



**Town of West Boylston**  
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

## **Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) Meeting Minutes**

<b>February 14, 2019 – 1:30 PM</b> <b>Town Hall Meeting Room</b>
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<b>Members Present: Julianne deRivera, Norma Chanis, Duane Henry</b>
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<b>Members Absent: Barur Rajeshkumar, Elise Wellington</b>
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Chairman deRivera opened the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

**Approval of minutes:** Henry moved to approve of SWAT's December 13, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Chanis and approved by all members.

**Update on Proposed Composting at WB Schools:** deRivera reviewed the flurry of emails between the owner of City Compost, located in Gardner, and Superintendent Elizabeth Schaper at the end of December '18, which took place in an effort to negotiate options for servicing a composting program at the local schools. A video from the DEP was also forwarded to the Superintendent and the head of the School Committee. The sticking point seems to be the Superintendent first wants a package of information and a contact list of other schools that have used these services before having City Compost presenting in front of the School Committee. DeRivera will be reaching out to City Compost for this material, as well as contacting the Superintendent on whether they plan to compost on school property or have it hauled away.

**Discussion on totter question raised by West Boylston resident:** Wellington had prepared a draft explanation for why totters did not make sense for the town to the resident who had emailed the DPW advocating totters. The draft was presented at last month's meeting. Chanis will contact the previous DPW head to see if he ever contacted the concerned citizen or posted the rebuttal on the DPW web site. Chanis stated that the cost of totters is more expensive than the PAYT system we have currently (she pays \$4/month versus \$18/month for totter system). Henry noted that automated trash pick-up trucks that use totters, are far slower than a trash collector fellow doing it himself.

**Report on Casella (Paul Degnan) Audit of Contaminants in WB recyclables:** Casella compared each of the routes in town and found the following contamination rates: Monday – 3.1%, Tuesday – 3.25%, Wednesday – 11.11%, Thursday – 8.15%; Friday – 11.61%, with an overall Average – 7.44%. Apparently, any contamination rate below 20% is acceptable, but the lower the better since China (our chief importer of recyclables) lowered their acceptable contamination rate from 2% to 0.5% last year. SWAT members agreed that this information should be available on the SWAT web page, along with the following links to Casella's and DEP's helpful websites:

<https://recyclesmartma.org/>  
<https://www.casella.com/services/recycling/recycle-better>

On the Casella site, one should scroll to the bottom to watch the video.

Regarding **the “Top 5” contaminants**; the site says, “We recommend targeting the following items:

1. Plastic bags/film like case wrap (This is the biggest issue by far)
2. Soiled/used paper products like paper napkins and single use drink cups
3. Textiles
4. Tanglers, like extension cords
5. Scrap metal – pots & pans

deRivera agreed to find out how to post this information.

Chanis reviewed how a town would implement the state DEP’s new **Recycling IQ (Improving Quality) Kit**; Citizens are sent a mailer explaining the process. Then a trained temp worker and a trained town worker go to residences and go through their trash and recyclables to record the amount of contamination (e.g. Paper towels are not recyclable, nor is foiled or sparkly holiday wrapping paper) before and 8 weeks later after the educational process has been done. There will be an increased push to educate people because more contamination means more cost to recycle and thus higher cost to the town. The town would also get funding and DEP points for implementing this program. Unfortunately, most people are not comfortable with strangers going through their trash/recyclables, so this may be a major stumbling block to initiation. Southbridge has instituted DEP's IQ Kit (see 2/6/19 T&G article).

Henry spoke to the possibility of twice yearly curbside pick-up of bulky recyclables that the Recycling Center might be able sell, organized by the DPW and coordinated with the Recycling Center to minimize landfill use.

**Review of 3 recent T&G articles covering Worcester's 'Clean City' plan:** deRivera summarized Worcester's push to clean up Worcester via switching from their recycle bins to large, clear, plastic bags for recycled materials to keep the recyclables from blowing out of the bins. If there are too many non-recyclables (contaminants) in the clear bag, the bag will not be picked up. Also, the city is increasing the cost of its Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) yellow trash bags in order to fund education efforts, workers to clean up problem areas, and public space city trash cans. The new, clear bags for recyclables can themselves be recycled.

**Impact on SWAT from resignation of DPW Director Vernon Jackson:** Chanis commented that Jackson had done 50% of the town's DEP grant applications before he left; the next deadline for the other 50% is in May. Chanis volunteered to work with Keri at DPW on getting the numbers for Wellington to enter into the annual WB trash program Spreadsheet. To date, there is no known replacement for Mr. Jackson. SWAT members all agreed that Jackson had been most helpful and cooperative in working with us.

**SWAT's FY 2018 Annual Report:** deRivera and Wellington will be working on the report which is due March 1st.

**Next meeting** scheduled for April 11, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** 2:40 p.m. Derivera made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Chanis. Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by,

Julianne deRivera, Chair, SWAT

