

**Brunswick Recycling & Sustainability Committee**  
**Tuesday, March 22, 2022 - 5:00pm – 6:15pm**  
**Via Electronic Devices**

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|--|---------|
| 1. Call to Order / Intros                        | 5:00 PM |
| 2. Administration                                |         |
| • Approval and/or Correction of Feb 2022 Minutes | 5:05    |
| • Open Committee Positions – Steve Weems         |         |
| 3. Solid Waste Update – Steve Weems, Jay A       | 5:10    |
| • Ecomaine/Casella agreements                    |         |
| • Upcoming Town Council Mtg                      |         |
| 4. Organics Subcommittee Report - Chrissy, Eliza | 5:30    |
| • Refresher on Grant Goals                       |         |
| • Execution Update                               |         |
| 5. Energy Subcommittee Report - Steve Weems      | 5:50    |
| 6. Public Comment**                              | 6:05    |
| 7. Adjournment                                   | 6:15 PM |

**Call-in information for public comment:**

Dial-in #:929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 825 6695 9702

Passcode: 089572

To request a video link to watch or participate, please contact [jastle@brunswickme.org](mailto:jastle@brunswickme.org).

\*\* Comment can be given at this point in the meeting via the Zoom dial in number provided during the televised meeting. Alternatively, written comments in advance of the meeting can be sent to [jastle@brunswickme.org](mailto:jastle@brunswickme.org) and they will be read aloud at the appropriate point in the meeting.

## MINUTES RECYCLING & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE 22 FEB 22

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Jamie Ecker at 5:05 PM. Personal introduction provided by each person in attendance.

**Members present:** Jamie Ecker (chairman), Steve Weems (vice chairman), Harry Hopcroft, Stephen Wood, Jennifer Hicks (secretary), Chrissy Adamowicz, Thomas Rumpf

**Town personnel present:** Kathy Wilson (Town Councilor), Steve Walker (Town Councilor), Jay Astle (Public Works Director), Eliza Blood (Organics Recycling Intern), John Eldridge (Town Manager)

**Public present:** Bill Good, Juka Zolas, Rep. Poppy Arford

**Minutes from January 25, 2022:** Harry Hopcroft asks for clarification about action steps for the Education Committee. Jennifer Hicks will finish writing the action step. Acceptance with modification moved by Tom Rumpf, seconded by Stephen Wood, approved unanimously.

### **Follow-Up, Memo to Council on Committee Charge & 2022 Goals:**

Jamie said that the memo to Council on committee charge and 2022 Goals was submitted February 2.

**Action:** Jamie will put the submitted version in the Committee Google Drive folder.

Tom Rumpf asked about the towns grant request for funding with the Maine Won't Wait funding ME Community Climate Action (Grant Opportunity Informational Link) Due date is March 22 and there are prerequisite steps (coordination and deciding on use for money). The grant is \$50,000.

Town staff has identified projects. May not make it in time for that first batch because of the necessary council resolution before submitting the grant. Tom Rumpf clarifies that the second round of grants is not for communities. John Eldridge suggests that if Brunswick doesn't get a grant in on time it can collaborate with Cumberland County projects.

**Action:** Jamie Ecker will follow up with John Eldridge about a greenhouse gas inventory project for the town.

**Action:** Jennifer Hicks will contact Brian Ambrette from the Governor's Office to find out for sure that towns can submit grants in September and inform the Committee and Town Staff of his response.

### **Organics Recycling Subcommittee Update:**

Chrissy Adamowicz reports that Eliza Blood has been hired as town intern to focus on organics recycling. The Subcommittee had an initial planning meeting with Blood about her work with a three-prong approach to further the town's work reducing waste through diversion. Will meet monthly for updates and guidance.

Jay Astle also reported that Eliza will work with other Public Works Dept projects in addition to organics.

Jay Astle also reported he is working to set up 2<sup>nd</sup> organics recycling drop off at the Recreation Center at the Landing. Targeting to have it set up by mid March.

Stephen Wood asks what kind of outreach will be conducted once the new drop off site is open. Chrissy Adamowicz answers that Eliza will come up with a plan for outreach and education and will consider all channels of communication in the town.

## **Solid Waste & Recycling Update & Recommendations**

Steve Weems introduced to the Committee a draft memo from the Solid Waste Options Subcommittee with recommendation for the Town Council to enter a long term agreement with ecomaine as the Town's trash (MSW) and recycling (SSR) processor, and to enter some form of hauling arrangement with Casella to transport the material there.

Weems reviewed the past activities including the previous recommendation from the Committee to the Council (January 4, 2021), which ultimately led to a vote by the Town Council in April 2021 directing staff to pursue a MSW and SSR contract with ecomaine, and Casella to continue to do the collection and transport the materials to ecomaine..

Since that time, new hauling challenges and costs developed making it hard to complete the original plan at the cost presented to the Council last April. This led to the Solid Waste Options Subcommittee and Town Staff working to explore a wide range of other possible options to transport the Town's trash and recycling to ecomaine at a cost that might be more reasonable.

Under the proposed new recommendation, Casella would still collect Brunswicks materials, but would deliver them to their West Bath transfer station. They would then "swap" an equal amount tonnage of material (trash and recycling) from either their Westbrook Transfer Station or from direct commercial routes to Ecomaine.

Jay Astle clarified that the origins of Swap material may be from Casella's commercial routes – both recycling and waste - from a number of entities in Portland. He further clarified that ecomaine is fine with this approach to meet Brunswick's needs..

Harry Hopcroft asks about how to keep contamination low if we are swapping materials with commercial entities. Steve Weems and Jamie Ecker responded that the contract will include a guarantee that there will be an maximum acceptable contamination rate or a penalty is paid by Casella. The last information we have from ecomaine is that, as an average of all communities served, the contamination rate is ~10-11%.

Harry Hopcroft emphasizes the need for education and information about how the Swap works and why it's still important to reduce waste, recycle properly.

Jamie restated that the draft Recommendation includes annual check ins on tonnage, quality and other factors, and that there be a clear 3 year check in/review Casella's performance in meeting the terms and goals of the agreement and Swap.

Jay asked that the Committee's Recommendation provide staff lee-way to negotiate terms with Casella, given that we need to gain their concurrence on these terms, but added that he thought the draft recommendation appeared to do that. He also noted that commercial recycling, based on feedback from casella as well as ecomaine, tends to be much cleaner than residential recycling.

Chrissy asked that the Town be informed exactly what the materials are made up of as not all commercial waste is the same, and how do we prevent excess contamination. Jamie Ecker and Steve Weems reiterated that the recommendation strongly urges the Town to set clear standards for what can be substituted, the maximum contamination amounts, and the Town should be informed of the program's effectiveness through annual checks on tonnage, quality, etc. And that ecomaine will be doing their normal auditing of loads, which provides us another data point on the quality of what they are delivering.

**Note:** Tom Rumpf moved that the Subcommittee memo with MSW/SSR recommendation with the Swap be submitted to Town Council with edits on swap materials origins. Stephen Wood 2nds. Voted for unanimously.

**Action:** Steve Weems will make corrections on the origins of the swap materials and send the memo to the Town Council, and Jamie Ecker will finalize the memo and send it in to the Town Council.

**Public Comment:**

Juka Zolas asked how long the contract with Casella will be. Jamie explains that our Recommendation leaves it open for the Town staff/Council to ultimately determine the exact term of the hauling agreement with Casella. .

Poppy Arford asked if that Town might return to “tagging” recycling if it's not the proper materials or obviously contaminated. Stephen Wood points out that once the Town goes to ecomaine, ecomaine will have periodic reviews and audits of routes and may tag non-conforming material. Jamie Ecker reminded all that the existing contract with Casella includes a provision for Casella to do so, in coordination with Town staff.

Bill Good congratulates the Committee for voting for the recommendations.

Tom Rumpf moves to adjourn meeting, Stephen Weems seconds. Meeting adjourns at 6:30pm.

DRAFT

## File #3 – Brunswick - Proposed Services

### 1. Description of Proposed Project

This application seeks to reduce the residential food waste in Brunswick's Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) stream going to disposal facilities. Since Brunswick town landfill has just officially closed (April 1, 2021), the Town is actively seeking to improve its waste reduction and recycling programs.

Food waste is the heaviest component of the waste stream, comprising an estimated 30% of Brunswick's residential waste. Its diversion to recycling options, such as composting or anaerobic digestion, would result in significant benefits, including reducing the Town's trash disposal costs (estimated at >\$80/ton, not including collection costs) as well as reducing the Town's greenhouse gas footprint.

Brunswick's Recycling & Sustainability Committee estimates that ~15% of Brunswick's households (~750) are currently recycling their food waste today through subscription services and home composting, recycling ~200 tons/year. This is based on firm data from existing organics recycling programs in southern Maine. It is believed that a well promoted program in Brunswick could increase the number of participating households to ~1,350 (~30% of all Brunswick households) and recycle over 400 tons/year.

