

Notes from Town of Brunswick Recycling & Sustainability Committee
Thursday September 26, 2019
7:00 pm- 8:30 pm
Town Council Chambers

In attendance: Harry Hopcroft, Juka Zolas, Jamie Ecker, Holly Greene, Steve Walker (Town Council member) Jennifer Hicks, Crissy Abramwicz, Kay Mann, Jay Astle (Director of Public Works)

Jennifer Hicks, serving as chair of the meeting in place of Mike Wilson who was not able to attend, called the meeting to order.

1. Welcoming the new committee members

The new committees were welcomed and were asked to introduce themselves: Harry Hopcroft, Juka Zolas, Jamie Ecker, Kay Mann.

2. The committee was asked to review the set of recommendations for the town recycling program that was presented to the Town Council. The following outlines the discussion around the recommendations:

Landfill closure and how will the closing of the landfill affect recycling:

- Different set of costs when landfill is closed → to our advantage: the cost benefit will be better seen when we have to pay to transport trash out of town. Right now we don't see the cost because we own the landfill
 - Bath landfill will be closing - could we work with them to create a regional transfer station?
 - There is a cost of managing landfill after closure that has to be factored in with the cost of waste management

Recycling contract RFP:

- Jay announced that the RFP language for a new recycling/trash pick up contract will be completed within the month. It will be based on the recommendations
- Members of the committee asked that a long term contract be avoided for the next contract as the realities of the landfill closure won't be understood until after April 2021.
- Members asked that credit for low contamination rates be included in the RFP.

It was expressed that it was important that the committee's decision-making is data-driven so there is baseline info to make long term decisions.

Action: Jay will provide the committee with numbers from trash/recycling costs/amounts over the past 5 years.

It was expressed that the committee should research the viability of setting up a regional waste removal program, recycling program.

Jay and Steve were asked what it was that the Town Council expected from the committee regarding a waste reduction plan.

- An outline of a way forward to developing a waste reduction plan was expected by December 2019. 2020 can be spent developing the plan.

Holly Greene announced that the School Department is going work with Agricycle to manage it's composting program - the start date unknown.

- School has eliminated straws and plastic cutlery and disposable trays.
- School could serve as an example of what the town can do to address waste.

The committee agreed that the next steps would be to create sub committees to help focus in on important areas of work to help the town reduce waste.

Further **Actions**

1. Education/public education
2. Compost/getting organic material out of waste stream
3. State legislation/local ordinances
4. Landfill closure/waste reduction (reps from this committee sitting on reformed landfill closure)

Crissy announced that there is a citizen group focused on waste reduction in town → committee could invite them to come and speak at a future meeting

It was suggested that the town consider a balloon ban.

Action: Steve will keep the committee updated about meetings for the Landfill Closure Committee so members from the Recycling & Sustainability Committee members can attend.

The committee discussed immediate things that the town can do to improve behavior around waste reduction:

- Tagging violators: Jay informed the committee that in the town's contract with current contractor Pine Tree they are supposed to tag trash and recycling that doesn't comply with accepted materials/bags Action: Jay will contact Pine Tree to ask them to increase tagging of violators.
- Composting: At the next R&S meeting the committee will discuss plans to set up a trial household composting area on River St.
- Education: The committee members indicated that they are willing to be trained on what can & can't be recycled curbside so they can conduct education programs in 2020.
- Holly, Harry, Juka, & Jenn were planning to attend EcoMaine's open house event on September 28 to learn more about the operation.

3. Recycling Reform Resolution for Maine

The Natural Resources Council of Maine is helping municipalities get involved in an effort to pass legislation to address the problem with recycling and the challenge of waste reduction. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection will submit Recycling Reform for Maine bill by December 19, 2019 that would put more of the responsibility of waste reduction on manufactures of the waste. One way to show support is for town councils to adopt a resolution developed by NRCM that urges the State of Maine to pass an Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging law called the Resolve, To Support Municipal Recycling Programs (LD1431).

Holly Greene moved that the committee vote to bring the resolution to the Brunswick Town Council.

Kay Mann seconded the motion.

The committee voted unanimously to bring the resolution to the town council to adopt.

Meeting adjourned --- Next meeting Oct. 24th; 7pm