

The Mayor's Energy & Environment Task Force
January 21, 2015
Room 101, City Hall

Meeting called to order at 7:05

Present:

Mr. Richard Bonenfant
Ms. Daphne Dixon
Mr. Bob Eyd
Mr. Eric Gribin
Mr. Steve Klocke
Mr. John Kydes
Ms. Diane Lauricella

Old Business

1. Task Force Structure:

In order to form two distinct subcommittees of the Task Force – Energy and Environment – we will need participation from all the members and to recruit new members. Mr. Kydes said he will contact the Task Force members who have not responded to meeting notices and have not been present for meetings.

2. Norwalk Public School Recycling Program:

Mr. Kydes reported that he met with Glen Iannaccone and visited schools. Recycling bins are not being used. All agreed that we need a plan to implement recycling at the schools. Ms. Dixon mentioned that City Carting has new trucks that pick up the recycling bins off the curb without the need for manpower. Ms. Lauricella mentioned the Keep America Beautiful program for schools as a resource. Mr. Gribin mentioned the CT Green Schools initiative which offers free resources like a recycling “challenge”. He also mentioned that we need to enroll a teacher/staff person who will be the recycling “champion” at each school.

Ms. Dixon said that the program should start with at the grammar schools – K-8. Mr. Klocke asked about the scale of the recycling program, how many schools, what is the timeline, etc. He agreed that each school needs a “champion” point person. Ms. Lauricella mentioned two resources for the Task Force - Dan Colleluori who oversees waste and recycling for the City of Stamford, and Jessica Palladino (affiliation unclear).

Mr. Kydes or Ms. Lauricella said that a letter should be drafted and sent to all teachers to start the project. Ms. Lauricella said that she would spearhead the effort to start an active recycling program directly with the schools. Mr. Kydes will be kept in the loop with this effort and will be the intermediary for any requests to the City to expedite the program. According to Mr. Kydes, we cannot count on Mr. Alvord of DPW to help with this effort. He also said that we need “more feet on the ground” with this effort. He has already arranged that DEEP will give the Board of Education recycling bins at no cost to them.

The discussion also touched on the City's contract with City Carting for recycling. Norwalk pays City Carting \$83/ton for waste, and \$17.50/ton for recycling. Mr. Eyd mentioned that

increased recycling adds financial resources to the schools' budget in lower costs for waste. Ms. Lauricella will present a plan for the recycling program to the Task Force at our next meeting.

3. Residential Energy Efficiency Program:

Santa Fuel has been added as the third HES vendor endorsed by the City for home energy audits and energy efficiency improvements. Santa will send out printed information about the residential energy challenge. The two other vendors are Next Step Living and New England Smart Energy. Mr. Kydes mentioned that there has been an Energy Challenge table set up at City Hall each week for the last 2-3 months.

For every home energy audit, each HES vendor contributes \$75 to the City. Money raised from this program will help pay for children to attend the Maritime Center Camp/Mayor's Summer Youth Science and Engineering Program. Ms. Lauricella questioned the lack of transparency in the decision to add Santa Fuel and to allocate the funds to the Mayor's Summer Youth Program. Mr. Kydes said that both the vendor and use of the funds are the Mayor's decision. The Task Force was assembled at the Mayor's request. Ms. Lauricella suggested that the Mayor's Task Force should be part of each press conference. Mr. Kydes agreed.

4. Energy Benchmarking of City Buildings:

Mr. Gribin presented the findings of NCC's BEST Program on the energy use of 20 Norwalk Public School buildings. Mr. Gribin will be meeting with Bill Hodel, the Director of Facilities for the Public Schools to review the report on January 30th. The 6 worst performing schools, compared with other similar-use schools in the Northeast are Marvin Elementary, Jefferson Magnet, Briggs High School, Brookside, Silvermine, and Kendall. 13 of Norwalk's 20 school buildings score below the Energy Star rating for energy usage. Total energy costs in 2013 for all buildings was \$1.9 million dollars.

Mr. Gribin explained that the next step after he meets with Mr. Hodel, is for Mr. Kydes to help organize a meeting for Andy Brydges of CEFIA/The CT Green Bank to present the structure and advantages of the State's "Lead By Example" and performance contracting programs to Tom Hamilton, City Director of Finance, Bill Hodel, Rich Rudel, Finance Director for Schools, Mike Sgobbo, Guardian Property Manager and Dan Miller, Guardian Chief Engineer for the City, Alan Lo, City Building and Facilities Manager, Mr. Kydes and Mr. Gribin. This meeting will help move the process along toward actual energy saving projects.

NCC's Energy Benchmarking of City buildings shows that there are great opportunities for energy savings. Mr. Gribin said that the City needs to arrange for energy audits of the worst-performing buildings. Typically, energy efficiency improvements save building owners 20-30% in annual energy costs. This could mean potential cost savings for the Public Schools of \$500,000 annually. Energy cost savings of 60-70% are not unheard of. The Task Force commended Mr. Gribin and NCC's BEST Program for their work on this initiative. Ms. Lauricella suggested that energy improvement projects be identified in time for the next budget cycle.

New Business

5. Task Force Project Matrix:

Mr. Klocke presented a print out of an extensive project matrix that he and Ms. Lauricella developed. He explained that the Matrix identifies activities as either Long Term, Short Term, or Continual, and also shows the Task Force members responsible by activity.

The Matrix could be organized into three main sections – Environmental, Energy and General. The Matrix is Cloud-based, so any of the Task Force members can edit the document in the future. Mr. Klocke will follow-up and send a link to the document to each Task Force member. Prior to the next Task Force meeting, members should review the document and make separate notes to discuss at the next meeting about how to prioritize the list, where to put our time and energy, timelines, etc. For the next Task Force meeting members should pick 2-3 energy projects and 2-3 environment projects for us to focus on.

Ms. Dixon said that we don't have to try to solve everything at once. She mentioned that we could meet with other City Task Forces to exchange best practices and to find out what kind of projects they were successful with. Ms. Lauricella said that for the City's Sustainability Plan any and all items in the Matrix could be included. Both the Cities of Stamford and Bridgeport have Sustainability Plans. One benefit of an overall Sustainability Plan is that they can attract funding. The Task Force can also request that certain project in our Matrix be included in the Board of Estimate budget. Mr. Bonenfant said that the retrofitting of privately owned building should be added to the Matrix. Ms. Lauricella mentioned that 20% of City residents are still on well-water.

In response to the extensive list of potential projects the Task Force and City can undertake, Mr. Eydt pointed out the limited resources of the Task Force. The group size has dwindled since our initial meeting. Ms. Lauricella said that we can all bring our own networks and contacts to the Task Force for consideration. Ms. Dixon said that we should make sure we can get some things done.

6. Task Force Administration

Mr. Klocke asked about the due process of the Task Force. Mr. Kydes said that the Agenda for each meeting is posted the day prior to the meeting and minutes are posted after each meeting on the City's website.

Mr. Klocke described that at Steven Winter Associates, since it is Mr. Winter's company, Mr. Winter makes the decisions. Since Mr. Kydes represents the City, Mr. Kydes and the Mayor should be in charge of this Task Force. Mr. Klocke continued that new members should be approved by the Task Force for the Chair and the Mayor to approve. There should also be a time limit for speaking so that our time is used wisely. We should adhere to the Agenda. Ms. Lauricella asked Mr. Kydes to consider her list of her other suggestions for the Task Force.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm