

## March 10, 2022 Recycling and Solid Waste Committee Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Rachel Bartlett, Richard Meyer, Vicki Reeder

Meeting minutes from February 16, 2022 accepted

Next meeting: Thursday, April 14, 2022, at 3:45 p.m.

1. Letter to Board of Selectmen (BOS): The letter was not reviewed at the BOS March 3, 2022, due to the absence of one Selectman and the upcoming arrival of a new Selectman. The BOS shelved the letter until the March 17, 2022, meeting which will take place at 6:00 p.m. Richard Meyer agreed to attend and represent the Committee in discussing the letter's contents.
2. Recommended sticker fee increase: A question was raised regarding the background on this decision. The following information was then discussed: Following review of an Environmental Protection Agency publication regarding pay-for-use approaches at transfer station, the Committee reached general consensus that a fee-per-bag system would address one or more of our core missions (reducing overall tax burden on town residents and incentivize recycling). Much work needs to be done on this proposal if/when it is approved by the BOS. In the interim, a previous review of other towns' sticker fees – discussed in October 2021 but without specific data captured – showed that Westmoreland's charge is at the low end of the spectrum. The increase from \$10 to \$25 per sticker, per year, was viewed as a way to get those who actually use the Transfer Station to shoulder more of the burden. Once the fee-per-bag system is implemented, the sticker fee could be removed but residents would still be required to obtain them. This approach would ensure that only Westmoreland residents were using the Transfer Station and no external persons or businesses would be able to dump their items.
3. External interest in the Committee's focus: Informal discussion with John Snowden revealed he is keenly interested in the Transfer Station and noted that solid waste is an issue statewide. He emphasized partnering with other towns in identifying and implementing solutions. Selectman Snowden also named a potential collaborator – Robert Simoneau – who has ideas for recycling activities. The Committee members present then discussed the idea of single-source recycling and the possibility of using half-containers for specific items in lieu of large containers for commingled recycling items.
4. Composting: Another important workstream for us pertains to composting; Haley Mackey has indicated an interest in this topic. Chairwoman Bartlett commented on the handouts and information submitted by City Compost. This service would accept all materials to include meat and dairy – a great improvement over the fruit and vegetable limitations town residents currently face in individual composting activities. Costs of the service range from \$6.00

weekly to \$10.00 monthly, although the cost per week could be reduced as low as \$3.50 if enough residents participate. Another benefit of this service is that participants receive composted materials back to use in their own gardens. Vicki Reeder agreed to begin development of a series of questions pertaining to composting that could be included in a survey for town residents. The actual mechanism for disseminating this survey remains to be determined.

5. Signage: Committee members noted the condition of the signs at the Transfer Station. Most are handwritten, some have information crossed out, and none catches the attention of Transfer Station patrons. For example, aluminum cans continue to be tossed into the commingled recycling container, rather than being segregated for separate processing. Chairwoman Bartlett agreed to research potential signage sources and funding needs, beginning with NH The Beautiful.
6. Newsletter: Although the letter to the BOS did not include a recommendation to create a series of informative newsletters, the Committee views this initiative as being crucial to gaining resident buy-in of the various initiatives. Vicki Reeder agreed to begin development of a “strawman” newsletter, to be populated upon approval of this initiative by the BOS. Richard Meyer had previously drafted language that could be incorporated in the initial product.
7. Outsourcing Transfer Station operations: If the BOS approves our recommendation to further explore outsourcing operations and a decision is reached to pursue this approach, development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be necessary. Richard Meyer agreed to work on this, following his return from upcoming vacation.
8. Hazardous Disposal Days: Chairwoman Bartlett will post the specific days that town residents can drop off items in Keene. Westmoreland currently pays \$2126 annually for this service and it is important that residents take advantage of the opportunity to dispose of these hazardous materials properly.

Minutes respectfully submitted March 15, 2022 by Vicki Reeder