johan Lopez, Chair; Barbara Smyth; Lisa Shanahan (6:06); Nora Niedzielski-Eichner (6:26)

STAFF: Jodi Trendler, Director of Sustainability and Resilience; Tom Livingston, Chief of Staff

OTHERS: Diane Lauricella, Diane Cece

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lopez called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. A quorum was not present.

II. ROLL CALL

A Roll Call of those present was performed.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Lauricella of 21 Little Fox Lane came forward. She expressed strong interest in the agenda topic and referenced past discussions with Ms. Smyth and Mr. Lopez about the Mayor’s former Energy and Environmental Task Force. She emphasized the importance of strong leadership and allowing subcommittees. She encouraged seeking resumes from community members with expertise in areas like solar and waste management.

Ms. Cece of the East Norwalk Neighborhood Association came forward. She voiced concern over the meeting starting early and advised she was present to listen in.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Community Sustainability and Resilience Task Force

Ms. Shanahan arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Ms. Trendler came forward to discuss this item. She provided a slide show outlining the potential framework structure for the task force. She discussed the following:

- Norwalk Sustainability & Resilience Task Force Overview
- Benefits of a Sustainability Community Task Force

- Management/Committee structure.
- Subcommittee Structure
- Mitigation + Adaptation Subcommittee.
- Energy Subcommittee
- Electric Vehicles Subcommittee
- Food Security Subcommittee
- Biking & Walking Subcommittee
- Waste & Circular Economy Subcommittee
- Building & Development Subcommittee
- Next Steps

A draft resolution was briefly discussed, which would serve as a formal commitment once finalized.

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner joined at 6:13 p.m.

Discussion followed regarding the purpose of the subcommittees and whether the task force should remain a grassroots, community-driven effort or evolve into a more formal City commission. There was strong support for starting informally to encourage broader participation and ensure involvement from residents, local experts, and businesses. The importance of community engagement in shaping the task force was emphasized. It was agreed that feedback should be gathered and the resolution reviewed by the Committee before presenting it to the full Council.

V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: June 11, 2025

**** MS. NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 11, 2025 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (SMYTH).**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.



CITY OF NORWALK
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August 7, 2025

Joe DeLong
Executive Director & CEO
Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM)

Mr. DeLong,

This letter is to formally request that CCM advocate to restart the 2010 Lawn Equipment Exchange Fund (LEEF) in partnership with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and, if needed, State legislature. I understand that similar requests have been made by elected officials of other municipalities that are required to, or that desire to, transition to battery-operated lawn and garden equipment, including Stamford, Greenwich, Westport, Ridgefield, and New Haven.

Background

In 2010, DEEP created the LEEF Program for CT municipalities and regional schools. DEEP funded 80% of the purchase of new, less polluting lawn equipment in exchange for retiring older gas-powered equipment. The program was created and organized under existing DEEP authorities and funded with \$ 550,000 of Supplemental Enforcement Project monies.

The 2010 LEEF Program resulted in substantial emission reductions, with participation from 71 different municipalities or regional school districts for a total of 328 equipment exchanges. It was a well-received and well-executed program with demonstrable positive environmental impacts.

In the past few years, there has been a growing level of citizen concern about the emissions from small, two-stroke, off-road engines in lawn and garden equipment. The noise and amount of toxic emissions from this equipment far exceed those from larger modern motor vehicles. Most small, two-stroke engines consume only 70% of the gasoline and oil used and have no pollution control devices. These engines emit carcinogens, greenhouse gases, and ozone-forming compounds. In April of this year, the [American Lung Association's 2025 "State of the Air" report](#) gave Fairfield County an "F" grade for ozone pollution and labeled Fairfield County as having the worst ozone pollution in New England.

Cities and towns are being asked by their residents to lead by example and transition to cleaner and quieter battery-operated lawn and garden equipment. It is also important to remember that the people most adversely affected by the noise and toxic emissions from gas-powered equipment are the ones using these machines. Municipalities can mitigate future employee liabilities by converting to cleaner and quieter technologies.

