

DURHAM MIDDLEFIELD INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 29, 2021
Peckham Park, Middlefield

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM by Chairman DeVecchio.

Members present: Dom DeVecchio, Ron Capozzi, Steven Koerber, Brendan O'Connell, Frank Petrella, Charlie Zieminski **Members absent:** Howard Weissberg **Staff Present:** Bob Matuskiewicz, Heather Castiglia **Public Present:** First Selectman Laura Francis, Selectman Carol Bufithis, First Selectman Ed Bailey

Mr. Bailey announced that DMIAAB board member Jim Gibbons passed away in late March.

A motion was made by Ron and seconded by Steve Koerber to approve the agenda as written. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Presentation First Selectman Laura Francis and Selectman Carol Bufithis

Introductions of Carol Bufithis and Laura Francis. Both have been part of CAT (Coginchaug Area Transition) and are passionate about ways to help sustainability within Durham and Middlefield and have been a part of creating solutions such as the CAT initiative, Durham/Middlefield Giving Garden at the Middlefield Community Center. The Giving Garden is one way in which the community can help to produce sustainability. The Giving Garden is made up of many people who donate their time, money and effort to create produce which is then harvested and given to people in need. Mrs. Bufithis is also an experienced composter and believes that composting can divert waste from the community waste stream.

Mrs. Francis mentioned the current waste management crisis in Connecticut and the future of waste management for the state is trucking waste to other states. It is difficult to provide solutions at a state/government level because waste producers have strong lobbies, which makes it hard for municipalities to fight them. Mrs. Francis is tri-chair along with Matthew Knickerbocker and Katie Dykes, of CCSMM (Connecticut Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management) a committee created to affect positive change in the community. It was founded with the purpose to investigate and provide guidance to municipalities on taking local actions to implement solutions toward progress for a more sustainable waste system in CT.

Mrs. Bufithis and Mrs. Francis presented their proposal for a composting pilot program at the Transfer Station, in hopes that DMIAAB would partner with CAT (Coginchaug Area Transition team) to find out if composting could help the waste crisis on a local level. They also asked if DMIAAB could fund the \$1300 fee that the pilot program would cost. Pertinent points:

- In association with Blue Earth Composting, the program will be for a 6 month period.
- Involves 100 volunteer households signing up to compost for 6 months. Blue Earth will collect the compost from the transfer station and dispose of it at the Anaerobic Digester in Southington, CT
- Cost is \$1300 for the 6 month and a fee for the kit per household that participates.
- Cost includes kit provisions for 100 households, Kit includes educational resources and instruction guides, buckets, pails and bags.
- The households that volunteer, would collect their compost during the week and dump it in appropriate canisters at the transfer station. Blue Earth would collect compost once a week, and truck it to the anaerobic digester facility in Southington, CT.
- Data Collection—there is the hope that the data collected by Blue Earth during this 6 month period will allow the committee(s) to see if administering a permanent composting initiative at the site would be worthwhile as well as better for the environment.
- May be a small solution to reduce the weight of tonnage the transfer station transports to Hartford.
- Project would possibly start in July 2021
- Both were adamant that this was not a project to make money, but to either save money or be a cost neutral initiative, with the actual benefit addressing educating the community on more sustainable waste management.

Concerns that DMIAAB board members had with the project:

- Site placement of the project
- Local wildlife scavenging the barrels at the station
- Bees
- Smell/odor
- Permits- Chairman DelVecchio will check the site permits, to make sure a project like this is allowed.
- Cost – Chairman DelVecchio explained that DMIAAB’s 21-22 budget is in deficit, but consideration would be given to funding the project. Mrs. Francis mentioned that CAT is applying for a CVEF grant, and there may be other options to help pay for the cost.

The board was agreeable that the project could take place at the transfer station, and agreed to fund the project for the interim six month period. Mrs. Bufithis felt it was a worthwhile experiment for the DMIAAB and CAT to partner up for. She stated she was happy to help answer any questions any of the board members had about the project at any time.

Site Manager’s Report

- Town of Middlefield done with brush pickup and grinding.
- Town of Durham just started brush pick up
- Employees worked on spring cleanup at the site
- 3193 stickers sold to date

Old Business

DMIAAB Fiscal Year 21/22 Final Budget

Chairman DelVecchio gave an update

- Durham did not want to fund their share of the budget this year and maintained the budget from last year. This has caused a deficit because of the MIRA tip fee increase.
- DMIAAB does have access to a cash reserve from each town, but should any major expense arise, it will have to go to the Boards of Finance for assistance.

Mr. Capozzi expressed his disappointment with the Durham Boards of Finance decision to not increase the DMIAAB budget, as well as the removal of a purchase of a new site truck. He stated that DMIAAB has reiterated twice the need for a new truck and the Board of Finance has refused. DMIAAB has no other option than to continue to pay for repairs on the ever aging equipment, as well as lose the trade in value for the truck. Mr. Capozzi suggested DMIAAB make a motion to increase cost of stickers another \$10.00 to allow for the purchase of a new truck. Chairman DelVecchio responded that he did not think it was a possibility because pursuant to the interlocal agreement any capital improvement requires the vote of the Boards of Finance and both Boards of Selectmen from both towns. A motion was made by Ron Capozzi to increase the sticker fee by \$10 starting July 1st conditional of Durham and Middlefield Boards of Finance and Boards of Selectmen allowing the lease purchase of a new truck. There was no second, and the motion failed. The board agreed to have more discussion about this issue, and create a plan to address it. There is a future joint meeting scheduled in September 2021 with the Board of Finance and Selectman from each town to discuss these matters.

License/Registration Private Haulers

- Chairman DelVecchio and Bob Matuskiewicz agreed to discuss this and update the Board at the next meeting.

Composting Units Update

- Mr. O’Connell reported that the sale is headed in a good direction, and there has been much interest generated.

A motion was made by Charlie Zieminski and seconded by Brendan O’Connell to approve March 25th, 2021 meeting minutes. This meeting’s minutes to be approved at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35PM

Respectfully Submitted, Heather Castiglia

Cc: Durham Town Clerk, Middlefield Town Clerk, Board Members