

Transfer Station and Recycling Committee Meeting Minutes

Town Hall – Chenery Room

March 14, 2016

PRESENT: Chairman Megan Sullivan, Ann Thompson, Barbara Meyer, Nancy Irwin, Tony Centore, Ken Feeney, Bobby Kennedy, Jr., and Michael Sullivan.

Also present—Mary Pat McSharry representing the Swap Area

Megan Sullivan called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to accept the February meeting minutes with a minor change.

Financials

Financial results had not been compiled for this meeting. Results will be available at our next meeting.

Swap Area Report

Since the Rhino tent was ripped, and the poles were deformed, a new 30' x 30' tent will be ordered. When it is assembled, pictures of the anchors will be taken to send to the dealer to certify that the tent has been erected and anchored according to manufacturer's specifications. The tent skin will be removed for winter, but the poles will be left standing. Medfield still has a backdoor kit from last year to use on the new tent. Placement of the tent will take the prevailing winds into account.

Bobby Kennedy explained that paving will proceed when the weather permits—the ground is still too mushy. In the meantime DPW crews are working to move loam piles that affect drainage through the Swap Area. Ken Feeney will be in touch with the Fire Chief to relocate the Fire Training Trailer so that the area is open for the placement of the tent.

Swap personnel would like to have electricity available in the Swap Area for residents to test items before taking them home, and for a fan in the heat. It was mentioned that the Swap could consider closing in high heat. A generator or solar electricity would be other possibilities, but adding underground electricity was not considered feasible because of the distance from electrical sources.

If there is sufficient money in the budget, a second tent will be ordered to allow that furniture can be covered. Ken Feeney mentioned that an arched tent will be stronger than a “wedding tent”. If there is money for a second tent, Ken and Bobby will contact Nancy Irwin and Mary Pat McSharry to determine what type of tent it should be.

While we had hoped to put together a comprehensive PR plan for the spring, since our last meeting we determined that was too ambitious. Instead, individual initiatives (such as the swap area) should be publicized when ready.

Donation Bins

As agreed at our last meeting, the Epilepsy Foundation will have a bin(s) placed with the line-up of donation bins. While they would like to start with two, instead of two, we will start with one EF bin and see what need arises. We will receive 7¢ for each pound of textiles in an EF bin, and we receive money for contents of some other bins as well. We do not receive money for the Red Cross bin which is rusty (Red Cross sells its logo to some other company for their collection). If a bin needs to be removed to accommodate the EF bin, the Red Cross bin will be removed.

GRANT FUNDS FY 16

Organics Collections

In responding to the Transfer Station sticker survey, 141 said “yes” to be interested in an organics composting program (and 14 more said “maybe”). This was 20% of the survey respondents, which is seen as very supportive. Megan is gathering a group of people who may be interested in helping get the pilot organics program underway this week. We agreed to order materials for 144 kits (the minimum number to order at a good price). The kits will include a 5 gallon bucket with a (screw-on) “gamma” lid (waterproof, odor proof, rodent proof), a kitchen scrap container, and 3 rolls of bio bags (25/roll).

The kits may be sold at \$25 each, which will cover the full cost. It was suggested that we look for a sponsor for the program to reduce the cost. Participation in the organics program will not require having a kit. Unbagged compostable materials may be placed in the collection bin, but care must be taken (education!) that any bags placed into the 65-gallon collection bin at the tip floor windows are bio-bags and not ordinary plastic bags. Ken Feeney feels strongly that the town should supply the bags to improve compliance. Supplying the bags (estimated @4 bags/wk...208 bags / household / year for 144 households [\$16/household/year] would cost \$2,304; for 760 households [20% of sticker holders], \$12,160/yr).

Start-up costs for the program include \$1800 for the buckets, lids and shipping; \$648 for the kitchen scrap containers; and \$1000 for bio-bags—totaling \$3448 (\$23.94 each kit). It is to be determined whether the small scale initiatives grant (\$1000) would be used to discount the price of the kits (specifically, the kitchen scrap containers) to participants. Money from the compost bin sales may be available to fund the initial outlay .

