

Brunswick Recycling & Sustainability Committee
Thursday November 21, 2019
7:30pm - 9:30pm
Room 206 - Town Hall

1. Reviewing and approving last meeting's minutes (5 minutes)
2. Other business (10):
 - a. Acknowledgement of appreciation of the service of former committee members Mike Wilson and Holly Greene
2. Brief review of the status of actions from last meeting (10 minutes)
3. Establishing ground rules for meetings, electing officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (10 minutes)
4. EcoMaine CEO Kevin Roche (45 minutes)
5. Town Waste Reduction Plan development and next steps (30 minutes)
6. Public comment (5 mins)

In Attendance:

Committee members: Crissy Adamowicz, Marie Caspard, Jamie Ecker, Jennifer Hicks, Harry Hopcroft, Kay Mann, Juka Zolas

Town representatives: Jay Astle - Director of Public Works

Meeting called to order at 7:32pm

1. Reviewing and approving October 24th meeting minutes

Kay Mann - moved to approve

Harry Hopcroft -seconded

Discussion: Harry's last name was incorrect. It will be corrected before posting on town website.

Minutes unanimously approved

2. Other business:

Jennifer Hicks acknowledged the service of former committee members Mike Wilson and Holly Greene. Mike served as chairman for several years and Holly has been on the committee for 18 years, many of those years as secretary.

The committee welcomed new member Marie Caspard. She is a Bowdoin student who will be graduating in December 2020.

3. Brief review of the status of actions from last meeting

Crissy was to check to see if the Council passed the Recycling Reform Resolution for Maine and research South Portland's compost program as a possible model for Brunswick. She reported that Council approved resolution, but did not research South Portland compost program.

Jenn was to reach out to Town Clerk Fran Smith to let her know that the committee needs to fill the seat vacated by Mike Wilson. Since the last meeting Holly Greene stepped down. Jenn communicated with Fran about needing to fill two seats, updating the website with minutes and agendas, and promoting meetings. Fran will advertise the two open seats and suggested to be in touch with Jay about the website updates and meeting promotions.

Action: Jay has committed to work on the website to complete updates in early December.

Jamie was to start putting together ideas for a town waste reduction plan and produce a draft outline for which the committee could respond. Jamie developed and sent out rough draft outline November 10th and the subject is on tonight's agenda.

4. Establishing ground rules for meetings, electing officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary

Jenn requested that the committee set ground rules for their meetings to ensure all voices are heard and order is maintained.

- Jenn requested a rule that members are to be called on when they want to talk.
- Jamie suggested that the committee chair check in with the group if it seems as though a vote should be conducted on an item of discussion and have a formal process established to vote.

Jenn also explained that officer voting at the last meeting was confusing - it was unclear if we voted for a Vice Chair or Co-chair. Harry sent out job descriptions for officer positions which included a Vice Chair position. He has offered two proposals to amend the officer descriptions:

1. Add, for each of the three positions, a line that says "If [position] becomes vacant, an election by the membership for a replacement will be held at the earliest possible time. The election to be held in person and at a general meeting."
2. Put a time limit on each appointment, and re-elect our leadership at regular intervals. We agreed to elect officers each December for the following year.

The committee proceeded to conduct another vote for Chair, Co-Chair, & Secretary:

Chair position:

Jamie moved to nominate Jennifer Hicks

Kay seconded

Unanimously approved

Vice Chair position:

Jenn moved to nominate Jamie Ecker

Crissy seconded

Unanimously approved

Secretary position:

Crissy moved to nominate Marie Caspard

Jenn seconded

Unanimously approved

5. EcoMaine CEO Kevin Roche Presentation

Kevin Roche provided a 30 minute slideshow presentation about the waste disposal company.

Action: Jay will work on posting the Ecomaine slide show on the Town website.