We believe that now is the time for LEEF version 2.0

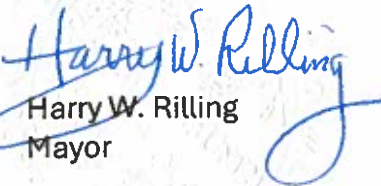
- The program would again be designed and implemented by DEEP and directed **solely to municipalities** and regional school districts; and
- It would again be an opt-in program; and
- Instead of exchanging older gas-powered equipment for newer gas-powered equipment; LEEF 2.0 would exchange older, two-stroke, gas-powered equipment for battery-operated equipment; and
- The program would be limited to the equipment with the highest pollution reductions per investment (e.g., gas-powered, two-stroke, leaf blowers, string trimmers, and handheld push mowers), extra batteries, and charging equipment.
- State funding would be provided by Supplemental Enforcement Projects, and/or State authorized budgets.

Our request

We are requesting that CCM advocate to restart the 2010 Lawn Equipment Exchange Fund (LEEF) in partnership with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and, if needed, the State legislature, as outlined above. We believe that this program is aligned with CCM's Sustainable CT objectives as well as our sustainability objectives.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Best regards,



Harry W. Rilling
Mayor

PROCLAMATION

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORWALK SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY TASK FORCE

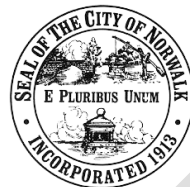
- WHEREAS,** The City of Norwalk recognizes the urgent need to address the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation while building community resilience, and to align with local, state, and global goals for a sustainable future; and
- WHEREAS,** Norwalk acknowledges that climate change factors can impact the social and emotional well-being of our residents and by planning for social-emotional wellness and fostering strong community connections the City can enhance its capacity to adapt to, recover from, and thrive amid adversity; and
- WHEREAS,** Norwalk's Climate Action and Resilience Plan establishes a vision for a thriving and environmentally responsible community, requiring collaborative action among municipal leadership, expert stakeholders, and the community at large; and
- WHEREAS,** It is in the interest of the city to engage many perspectives, professional expertise, and the passion of its residents in shaping and advancing sustainability initiatives; and
- WHEREAS,** The creation of a Sustainability Advisory Task Force will provide a structured forum for community members, local organizations, and subject matter experts to advise the City on the implementation of policies and programs that promote environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social thriving for all; and
- WHEREAS,** The Advisory Task Force will include subcommittees to focus on priority areas critical to Norwalk's sustainability and resilience.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, HARRY W. RILLING, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT, do hereby proclaim the official establishment of the **Norwalk Sustainability Advisory Task Force**, and direct that:

1. The Task Force shall serve as a community-driven advisory body to support the development, coordination, and advancement of sustainability and climate resilience initiatives across the City; and
2. The Task Force shall serve as a conduit for public input and engagement, fostering collaboration between residents, businesses, civic organizations, and City leadership.
3. The Task Force shall be open to participation by interested residents, local stakeholders, and subject matter experts who represent the knowledge, skills, and abilities available within and to the Norwalk community; and
4. The Task Force shall advise the City as the City develops and implements sustainability policies and programs, with attention to advancing human wellbeing, environmental and economic resilience; and
5. The Task Force shall initially organize itself into the following subcommittees to ensure focused attention on key areas of sustainability:
 - Energy** – advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives.
 - Transportation** – promoting safe, accessible, and low-emission mobility options.
 - Building and Development** – fostering sustainable land use, low-carbon buildings and resilient infrastructure.
 - Natural Resources** – protecting and enhancing Norwalk's ecosystems and biodiversity.
 - Waste** – supporting a zero-waste future through reduction, reuse, and recycling.
 - Human Health, Food Security, and Housing** – ensuring access to healthy food, affordable housing, and a safe living environment.
 - Circular Economic Development** – stimulating local, sustainable economic opportunities.
 - Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and Recovery** – building capacity for climate and disaster resilience.
 - Community Outreach** – engaging, educating, and empowering Norwalk residents and businesses in sustainability and resilience efforts.
6. The Task Force shall provide reports at least every six months to the Mayor and Common Council to inform decision-making and track progress toward Norwalk's sustainability goals.
7. The Task Force shall function solely in an advisory capacity and shall not possess regulatory, budgetary, or decision-making authority. Its purpose is to inform and support the City's sustainability efforts through community collaboration, education, expertise, and public engagement.



Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy
Commitment of
City of Norwalk, Connecticut
United States of America



I, Harry Rilling, **Mayor of the City of Norwalk, Connecticut**, commit to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM), joining thousands of other cities and local governments around the world currently engaged in climate leadership.

GCoM envisions a world where committed mayors and local governments – in alliance with partners – accelerate ambitious, measurable climate and energy initiatives that lead to an inclusive, just, low-emission and climate resilient future, helping to meet and exceed the Paris Agreement objectives.

Whatever the size or location, the mayors and local leaders committed to GCoM stand ready to take concrete measures with long-term impact to tackle the interconnected challenges of climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as access to sustainable energy.

To implement this vision, we pledge to implement policies and undertake measures to (i) reduce / avoidⁱ greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, (ii) prepare for the impacts of climate change, (iii) increase access to sustainable energy, and (iv) track progress toward these objectives.

Specifically, within three years of this commitmentⁱⁱ, we pledge to develop, adoptⁱⁱⁱ, use and regularly report on the following:

- A community-scale GHG emission inventory, following the recommended guidance;
- An assessment of climate risks and vulnerabilities;
- Ambitious, measurable and time-bound target(s) to reduce/avoid GHG emissions;
- Ambitious climate change adaptation vision and goals, based on quantified scientific evidence when possible, to increase local resilience to climate change;
- An ambitious and just goal to improve access to secure, sustainable and affordable energy; and
- A formally adopted plan(s) addressing climate change mitigation / low emission development, climate resilience and adaptation, and access to sustainable energy.

The targets and action plans for mitigation / low emission development must be quantified and consistent with or exceed relevant national unconditional^{iv} commitments defined through the UNFCCC (Intended) Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The targets and action plans should be in line with National Adaptation Plans, where these exist; and should be consistent with the

principles around energy access and urban sustainability embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We will explore the allocation of adequate staff resources and institutional arrangements. This includes governance processes, municipal structures and budget allocations to deliver on this commitment and secure continuity.

We acknowledge that there may be additional regional- or country-specific commitments or requirements that we commit to follow, and that may be agreed through our city networks or through our direct engagement with local partners of GCoM.

The **city of Norwalk** acknowledges that continued engagement in GCoM and associated Regional or National Covenants, as established, is contingent on complying with the above requirements within established timeframes.

Name and title of person signing this commitment

.....

City of Norwalk
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851
<https://norwalkct.gov/>

Mayor Harry Rilling, HRilling@norwalkct.gov (203) 854-7701

92,458 Inhabitants, **36.37** sq. miles

United States of America, <https://norwalkct.gov/>

OFFICIAL SIGNATURE

Mandated by the **City of Norwalk Common Council** on **....., 2025.**

ⁱ "Avoid emission" via low emission development

ⁱⁱ Flexibility is allowed to suit differentiated local circumstances and needs.

ⁱⁱⁱ According to the city and local government's procedures

^{iv} Many countries have submitted two sets of NDC targets: unconditional targets, to be implemented without any explicit external support; and conditional targets. The latter are more ambitious than unconditional targets and require external support for their fulfilment. The cities and local governments committing to the GCoM are required to commit at least to the equivalent of their country's unconditional targets, but are encouraged to be more ambitious where possible.