There is also \$1000 in the grant for the Pilot Organics Program for Publicity, PR, and Education.

April 20 is targeted as the initial kick-off for organics composting, and May is scheduled for broader distribution of kits and full-scale publicity. At \$40/week removal from EOMS, the grant will fund approximately 62 weeks of removal. This will allow the program to run through June of 2017, the end of FY 17.

Mattress Collection

The mattress collection grant provides for a container to collect mattresses regularly. The Town will have to pay for the disposal of any rejected mattresses, and wet mattresses will be rejected and could make additional mattresses wet. Some monitoring will be necessary to make sure that people do not leave mattresses outside/against the container, so mattress collection may be limited to one Saturday a month. Since moving (someone else's!) mattress requires two people, mattress moving should be minimized. It may be that we caution residents to bring mattresses only on dry days to avoid the expense to the Town of wetness/mold. Stained mattresses are acceptable (regarding mattresses getting rust just from being in a container, rust is not a concern). Concerns will be further addressed at a meeting later this week with UTEC, the company that the state has determined will handle our mattress recycling.

TS Sticker Survey

Committee members reviewed the comments from the TS Sticker Survey Rachel Brown prepared for the last meeting. Some of the highlights of the comments were shared. No action items were created, but the discussion served as education for our group.

Many residents would like Sunday hours. Sunday openings are costly, since workers are to receive time-and-a-half for scheduled work hours on Sunday (and double-time if they are called in to replace scheduled workers who are sick). Staggered hours, with opening earlier or later were mentioned. When concern was expressed that the swap might have to operate during the alternate hours, it was pointed out that there is no precedent for the Swap to be open when the Transfer Station is on extended hours, since the Swap has not been opened on Wednesdays in the summer after 3:00.

Ken and Bobby shared the positive comments with the DPW staff.

Some survey respondents suggested that a third compactor for recyclables would be helpful to reduce congestion for the single stream recycling. Ken pointed out that a third compactor would require another electrical service line (and that a compactor costs \$25,000).

It was also mentioned that it is difficult for elderly residents to heft their recyclables to the opening of the compactors, and that a railing to climb up to the platform would be helpful; it was suggested that a railing and a counter-type platform beside the railing might help allow residents to lift recyclables to the counter-type platform, before climbing the steps with the railing and then get their recyclables off the counter-type platform to empty them into the compactor. Any such change would need to meet construction standards, as did the steps currently in use. TS personnel have been very helpful to seniors in emptying recyclables, but they are not always at the Single Stream compactors. The openings are high for safety reasons. Tony reiterated the need to maintain the non-skid surfacing on the steps up to the compactors.

Residents registered concern that many recyclables are in the trash—especially cardboard, paper, cans, and glass.

Some wanted receipts available at the Goodwill trailer. It was suggested that we have a sticker on the Goodwill trailer indicating to residents where they can acquire a self-issue receipt from Goodwill.

There was a request that there be collection of small amounts of construction debris. This was countered with the fact that construction debris is a waste ban item by Massachusetts state law and needs to be handled separately.

Several residents wanted sticker renewal to be available at the Transfer Station, or on all Saturdays in June.

Webinar & Meeting Reports

Barb Meyer participated in a webinar by the Recycling Partnership. They are working with the State of Massachusetts to develop “messaging” to reduce the contamination of recycling. A clean recycling stream will improve the economics of recycling, benefiting everyone.

Megan Sullivan attended the regional MassDep meeting. At that meeting, Brooke Nash presented the results of a survey about recycling and trash disposal habits. The survey had many important insights and Megan suggested that we might hold a meeting for the town residents to talk about trends and issues facing trash and recycling.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Next meeting will be scheduled for April 4, 2016, 10:00 a.m. Please note that this is the first Monday instead of the second Monday of April.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Meyer