

Recycling Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved

May 11, 2010

The meeting started at 6:40PM

Those present: Sue Smith, Justin Leavitt, Lori Baldwin, Johnna McKenna, Breane Vachon, Lew Henry, Israel Willard, Andrew Stockwell and Barbara Swanson. Don Guarino joined the discussion a bit later.

Barbara volunteered as Secretary to take notes of the meeting. No one opposed or volunteered for the position. Justin Levatt and Andrew Stockwell were both nominated as candidates for Chair of the committee and after some brief questions and discussion, Andrew became the committee's Chair.

Sue suggested that there is a need for advertising/publicity regarding recycling and that articles could be written for the local papers (Laconia Sun, Laconia Citizen and The Suncook Sun were named) as well as the town web site. It was noted that the web site is underutilized. We could let people know that the town has a recycling committee and keep them informed of what we are doing. Sue checked out several web sites, including the EPA's and found lots of "cool stuff". She showed some visuals that would be great to share with folks to show what can be recycled and what is being done with things that are recycled – perhaps a poster could be made for display at the library and/or school. She also shared a "tag line" that she read - "Break the Cycle...Recycle" and thought it might be an idea to have the school children make posters that would promote this. Justin noted that there are a lot of marketing materials available promoting recycling (posters, pens, etc.).

Regarding publicity and being a bit late to take advantage of Earth Day, it was mentioned that the Blue Bag campaign was down this year. What people don't realize (including some on the committee) is that credits are given to towns by the NH Beautiful campaign for the number of bags collected.

Justin has been writing articles and shared his latest one on the income generated from recyclables. Israel asked, "What is the cost of recycling?" Justin does a quarterly report, but some costs he can't factor in since the town wraps some costs in the budget, so he doesn't know them. He needs the figures from the town to factor in lights, electricity, labor, etc. Don Guarino said the information is available and he would get those figures for the next meeting.

It was noted that recycling is "up" for the year to date, especially plastics (approximately 2-3 times more). The thought is that it might be higher due to the inclusion of all plastics, making it easier for folks to recycle.

Lori suggested that we need to educate people on recycling, make it easy to do and help them to get into recycling. It was mentioned that the school and the GYO are set up with recycling, but the residents need to be reached. This prompted discussion on recycle and compost bins that are available for nominal fees (\$5.00). Justin will get samples (one each) of the bins available and display them at the Recycling Facility. It was suggested that the committee could have them on display after the 4th of July parade and take orders (prepaid) for them. This could also be done during the Old Home Day celebration. Justin also noted that he has reserved the recycle-mobile again this year for the 4th of July and he can reserve it for Old Home Day as well.

Johnna asked if a survey may help us find out why people don't recycle. Further discussion led to the decision to have a short "exit poll" (3 questions suggested: Do you recycle? If not, why not? What can we do to make it easier to recycle?). Discussion led to possibly gathering other information as well, such as the number of vehicles that are in the recycling area and those that only go to the compacter. It

was decided that May 23rd would be a good day to start the recycling awareness campaign and take a survey.

Johnna also suggested that Don Maurer, at the Department of Environmental Services, Waste Division, would be willing to give a talk and/or answer questions regarding recycling. Justin has been in touch with him and he's very knowledgeable and very helpful.

Justin shared information regarding the annual NRRA Conference on June 7-8 in Manchester. They have lots of information and workshops on recycling including new technologies. It's open to everyone, but there is a cost involved. For those interested in attending any part of the conference, he will find out if the town would be willing to pay for us to attend. A paper was sent around for those interested to sign up.

On May 18th, at 9:30AM, Justin will be giving a tour to some children from the elementary school, in case anyone on the committee would be available.

It was asked if the state has grants for recycling. There are some, such as NH Beautiful.

Single Stream Recycling was mentioned as an alternative that may encourage more people to recycle. It was noted that it generates less revenue than sorted. It was also noted that if more people were encouraged to recycle because of it, then the amount sent to Wheelabrator would be significantly less and this cut costs. Also discussed was the initial start up cost which could be significant (for equipment, etc.) More information is needed on this topic to evaluate and compare as an alternative.

Action items:

1. Sue will write a "blurb" for the papers and send it to the committee (and Betty Ann Abbott) for additional input and approval.
2. Don Guarino will get the costs to run the Recycling Facility.
3. Justin will get samples of the recycling bins for display.
4. Johnna will submit an exit survey for approval by the committee and Don will have copies made for May 23rd.
5. Justin will create a "Facts of the Month" (3-4) handout for approval by the committee and Don will have copies made for May 23rd.
6. Don will look into getting Team T-Shirts for the committee.

Sunday, May 23rd Team schedule for the Recycling Facility:

Noon – 1:30 Israel and Sue
1:30 – 3:00 Andrew and Barbara
4-5 Don and Breane

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, June 8th at 6:30PM on the top floor of the Academy Building.