

Brunswick Recycling and Sustainability Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Meeting via Zoom: 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Members Present: Harry Hopcroft, Steve Weems, Dieuwke Zolas, Steve Wood, Kay Mann, Chrissy Adamowicz, Jenn Hicks, Marie Caspard

Staff Present: Jay Astle (Public Works Director), John Eldridge (Town Manager), Steve Walker (Town Councilmember)

Edits to July 28, 2020 Minutes

Motion to approve edited July 28 Minutes

Approved by unanimous vote of those present.

Public Works Update - Jay Astle

Glass Recycling: Jay circulated a draft press release regarding the discontinuation of glass in recycling. Discussion that discontinuation of glass will not be emphasized as temporary. Steve Walker & committee members emphasized that this measure is not anti-recycling as the town's glass is already largely landfilled. EcoMaine crushes broken glass and makes it available to other users, which would move glass production up in the waste hierarchy.

Food waste drop-off: Jay has contacted Greg from AgriCycle and the town is ready to go with a pilot of two totes at a drop off site at Industry Road, near the brush pile drop-off. Greg has also provided information and instructional signage. It is estimated at \$2800/year or \$55/week for two totes. AgriCycle works with the Exeter AgriEnergy facility where food waste is co-digested with manure from the farm on site. Methane is used to generate electricity sold to CMP and fertilizer as an additional by-product. Anaerobic digestion is generally more carbon negative than composting because of energy production. The AgriEnergy facility has the ability to de-package waste and take meat, bones and dairy. The biodigester in Brunswick is currently off-line and co-digests sewage instead of dairy manure but could be part of future plans.

Action - Jay will share educational materials provided by AgriCycle.

Short-term planning Subcommittee Update- Steve Weems & Jamie Ecker

Discussion: Waste management statement providing a vision that centers around sending town waste to a Waste-To-Energy (WTE) facility, which will require a transfer station.

Discussion: Brunswick solid waste greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions calculations for different waste management scenarios; landfills or WTE plans and transportation options. The town's 2009 GHG analysis showed about 6000 tons CO₂/year of GHG from municipal operations. Waste-to-Energy has the potential to significantly reduce the town's GHG emissions. The EPA estimates that the national average captured emissions for landfills is 75%.

Steve Weems made a motion: Send the 'solid waste vision statement' & associated GHG analysis to the town council & town manager to clarify the committee's vision.

Kay Mann seconded

Discussion: EcoMaine will take trash as well as recycling. A single transfer station facility would contain both waste streams. The Public Works Department is working on permitting a non-municipal solid waste processing facility and evaluating the potential for a transfer station at Graham Road. John Eldridge commented it will not be possible to prepare the Graham Road site by April 2021 closure and the landfill space may still not be practical from a transportation perspective, because it is 7 miles from downtown. A processing facility and a transfer station should be co-located. Economic, greenhouse gas, permitting and environmental perspectives will all be taken into account in the ultimate development of a transfer station. Other locations may include Brunswick landing or in nearby communities. Retaining a transfer station will enable the town to retain control over its waste management. An interim measure with Casella at West Bath may be possible to limit the capital expenditure. Steve Walker has asked if neighboring communities manage transfer stations. Further questions will be answered by the short-term implementation subcommittee.

Motion Approved by all committee members, except Harry Hopcroft who abstained

Education Subcommittee Update - Kay Mann & Jay Astle

Jay has begun editing the website in anticipation of the glass recycling press release. The subcommittee has a plan to share information via social media and community spread after the press release is published. Kay has shared tricky recycling and household hazardous waste flyers. Harry Hopcroft has begun weekly columns in the Times Record titled 'The Recycle Bin' and has already had one email request about recycling. Subcommittee members have done extensive research on recycling various items. Margaret has agreed to produce four 30-second videos about 1) the cessation of glass-recycling, 2) shopping with trash in mind (source reduction), 3) wishful recycling (i.e. recycling non-recyclables), and 4) organics recycling.

EcoMaine Tour Proposal - Stephen Wood

Stephen Wood has been in touch with Lissa Bitterman, business development manager. EcoMaine's WTE facility is full, but will make room for Brunswick. EcoMaine is very keen to add Brunswick as a customer. Time is somewhat of the essence because if another town signs on with EcoMaine, Brunswick will no longer have a slot. Packer tracks may be a short-term solution. There is a limit of 6 individuals on the tour, though this may be expanded based on the number of "COVID bubbles." Lissa has offered to provide an in-person tour, a zoom call, or a in-person socially distanced visit to Brunswick. Committee members suggested expanding a presentation by EcoMaine to other decision-makers like the council.

Steve Weems, Jamie, Harry, Stephen Wood, Marie are all interested in touring the recycling and WTE facility. The tours are best while the machines are running, Monday-Friday 9-5.

Action - Stephen Wood will communicate with interested committee members to organize a tour.

Solar Energy Development Letter of Support - Steve Weems

The town will receive a presentation from Revision Energy in September. Further discussion was deferred to another meeting

Maine Climate Council - Steve Weems

The council is soliciting comments before they close. There is also an opportunity to take an online survey. The Council has received 4000 responses so far. The website is climatecouncil.maine.gov. Waste has largely not been recognized in the plan.

Organics Recycling Subcommittee Update - Chrissy Adamowicz

The committee plans to provide information to the community about the other two prongs of the organics recycling plan including service providers and at-home solutions such as backyard anaerobic digesters, vermicomposters. Marie and Chrissy are working on a draft page which Jay will put on the website.

Other Business

Chrissy Adamowicz announced that the World Resources Institute has received funding from the Walmart Foundation to conduct an organics diversion and food waste study; Stacy Blondon of WWI has discussed studying Brunswick. This would be an opportunity to get measurable data. WWI is coming from a social psychology perspective.

Action - Chrissy will share the Organics Recycling plan with Stacy Blondon and may then invite Stacy to a future committee meeting

Chrissy also announced that Adaptive Outdoor has opened a new location in Brunswick. This non-profit provides outdoor opportunities to individuals with disabilities. They are interested in composting in their facility. Chrissy will be working with Adaptive Outdoor to develop accessible at-home composting options.

Next Meeting: Tuesday September 22 5:30 - 7:30

John commented that it is up to the committees to determine when to meet in person as long as they can socially distance within council chambers at this point. The committee agreed to continue holding meetings online using Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:14 PM