



# Sustainable Bethel Commission

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street  
Bethel, Connecticut 06801 Telephone: (203) 794-8501

## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 6:00 pm - Hybrid Meeting  
Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School St., Bethel, CT 06801  
Meeting Room D

**Present:** Chair Kathryn Hebert, Gabriela Hernandez, Dana Dessereaux, Suneetha Malkani attended in-person. Peter Schenkman, Tia Murphy, Krista Swanson-Fiorini attended via Google Meet.

**Absent:** Kelly Coladarci

K. Hebert called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

**Public Comments:** Nicholas Jordan 22 Wolfpits Road

**Correspondence:** None

### Guest Speaker – Bob Babcock/SBEA Program

Bob Babcock discussed the program called “Small Business Energy Advantage” (SBEA). This program works through Eversource, and centers around small businesses. To become involved in the program there is no obligation to put down any money. The main focus of the program is to reduce energy consumption in small businesses. One example of how the program is used is by lighting. If a business has fluorescent lights, the SBEA program will change those lights into LED lights to reduce the amount of energy is used. The process for a small business to become involved in the SBEA program, the business owner will get in contact with Bob and he will determine if the business have devices that could benefit from the program. If the business can benefit from the program, an auditing team will be sent out and count every device and check the insulation. The team takes an audit of an assessment of all of the devices that use energy. Bob will then put all the information on a spreadsheet and submit to Eversource. Eversource then determines which devices to take out and how to replace them to save energy.

K. Hebert opened the floor to discussion by the Commissioners. Discussion ensued.

K. Herbert stated S. Malkani and J. Chrzescijanek, Economic Director are leading the project with Bob Babcock.

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S. Malkani stated the next steps will be to have a meeting with J. Chrzescijanek, and J. Chrezcijanek will send out emails to small businesses, and Bob will send by mail.

**Chairman Report:**

K. Hebert stated this will be D. Dessereaux last meeting. D. Dessereaux will be resigning due to moving out of Bethel. K. Hebert read a letter into the record (**see attached**).

**Consideration of approval of the regular meeting minutes from 7/16/2025:**

Motion made by D. Dessereaux, and seconded by S. Malkani, to amend the regular meeting minutes of 7/16/2025 to change under “Discuss and consider Sustainable Bethel Commission subcommittee structure” to say bylaws subcommittee instead of subcommittee by laws. Motion passed. (5-0-2). P. Schenkman, and T. Murphy abstained.

**Discuss and consider Bylaws – presentation by the Bylaws Subcommittee:**

G. Hernandez stated the Bylaws Subcommittee met; in attendance was G. Hernandez, K. Swanson-Fiorini, and D. Dessereaux.

G. Hernandez presented Draft Sustainable Bethel Commission BYLAWS 2025 for the Commission to review. Suggested the Commission review the document before the next Regular Meeting on September 17, 2025 to have a further discussion, and make and notes and/or comments right on the document itself. Discussion ensued.

**Discuss and consider SBC submission to the American 250 Bethel program:**

K. Herbert asked the Commission if anyone was interested. Discussion ensued.

**Commissioner Reports:**

**Urban Forestry/pollinator pathway program:** K. Swanson-Fiorini presented pollinator pathways website and map that shows pathways in the surrounding areas. Presented tool kit on how to start a pollinator pathway. D. Dessereaux mentioned going through the pollinator pathway to purchase signage to place around Town to help promote the pollinator pathways in Town. K. Hebert suggested collaborating with the Garden Club. K. Swanson-Fiorini suggested being involved in helping decide which trees Bethel Park and Rec plant at the renovated Parloa Park. Discussion ensued.

**West Conn Student Steward Project Collaboration:** G. Hernandez stated no new update.

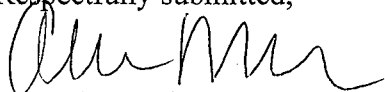
**Earth Day 2026:** G. Hernandez stated no new update.

**Other Business:** None

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 6:00pm in Meeting Room A

Motion made by G. Hernandez, and seconded by P. Schenkman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Martinez', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Martinez  
Recording Secretary

### **Recognizing Dana Dessereaux**

Tonight, I want to take a moment to recognize and express my deepest appreciation for the work that Dana Dessereaux did while serving on the SBC.

Dana was appointed as a Sustainable Bethel Commissioner July 2023. She has been a dedicated volunteer, actively contributing her time, energy, and expertise to the Commission.

Her impact on our success has been noticeable, and she will be deeply missed. In the short time of your appointment, you have:

- Been a conscientious, vocal and consistent observer of government compliance including the rules related to FOI and Roberts Rules of Order while balancing the mission of the Sustainable Bethel Commission and the representation of all Bethel residents.
- Attending and actively contributing to SBC events, including Earth Day, Pride, the Walk Audit, and more—offering invaluable support in so many ways.
- Helping to develop Sustainable Bethel Commission bylaws and subcommittee structure within the parameters of the commission's mission.
- Consistently bringing insightful ideas and fresh perspectives that have positively impacted our community.

Dana, in your short appointment to the SBC, we are incredibly grateful for everything you've done. We completely understand that you need to move closer to work, commuting is not fun and a definite time waster! Your presence, dedication, and contributions will be truly missed—not just by this Commission, but by the entire Town of Bethel.

That said, we know this isn't a goodbye forever! We look forward to staying in touch, and we wish you all the best. Please know you are always welcome to reach out anytime.