In July 2020, the Committee developed the following "3 Prong Approach" to increase the recycling of food waste generated by residents:

1. **Home Composting** (for those willing to "do it yourself")
2. **Curbside Subscription Services** (for those willing to pay)
3. **Development of a Drop-off Location** (for those wanting to participate, but not interested in home composting or paying for curbside subscription)

This approach was designed to give residents, who are new to the concept of food waste diversion, a sense of the options they have. There are a variety of living situations in Brunswick, and the Committee developed the 3 Prong Approach to serve most, if not all, situations. Our goal going forward is to also educate residents on their options and to increase access to the options by reducing cost barriers.

### 2. A description of the need for this initiative and how it has been identified, including any relevant data.

The Brunswick Landfill closure presents a new opportunity to help residents form new habits such as recycling organic material. Additionally, the Town Council adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution in December 2019, committing the Town to develop initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Town believes an effective organics recycling effort will reduce waste disposal costs paid borne by taxpayers, as well as reduce the Town's carbon footprint.

### 3. An estimate of the types and amounts of materials expected to be annually diverted from disposal.

This grant targets residential food waste. Our goal is to increase the number of households recycling food waste to ~1,350, or approximately 30%.

4. A description of how the feasibility of the initiative has been evaluated, including information on the likelihood of community support and the establishment of partnerships necessary for successful implementation.

The Committee has been conducting education and outreach to the community for about 8 months through a number of efforts, including posting of the 3 Prong Approach on the Towns' website and establishment of the Town's first Organics Drop Off Location (toters serviced by Agricycle located at the Public Works complex). Although the Drop Off Location has been a success, it is not ideally located to service the public.

5. For proposals designed to increase recycling and/or organics diversion from disposal, include information identifying or supporting the planned 'end-markets' for the materials.

Brunswick is serviced by several organics recyclers, including two residential curbside subscription services (We Compost It and Garbage to Garden) as well as Agricycle (for commercial businesses and the Town's Organics Drop Off Location. All are well established and have been operating in Maine for several years, with firm end markets for their products.

6. Identification of proposed acquisitions of equipment, including but not limited to: Balers, recycling containers, collection bins, curbside containers, and collection vehicles.

Our goal is to reduce the barriers to engaging in organics recycling.

For residents interested in backyard composting, we want to purchase 125 compost bins. In addition, to make it is easier for all resident to collect their food scraps, we want to purchase 250 stainless steel "Kitchen Caddies" for countertop use. In both cases, these would be purchased from Brunswick Public Works Department at 50% of the full item costs, ensuring resident have some investment in the effort.

We also want to establish a second Organics Drop Off Location, initially equipped with two toters (serviced by an organics recycling firm). At this time, it will tentatively be located at the Coffin School, one of the public elementary schools within walking distance of a relatively dense downtown neighborhood. This would include setting up an area to located organics toters with an information kiosk.

7. A description of any proposed facility construction, facility renovations, or other improvements, including a site drawing clearly showing all existing relevant facilities and the changes that will result from the proposed project.

See response to #6, above.

8. An explanation of how this proposed project and any existing facilities and operations fit together.

Promotion of several of the prongs of the "3 Prong Approach" build on existing organics recycling efforts that are already in Brunswick but may not be widely known by, or accessible to, residents.

Promotion of curbside subscription services can build on the fact that Brunswick is already serviced by two private services, although they currently only service portions of

the Town. Our hope is that expansion of the number of residential subscribers may encourage these private companies to build out and expand their geographic routes.

Locating a second Organics Drop Off Location at The Coffin School would make geographic sense since it is centrally located in a dense Brunswick neighborhood, and it is a significant distance from Brunswick's existing Organics Drop Off Location (at the Public Works Department). The site is town owned property and acts as a crossroads for the community. This site should increase access and convenience for residents in the western portion of Brunswick.

9. The components of any planned training, education, and outreach; the intended audience(s); and how the training, education, and outreach will be implemented.

To complement and promote the "3 Prong Approach", if funded Brunswick will hire a summer intern dedicated to education and outreach to Brunswick residents. The intern will focus on educating residents on the "3-Prong Approach", answering questions about organics recycling, and gathering data/surveying residents on their preferences related to organics recycling. Outreach methods will include going door to door, tabling at events, phone calls, social media, and engaging with media outlets.

10. A description of any data gathering and record keeping systems that will be used to measure the amount of materials diverted from disposal, and the related cost savings realized by the participating entity(ies) to report to the Department.

