

League of Women Voters Mid-Hudson Region
Materials Management Committee
Minutes of Meeting May 3, 2016

Call to Order: 5:55 p.m.

Present: Kathy OConnor (Chair), Soyal Smalls, Margot Becker, Kathie Beinkafner, Kristen Faughnan, Susan Holland, Cindy Lanzetta, Noa Simons, Sarah Womer, and guest Victoria DiLonardo

Absent: Jolanda Jansen, Anne Needham, Dare Thompson

MINUTES Motion made to approve the minutes of the 04-05-16 meeting (Sarah, Susan). All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

PAINT STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

The League is sending a letter to the executive of Paint Care expressing support for the passage of the paint stewardship bill in the Assembly. The letter will be signed by Kathy OConnor, Jolanda Jansen, and Dare Thompson. Kathy O shared a draft of the letter with the Committee.

Cindy discussed a Paint Care webinar she recently attended, and reported that the hosts expressed cautious optimism about the passage of the bill in New York. The hosts also discussed two major obstacles to the bill's progress. The first of these was that it is being held up by a staff member of an Assembly member. Cindy recommended getting in touch with Alison Keane and Scott Castle to discover who this person is, and suggested involving Barbara Bartoletti as well. After discussion, it was agreed that Cindy would contact these people.

The second issue is that Lowe's is opposed to the bill's passage. The company's issue is philosophical: it believes paint should be thrown out.

There was also a brief discussion of product stewardship on a broader scale. It was reported that Ulster County Chairman Ken Ronk is making a big push for pharmaceutical returns. Margot expressed concern, however, that such programs rarely address environmental problems with pharmaceuticals, and the collecting agency still has no way to safely dispose of the products. She also believes it can cause harm, as people feel like they have addressed the issue when they in fact have not. Cindy acknowledged these concerns, but argued that the problem is more likely to be meaningfully addressed if companies are forced to confront it.

Finally, there was a discussion of whether this committee would benefit from becoming a member of the Product Stewardship Institute. Joining might give us access to helpful resources, such as the webinar Cindy attended. No conclusion was reached.

UC SWM IC

Jolanda was not present to report, and Kathie B was unsure of the Commission's status as she had not been able to attend meetings while recovering. She did report, however, that report sections were being submitted, and that the Commission was planning to attempt to develop a recommendation at its upcoming May 11 meeting. She also said that she had submitted the Gasification section, though it was not completely finalized.

This was followed by a discussion of the merits of different paths the county could take. Kathie B expressed reluctance about gasification, as it produces carbon dioxide. Kathy O said that Jolanda seemed to like the idea of a shared solution between Ulster, Green, Sullivan, and Columbia Counties, but Kathie B doubted that Ulster County would be willing to invest a large amount of money in any new technology. Noa asked if there was any condition under which the Commission would recommend mandatory organics separation, and Kathie B reported that composting was one of the options being considered. She also mentioned that for gasification, organics separation is not necessary because they go into the process. Margot asked if there was any "reduce" component of the plan. Kathie B

answered that the issue had been raised, but that the Commission's report does not specifically address it.

The Commission is due to report its findings on August 1.

UCRRA

The June meeting of the Ulster County Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors will be held at UCCRA.

DUTCHESS COUNTY RECYCLING/COMPOSTING EVENTS

Kathy O reported on the recent Tivoli Arbor Day event, which was successful. Kathy O had invited Merlyn Akhtar to help at the pop-up tent, and while Merlyn was not able to attend in person, she sent a very helpful PowerPoint that Kathy O printed and brought. It was very useful for showing people what could be recycled and how, and attendees were excited about the information.

The next activity of our MM Pop-Up Tent will be at the Trash Fest opening on June 4 in High Falls.

MARBLETOWN TRASH FEST

Margot reported that she was currently working on publicity for Trash Fest. She believes the opening event came together well and should be fun, and while she is anxious that people attend, she also thinks the transfer station is a good location because people will be there anyway for other reasons. We will have a booth at this event, and there will also be art, music, and other organizations such as Catskill Fungi.

The opening event will take place from 12:30 to 3:30 on Saturday, June 4. Following it will be a more traditional art gallery opening. Margot also mentioned that our committee is welcome to return on other Saturdays during Trash Fest if we would like, and suggested that perhaps we could decide this after seeing how the opening event goes.

SUPPORT THE STYROFOAM BAN

A Facebook page in support of the Styrofoam ban has been created and is in the process of being filled out. It will be circulated as soon as it has substantive content to share.

Margot said that the Marbletown ECC would like to support the ban and that she will draft a letter regarding this, but that it would be helpful to have access to some of the additional information that Tracey Bartels offered to distribute.

Cindy suggested that writing a letter to the editor might be valuable.

Kathy O reported talking to the environmental reporter at the *Daily Freeman* about the best way to publicize. He advised that stories featuring two people discussing an issue tend to get the most attention, and recommended using a press release rather than letter to the Editor for maximum attention. Kathy O suggested that, in light of this, it might be a good idea to write a story about our discussion with Tracey Bartels at the last meeting. Kathie B suggested that we record videos talking with people and post them to the Facebook page.

HUDSON VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Sarah and Victoria DiLonardo attended the April 18 meeting of the Hudson Valley Regional Council's Materials Management Working Group.

A major discussion point at the meeting was how the working group should organize itself and its meetings. In response, Sarah mentioned our committee and the way we operate. The working group did not decide on specific action items, but will meet again in July.

Cindy asked if this group was an outgrowth of the Regional Plan, and Sarah replied that it was. There was then a discussion of the Regional Plan, and that it was a good document but that progress stalled after it was created. Cindy perceived this to be a result of the rise of the Regional

Economic Development Councils and their drawing away resources from other groups and activities. In addition, funding and grant requirements have become increasingly complicated.

Finally, there was a discussion regarding the proposed changes to the Part 360 Solid Waste Regulations. The DEC is currently accepting comments on the proposal.

NEW BUSINESS

- o Margot will be on the radio on May 16th to discuss Trash Fest.
- o Kathy O began a discussion of the possibility of succession in the chair position. While she is not actively looking to step down, she thinks it would be a good idea to have some sort of structured system for succession rather than waiting until the Chairperson is forced to step down by circumstance. The discussion did not reach a firm conclusion, though Cindy expressed support for two-year terms and all praised Kathy O for her leadership over the past year.

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:03 p.m.

(Minutes prepared by Kristen Faughnan)