

MINUTES
TOWN OF BRUNSWICK RECYCLING & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
Council Chambers - Brunswick Town Hall
January 24, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jamie Ecker at 4:30 PM.

Members present: Representative Poppy Arford (telephone and in-person), David Costello, Jamie Ecker (Chair), Jennifer Hicks (Zoom), Shelley Raymond, Tom Rumpf, Stephen Wood, Steven Weems.

Town personnel present: Jay Astle (Director of Public Works), Ashley Charleson (Environmental Planner, Department of Planning & Development).

Community Resilience Partnership Community Action Grant Subcontractor personnel present: Eileen Johnson (Bowdoin College); Sara Mills –Knapp and Kelly Rehberg (Greater Portland Council of Governments)

Public present: Bill Good and Marianne Haughwout.

Initial Administrative Matters

Introductions of Committee Members and Town Personnel. Personal introduction provided by each person in attendance. The Chair asked Steve Weems to take the minutes.

Approval of December 27, 2022 Minutes: Based on two necessary corrections noted by the Chair and David Costello, upon a motion made by Tom Rumpf and seconded by David Costello, the minutes were approved unanimously by those present.

The Chair deferred any other administrative matters until later in the meeting.

Maine Climate Resiliency Grant Award (General Discussion)

- The grant has been awarded in accordance with the grant application materials submitted. It is being administered by Ashley Charleson, the town's Environmental Planner, on behalf of the Town of Brunswick (the grantee). The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) will direct the work and perform a number of tasks, pursuant to an agreement with the Town of Brunswick. Eileen Johnson (Bowdoin College), as a subcontractor, will provide key assistance, especially in the area of vulnerability assessment.
- Kelly Rehberg (GPCOG) led a briefing and discussion (including questions and guidance comments from the members of the Recycling and Sustainability Committee about the grant award and work plan. The work will be divided into four basic overlapping sections:
 - Data collection (3 months)
 - Greenhouse Gas (GHG) assessment (3-4 months)
 - Vulnerability assessment (5-6 months)
 - Creation of a draft Climate Action Plan (5-6 months)

- There will be public involvement during the period of the grant work and at the end in response to the draft report. Along the way there will be opportunities for public input during the vulnerability assessment work (presumably a workshop of some kind), with another workshop to solicit input about priority items to include in the Climate Action Plan. The membership and charge of a Town-created working committee to provide advice and guidance to CPCOG throughout the process is being developed by town staff.
- In response to a question, it appears the GHG assessment work will not take into account the potential for carbon sequestration in any meaningful way. Apparently this is not part of the ClearPath model which will be utilized by CGCOG. This is a model geared to municipalities. Regarding vehicle emissions, it takes account of in-town trips; trips originating in Brunswick and ending out of town; and trips originating out of town and ending in Brunswick; but not through trips.
- The vulnerability assessment will include three major types of vulnerability to climate disruption: (1) human or social vulnerability; (2) infrastructure vulnerability; and (3) natural resource and environmental vulnerabilities, including those associated with weather changes (e.g., more violent storms).
- In response to questions and comments from the Committee, GPCOG said it would provide a menu of potential mitigation and adaptation options (apparently there is a handbook of such options). It also committed to solicit input on critical problems from the general public, the working committee the Town will establish, and members of the Recycling and Sustainability Committee, including priority issues that may not be evident in the GHG modeling data (e.g., CO2 and methane emissions from 2-cycle engines used in landscape equipment).
- The next steps are (1) getting going on data collection and (2) setting up the community liaison and input process.

Review of Proposed Revisions to the Committee Charter

- The current charter of the Recycling and Sustainability Committee was adopted by the Town Council in 2007. The Chair noted it is time for a review and update, and further that the Committee had provided proposed revisions to its charter to the council in early 2022. This was not acted upon.
- Consequently the Committee Chair and Vice Chair tuned up the proposed new charter further, with the most substantive change being a name change to the Sustainability Committee, with its work still encompassing recycling as a major priority area. The Chair then provided the latest version to the Committee members, showing the changes to the version approved by the Committee a year ago, along with the standing charter adopted by the Town Council in 2007.
- Discussion at the meeting centered on three potential changes to the current draft:
 - Specify regular meetings are to be held monthly on a schedule set by the Committee, but delete the current practice (day of the month, time) (Astle);.
 - Add an explicit reference to the diverse communities in Brunswick in section d) of what the Committee should take into account when doing its work (Hicks); and

- Emphasize the Committee needs to be aware of and take into account the work of other town boards, commissions, and committees in the fulfillment of its mission.
- Contingent on these changes being made, upon a motion made by Tom Rumpf and seconded by David Costello, the Committee approved, by unanimous vote of those present, to send the proposed new charter to the Town Council for its consideration

Report to the Town Council: The Chair noted he made a brief presentation to the Town Council about the Committee's work, results relating to its 2022 goals, and proposed new goals for 2023. He reported the response was positive, which he interpreted as an endorsement of the Committee's work and its 2023 goals.

Solid Waste Management Updates

- Stephen Wood reported that Jay Astle has made great strides in pulling together a monthly spreadsheet presentation that will allow his department and the Committee to track the metrics of Brunswick solid waste recycling and waste-to-energy activities. Jay Astle cautioned the Committee that it is best to focus on longer-term results and trends when considering solid waste metrics, due to monthly variations and a high degree of seasonality, among other variables.
- Jay Astle said he continues to work on creating sufficient capacity at the two sites currently accepting organic waste for recycling, at the Department of Public Works operations center and the Brunswick Recreation Center. He is working on a third potential site as well, possibly at one of the public school locations.

Public Comment

- Marianne Haughwout commented on two issues for Committee and Town consideration:
 - She expressed concern about what people, especially elderly people, do with their hazardous waste between the occasional designated times such materials can be brought to the Department of Public Works operating location. She is worried that these materials end up being bagged somehow and put in the trash. She noted the existence of programs elsewhere to deal with this issue. Jay Astle clarified there are semi-annual designated dates for hazardous waste disposal, one in the spring and one in the fall. These are budgeted at \$14,000 for each date, which is a deterrent to adding dates.
 - Ms. Haughwout also is hoping something can be done to encourage recycling and more effective solid waste management at The McLellan (senior living apartments on Union Street). It is not currently serviced by Casella's curbside pick-up of residential recyclables and trash. She wondered if this can be changed. Jay noted some other multi-unit apartments are eligible for residential collection service, but there are distinctions among multi-unit properties that have to be taken into account. He said his department is evaluating this specific situation further..
 - Bill Good thanked the Committee members for their service and noted this was his second anniversary of perfect attendance at the Committee's meetings.

Adjournment

- Upon a motion make by Stephen Wood and seconded by Poppy Arford, the members of the Committee present voted unanimously to adjourn at about 6::10 pm..

Brunswick R+S Committee Minutes for 1-24-23 Meeting (amended Draft)