Present: Julie Sherman, Ted Busky, Rita Kornblum, Nikki Pederson, Susanna Bekman, Virginia Walton (staff)

Acting chairperson Kornblum called the meeting to order at 5:37 pm.

The minutes of the June 21 and July 19, 2022 meetings were approved on a motion by Pederson/Bekman.

Walton reported that a zero waste initiative is underway for grades K-12. Most recently, Walton met the new food service director who is in support of reducing disposable items used for school meals. Next steps - forming zero waste teams for each of the three schools. Now that Southeast Elementary School has been demolished, the Committee would like to know how much material was salvaged and recycled. Walton will follow-up with the contractor Colliers.

Walton is working with colleagues from other CT towns in arranging professional services from the Product Stewardship Institute to help educate municipalities about the benefits of packaging extended producer responsibility legislation. Mansfield, along with West Hartford, Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority and Middletown has contributed $5,000 of nips funds toward hiring them this fall.

Sherman arrived at 5:45 pm and took over chairing the meeting. Sherman and Kornblum will co-chair since 5:30 pm has become a difficult meeting time for Sherman.

The Celebrate Mansfield Festival will be introducing washable utensils on Saturday, September 24, 2022. A new instructional video has been created for waste station volunteers. The video QR code will be attached to each waste station. Busky will volunteer from 2 to 6, Sherman from 2 to 4, Kornblum from 2 to 4 and Bekman form 4 to 6. The SWAC recycle, trash, compost sort activity will offer a drawing for one month’s free trash service (up to the 35 gallon trash container size) for those who participate in the activity.

Members discussed whether fee waivers should cover bulky waste. Currently residents with fee waivers pay full price for bulky waste. Since all fee waivers have a yearly cap, members thought a moderate amount of bulky waste should be covered by the fee waiver. On a motion by Kornblum/Busky the committee approved allowing up to $100 per year of bulky waste to apply to a resident’s fee waiver.

The Committee reviewed the multi-family collection contract bid. One bidder, Casella Waste Systems/Willimantic Waste Paper, responded. Prices will be increasing around 5%. In addition, there will be a fuel surcharge which means the monthly payment will fluctuate. Overall, the increase could be 9% more than what is currently paid to Casella.

It has come to Walton’s attention that there are businesses using plastic checkout bags. She has spoken to Dollar General, Tea More, Eat Joy, DP Dough and a new business about discontinuing the use of plastic bags and has made a flyer for them to hang in their stores. Pederson offered to post information about the bag ordinance on Mansfield Connection Facebook. The Downtown Partnership will be placing a reminder in their business digest. Walton asked that members alert her if a business provides them with a plastic checkout bag.

Walton met with the High Tone Farm anaerobic digester developer, Ag-Grid Energy, about food scrap collection. The digester is projected to begin operations at the end of 2023. Casella is interested in centralized collections. As the facility opening draws closer, Casella will provide pricing.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton