

Recycling Center Advisory Committee

Minutes September 30, 2020 1500-1630

Present: Rachel Bartlett, Chr, Jon Lounsbury, Robb Ball

M/S Minutes for Sept 16 2020, approved

1. Rachel and Jon discussed their site visit to Walpole's Transfer and Recycling operation. They reported a very informative tour provided by station manager. They are open three days per week, T TH and Sat. They are staffed with 3.5 FTE, with 2 working 5 days per week and 1 working at least 2 days per week. They also utilize some volunteer help, particularly with the recycling material stream, performing quality management e.g. strictly X plastic, glass, containers in the correct containers as co-mingling colours, types, or materials will contaminate a bale or container pf produce.

Walpole actually receives enough income from recycling separated waste to allow for partial funding of payroll and reduction of bulk waste going to compactor, and resulting hauling and tipping fees. They indicate their income from cardboard alone at \$45 per ton. They are also making money on all other recycled materials. This is not to say the waste management of the Town of Walpole is not a line item in the town budget; but it is significantly offset. They have three compactors for recyclable materials, plus the garbage/non-recyclable trash compactor.

Walpole burns brush, recycles aluminum, and plastics are separated into recyclable numbers and baled. They have a donation shed, into which reusable items are placed, and are taken as desired with an encouragement to make a self-valued donation for items taken by individuals. Books which are donated are sold on location with proceeds to the Town Library and Fall Mountain. Their facility is in all respects, pleasant and user friendly. The traffic pattern is one-way, with the first stop at the waste compactor. The waste is bagged in Town mandated plastic bags sold at area retailers such as Shaw's for \$20 per roll of 10 (\$2 / bag). These are 30-gallon opaque bags and are purchased by the Town and resold. There are no annual vehicle tags.

Other materials which are separated include fluorescent lighting, refrigerators, televisions, all are taken on fee basis and reclaimed by NE Recycling. Construction waste is also taken.

After the bagged waste is dropped, the next stop on the path through is co-mingled metal, numbers 1,2 and mixed-use plastic, all container glass, clean cardboard, and paper. The use of volunteers is a significant help in controlling both quality and costs. To keep the separation proper and effective they are supervised by dump staff (on an oversight basis). Materials are put into container along wall windows in recycling building and quality controlled and collected and managed inside by the volunteers.

The Walpole site is large and after patrons have finished dumping and recycling, they are free to congregate for community visiting in the adjacent parking lot, well out of the way of other patrons. The roadway through the site manages and prevents congestion and facilitates smooth operation.

In their review of the Walpole program, Rachel and Jon reported the growth and development of the program has been a long-term process and through their diligence and insightful management of their waste they have driven down the overhead and town costs. It is noteworthy that there is little landfill space left in the NE, and the reduction of waste in general is in everyone's interest, if simply to preserve landfill space.

1. The Advisory Committee is in agreement on the social and ethical commitment to reduce waste, all the while being fiscally responsible.
2. Rachel provided other towns' specific documentation for Chesterfield, Gilsum, Keene, and Walpole. She also provided financials for two years on our town waste management operation, for the group to review. Jon may be able to sort data into sets in an Excel spreadsheet.
3. Hazardous waste management was discussed in general and specific to our town and Keene's program.
4. Our town waste management program and methods were discussed in general, including overflow, compactor use, traffic flow and congestion, and how our program may benefit from others' hard work and development.
5. The committee is working to build a culture in our town of responsible householder waste management

Discussion included points taken from Walpole's program. The visibility of both the separating stations and the community values of separating waste and recycling materials can be encouraged in a facility where the end product of recycling is visible along with the physical plant that it flows through. In a facility which is clean and easy to use, we can encourage participation by making expectations clear; again, with a moral and responsible philosophy of waste management AND waste reduction through utilizing all means available. The fiscal efficacy of these developments over time is seen as positive in the experience of Walpole.

The optics of how the town manages the waste, both currently and in the future, includes the tag or bag issue and necessary buy-in by the town residents. The financial tradeoffs include overhead reduction, waste reduction and responsible management in terms of decreasing availability of landfill space. This space issue WILL become an issue for all towns and seeking to grow a program and increase reuse, recycling, and redistribution will become an issue whether we participate and anticipate or not.

6. Future business and plans:

Visit with Ron on the grounds of our town's waste management facility, hopefully to be sure Ron is not disadvantaged/is paid for his time. Rachel will visit this with town manager and Ron.

Visit Swanzey and other County Towns to examine, compare, and contrast different programs. Swanzey is reported to have a good program.

Rachel will seek depersonalized info regarding town personnel costs (including overtime) for facility and waste management to allow comparison to other town's operating costs. Possible information seeking methods from residents was discussed but remains in the future for now. The advisory committee agreed that this process we have begun will be a long-term development but is essential to the town's future.

Respectfully submitted, Robert S. Ball