The following is a summary of his presentation:

- EcoMaine's mission is to provide comprehensive long term solids waste management solutions in a safe, environmentally responsible, economically sound manner.
- 71 member communities and organized as a non-profit
- EcoMaine views recycling is still an effective way to reduce waste even though it has been challenging recently.
- The US, and other countries, have been in a recent waste management crisis with due to changing commodities markets, spurred by policy changes in China. Its ban on imports has left the market out of balance.
- In 2018, bundled recyclable value dropped to \$15, from nearly \$100/ton.
- If municipalities aren't pro-active, waste from other places will likely be shipped to Maine
- EcoMaine's Ash Landfill in Portland has capacity until 2045 because EcoMaine uses a hierarchy in which landfill is last location for waste. They only permanently discard ash from Ecomaine's waste-to-electricity (WTE) incinerator in their landfill.
- EcoMaine has extensive public education programs and employs staff solely to do public education and work to improve recycling in member communities.
 - In 2018, 40,000 people came for tours, presentations, or attended an event.
 - Have worked with communities on a regional scale, and trash haulers to improve recycling quality
- The waste stream is also changing, e.g. newspaper volume has reduced dramatically over the past 20 years, while cardboard has increased.
 - 50% of all paper is cardboard (used to be 3- 4%)
- Packaging has changed moving toward less recyclable packaging
- We all have to work to reduce contamination in our single stream recycling for it to stay economically viable
- Now that China is taking only higher quality i.e. less contaminated recyclables, and therefore smaller quantities, the domestic industry is re-building capacity to do more recycling.
- More paper mills are re-opening to take post-consumer paper
- In 2018, Ecomaine also diverted 6000 tons of organics (all commercial, no residential) to anaerobic digestion
- Ecomaine's WTE Incinerator reduces waste volume by 90% - working to acquire electric trucks using energy from the incinerator to haul ash.
- Landfills are one of the largest producers of greenhouse gases, so diverting material from them to reduction and recycling methods higher in the waste management hierarchy is critically important.

Discussion with the committee:

- Does EcoMaine haul? No – Municipalities contract out all collection and transfer hauling to EcoMaine's facilities
- Different levels of membership: Owner-members set policy, are owners. Associates = 20 year agreements (Saco), Contract communities = 1 - 3 year agreements
- All EcoMaine communities's waste is hauled to Portland...usually by tractor trailer
- Developed a program that is tailored to the communities need to address contamination (worked with hauler, etc.).
- Kevin Roche indicated that there is space in EcoMaine's facilities for recycling single stream, and would welcome further discussion with the Town.

6. Town Waste Reduction Plan development and next steps

Due to lack of time and that some of the members did not receive the draft outline this agenda item was pushed to the December 19th meeting. Jenn will resend the document to the committee. The majority of the agenda for the December 19th meeting will focus on this item.

7. Discussion: Number of members on the committee

The town ordinance calls for 8 members on the committee (Code of Ordinances for the Town of Brunswick - Solid Waste https://library.municode.com/me/brunswick/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeld=PTIIMU-COOR_CH13SOWA).

Jamie proposed that the committee be made up of nine members so it was an odd number and there wouldn't be a deadlock on votes. This would require a change in the ordinance which would need to be made by Town Council. The committee currently has seven members with the Town Council interviewing for additional member(s).

Jamie moved that the committee member number be modified from 8 to 9

Harry seconded the motion

Unanimously approved

Action: Jay will ask this put on the Town Council agenda to gain Council approval to expand the Committee to 9 members.

8. Discussion: Rules around Member meetings/discussion outside the Monthly Meeting

There was discussion surrounding what rules the Committee needs to adhere to when meeting in small groups or working on draft documents outside of the regularly scheduled, televised monthly meeting. It is clear we need to get input from the Town Manager or other officials on what we can and cannot do to advance the work of the Committee between meetings.

Action: Jay is going to provide us more formal guidance at the next meeting. Jamie also offered to speak with the Town Manager and the Town Council liaison.

9. Discussion: Moving meetings to an earlier time

Chrissy suggested moving the monthly meeting to start at 6:30 rather than 7:30. Other members of the committee expressed they would be okay with that change

Action: Jenn will look into room availability and confirm the time for the next December meeting.

Meeting Adjourned @ 9:40 PM