The Public Works Director, with assistance by the intern and Committee members, will document the results of their promotional effort to gauge the impact. Metrics to report:

- Estimated food waste recycled via the "3 Prong Approach":
  - New participants (# kitchen caddies sold and from survey data)
  - New Participants in home composting (# of bins sold)
  - New curbside subscriptions (from private companies)
- Track traffic to the Public Works "Organics Recycling" website landing page
- Estimated tons of food waste diverted from the waste stream
- Estimate of annual avoided costs (in tons, \$\$'s, and GHG reduction)

## **11. Implementation – Work Plan**

The project will start immediately after grant announcement, although the Town will advertise for an intern in advance (hiring pending successful grant award).

The workplan for the dedicated intern will be finalized, and citizen engagement and feedback as described previously will occur through the summer of 2021. Findings from the intern's work will be synthesized and summarized at the end of the summer and presented to the Recycling and Sustainability Committee.

Immediately after grant award, the Public Works Department will purchase bins and kitchen caddies and advertise their availability to the public through various channels, including social media and the Town's website. The second Organics Drop Off location will also be constructed in the summer of 2021.

July 2021 – June 2022: The education process will occur throughout the year. The Brunswick Recycling & Sustainability Committee will work closely the Public Works Director to develop educational materials and promote the "3 Prong Approach". This

will be accomplished through, press releases, social media, town's website, flyers, and televised Council meetings.

# Brunswick Recycling & Sustainability Committee

## Energy Subcommittee

Updated March 18, 2022

### Members:

Steve Weems

Steve Wood

Tom Rumpf

Lily Hatrick

Mission: Develop recommendations and take actions in pursuit of the goals of (i) energy efficiency and (ii) conversion to clean, renewable sources of power.

Scope of Work: Within a policy framework that stresses efficient uses of energy, encourage the “beneficial electrification” of life in all segments of the Brunswick community, consistent with the State of Maine’s and the Town of Brunswick’s climate-related goals and mandates. “Beneficial electrification” means converting our sources of power from those derived from fossil fuels to electricity produced from clean, renewable resources; for transportation, space heating and cooling, powering equipment, electricity generation, commercial and industrial processes, and other uses of energy.

2022 Work Priorities: The members of the Energy Committee propose that the following activities be given priority during 2022.

1. Develop an updated, comprehensive greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions profile for the town of Brunswick – all sectors and activities – using carbon-emission equivalents as the basic unit of measure;
2. Deliver or facilitate technical and educational services to Brunswick residents to provide knowledge and access to specific steps they can take to conserve energy and convert to electricity from clean, renewable sources; and
3. Assess the feasibility of establishing a municipal electric utility district (local consumer-owned utility) in Brunswick, in coordination with the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA).

## Notes:

1. The GHG emissions inventory work most likely will require funding for external consulting support and/or the donation of in-kind services from qualified consulting firms. The Committee will pursue a two-pronged approach: (1) search for equivalency factors it could use to apply to Brunswick (resulting in rough GHG emissions estimates), and (2) more precise modeling that would require outside services.
2. Initially, the Committee will strive to define specific targeted services that it can initiate immediately to Brunswick residents, through either educational materials or hands-on services, however modest this may be at the outset, and build upon this experience.
3. The investigation into a municipal electric utility district will at least start the evaluation of what could be a medium or long-term objective. There currently are nine small-scale electric utilities of this nature in Maine, ranging in size from a portion of a single municipality or adjacent municipalities to a regional (multiple small municipalities) service area. These are all locally-controlled and accountable to their customers, and as a group are highly successful.

## Unedited List of Potential Ideas

A potpourri of ideas that have emerged from various discussions are listed below, set forth as an unedited working list. Additions from any source are welcome.

### Municipal (& School) Ideas

- Building Upgrades
  - Energy efficiency improvements (i.e., weatherization)
  - Conversion of heating and cooling to clean, renewable energy sources
- Conversion to electric or biogenic gas-powered vehicles
- Conversion of electricity use to clean, renewable energy sources (e.g., solar, wind)
- Creation of a dedicated Sustainability planner/coordinator/facilitator position
- Creation of public electric vehicle charging stations

## Town-wide Ideas

- Audit of Brunswick's carbon footprint
- Town-wide educational effort re: energy efficiency and beneficial electrification (What topics? What venues or forums? Residential? Commercial?)
- *Solarize Brunswick 2.0* (sponsored pooling of solar equipment purchases)
- Town-wide educational effort re: energy efficiency and beneficial electrification
- Review of climate action initiatives in other Maine cities and towns
- Other town-wide municipally-sponsored energy efficiency and/or beneficial electrification pooled purchasing initiatives (e.g., heat pump hot water heaters; building energy audits and energy efficiency installations)

## Other ideas

- Create a town-wide consumer-owned utility (building on MRRRA system)
- Brunswick Anaerobic Digester (WWTP sludge, food waste)
- Program to encourage wider residential or small-scale commercial food production