

Brookline Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for July 14, 2020

Submitted by Mary Litterst

Meeting called to order online via Zoom at 6:35 P.M.

Committee members present: John Dempsey (Chair), Deane Coady, Mary Litterst, Kathleen O'Connell, Clint Richmond, Susan Rittling, John Schreffler

Staff: Commissioner Andrew Pappastergion, Kevin Johnson, Ed Gilbert, Tom Segear

Minutes from June 2, 2020, meeting were reviewed and approved.

1. DPW Report - Mr. Johnson, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Segear

• June 2020 report:

Solid Waste = 760.38 tons, up 2.78% from June 2019.

Recycling = 388.11 tons, up 1.09% from June 2019.

The June ACR was down to \$70.62 from \$86.73 in May, 2020, mainly because cardboard (OCC) increased to about \$130 a ton in June versus \$46 a ton in February.

FY2020 Solid Waste = 8334 tons (including 70 tons from amnesty week). Compared to 8411 tons for FY 2019.

• Cardboard

Discussion of the possibility of keeping cardboard separate from "mixed paper" so we could take advantage of the current higher prices for OCC. Factors mentioned: domestic cardboard not bailed, existing mixed vs single stream sorting, logistics, market rates, staffing, bailer. Currently BHS has a compactor but no bailer. Mr. Johnson said he would investigate bailer costs.

• Report on the first two days of HHP Drop-Off from Mr. Segear:

First two Tuesdays went well with adhering to protocols and with the number of users. There were high quantities of electronics (though Town does pick up electronics curbside when called in a week before), lightbulbs, flammables and pesticides.

• Update on contracts and budgets from Mr. Johnson:

The Town negotiated a new five year contract with Casella and did not have to go out to bid.

As of 7/1/20, the fee for recycling curbside collection and single stream processing is \$90 per ton in 1st year, \$96 in 2nd year up to \$118 in 5th year (up from \$75 and an 80/20 split when over \$75 and dollar for dollar when below \$75 which it has been recently).

Regarding the increase in recycling expenses over the past year, Commissioner Pappastergion reported that the extra costs were covered in a transfer from the reserve fund.

Factors prompting the new contract fee increases included union wage increases for truck drivers, the weak recycling commodity market, closing of Casella's landfill requiring 3rd party tipping fees and transportation costs to waste-to-energy plants.

• Update on Residential Trash/Recycling Fees:

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Johnson said that special pickups will continue without a separate fee but the household refuse fee will have to increase. Commissioner Pappastergion explained that he and the Town Administrator are discussing the existing fee which now covers only 59% of the refuse costs (versus the intended 75-80%). An increase may come as soon as September or October.

SWAC members supported a fee increase. Commissioner Pappastergion welcomed SWAC support and asked that the Committee delay any action until he has completed discussions with the Town Administrator.

• Update on encouraging private subscriptions for curbside composting

Mr. Segear reported that the new ReCollect application has been named "We Recycle Brookline" and includes a tab for Black Earth Compost. As of last week, he said Black Earth has between 500-600 Brookline subscribers. Stickers with the QR code are available to facilitate promotion. Other ideas: display Black Earth carts at HHP site once Mr. Segear can distribute them (currently a Stedman St. resident oversees the site for cart & starter kit pick up).

Discussion: Ms. Coady confirmed there is no compost drop off at HHP site and favors other sites like Teen Center, maybe schools as they already have scheduled pickup. Schools attractive to residents in buildings without cart storage space (Ms. Rittling), already have required state permit (Mr. Segear), and may eventually be cart pick up sites (Mr. Richmond). Re financing, Ms. O'Connell, brainstormed linking fees, i.e. if you compost, maybe get a Solid Waste fee discount; or tie Solid Waste fee to property valuation (Ms. Rittling). Mr. Segear and Mr. Johnson mentioned balancing monetary incentives and fees for small carts.

• Simple Recycling Pink Bag distribution

Per Mr. Johnson, these are not distributed at HHP site because they are provided by private company at curbside and he wants to keep the site "no-contact" during the pandemic.

2. Review letter to Select Board about encouraging/enforcing sustainability bylaw for takeout restaurants

Mr. Richmond has drafted a letter; Chair has not had time to work on it yet. Both favor sending the letter, recognizing the Health Department pandemic workload), and assuming Dr. Jett can implement on date of his choice. Give thoughts to Chair and Mr. Richmond.

3. Review letter to Select Board encouraging the Board to encourage the School Committee to use school dishwashers and reusable service ware

Ms. Coady sent draft to Chair. Per Committee consensus there was no need to send letter immediately as meals likely will be 'grab & go' in classrooms without reverse logistics. Post pandemic, Ms. Coady explained, there are strong economic, educational and environmental

arguments supporting use of dishwashers and reusable service ware. The Chair will put letter on future agenda. Currently 5 schools have dishwashers and 4 do not.

This summer, the school department COVID response is providing USDA funded 'garb & go' breakfast & lunch at 5 distribution locations in Town for all Brookline children; no information at this time if well used; meals come from the Coolidge Corner School kitchen.

4. Other business

- MA Solid Waste Master Plan Zero Waste to 2050

The Master Plan continues to be open for comment until September. Consensus to review plan for the August meeting. Let Chair know which half you will be reading. Mr. Richmond will send members a copy of his December 2019 comments.

- Regional glass crusher inquiry

Ms. Coady asked whether there is any benefit for Brookline to become a regional glass crusher site.

- Town Meeting warrant opens August 6 – September 3

- Pandemic Update

Mr. Segear reported that Town buildings continue to be closed to the public. Mr. Johnson reported that Sanitation Department staff are no longer split in staggered weekly shifts and no one has contracted Corona Virus though one staff member was quarantined with pay because of family exposure. The Department continues its cleaning protocols.

- Waste Management Criteria

Let Ms. Rittling know if you want her to send you a copy of this data heavy report from the Climate Bond Initiative.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Next Meeting (virtual): Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

SWAC Meetings/Minutes Rotation – Updated as of 8/26/20

Mary – 7/20

Marga – 9/20

Kathleen – 10/20

John D. – 11/20

Clint – 12/20

Susan – 1/21

John S. – 2/21

Deane – 3/21

Mary – 4/21

