



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

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

<b>February 8, 2018 – 3 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 NOT Present: Barur Rajeshkumar, Elise Wellington</b>
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**Chairman deRivera opened the meeting at 3 PM.**

**Approval of Previous Minutes:** Henry moved approval of SWAT's December 14, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Chanis and approved by all members.

### **Old Business:**

**Educational Efforts:** deRivera and Chanis both separately had reached out to the WB school superintendent via phone calls and email (including the website for the 'Green Team') to open a dialogue to work together to promote recycling efforts with no success. deRivera agreed to visit the school to establish a workable contact.

**Educational Videos** promoting recycling on local cable TV: Chanis had emailed PEG director, Brittany Blaney-Anderson, the educational videos from the DEP, but had not heard back. Members were unclear whether the videos were being used. deRivera agreed to attempt contact with Blaney-Anderson. SWAT's ideas for videos include filming a citizen sorting thru their trash and recyclables determining which goes where, or having a high school student film the activity at the Wachusett Recycling center and filming at the brush dump. SWAT also discussed how different haulers had different standards of what they would accept as recyclables; clean milk cartons may or may not be acceptable or waxed cardboard. Chanis noted that there was an effort to standardize recyclables. Chanis also noted that the contamination in the recyclables was secondary to folks not cleaning their cans, jars, or bottles enough (ie., there should not be any food or liquid left inside) and/or incorrect items were included (straws or plastic ware are not recyclables). Chanis noted that far and away the biggest contamination issue was single use plastic bags in recycling bins. Chanis also cited a DEP statistic that only 25% of recyclables from central Massachusetts were going to China.

Henry pleased with the success of his article in December 15, 2018 edition of 'The Item' and agreed to do a follow-up article in the spring to coincide with spring clean up and the opening of the brush dump in town.

**Trash contract renewal:** Chanis volunteered to work with the 7 (2 of the 7 have private haulers) communities using the Wachusett recycling center as she has personal connections with them from her work there. She agreed to find out when each of their trash contracts would be up for renewal. Henry pointed out that having a united bargaining position with the haulers would give

each community the best price. Unfortunately, the town administrator was unavailable to attend today's meeting.

**Single Use Plastic Bag Ban:** Chanis had attended several of Shrewsbury's ad hoc committee meetings and found out that despite the ban over the past year, there was no enforcement in place to maintain compliance. For example, smaller businesses were still using the single use plastic bags while other businesses switched to heavier duty plastic bags. Henry commented that Wal-mart and restaurants in town were WB's biggest sources of plastic bags; they could be approached individually rather than waiting for town wide ban. Chanis also mentioned that Raj had put an informal ballot up on the town's facebook page revealing a strong citizen resistance to more 'government interference.'

**Textile Recycling Programs:** Chanis reported on her webinar on this topic. She presented a handout with possible options to remove textiles (clothing, shoes, and cloth materials) from our trash and thus our landfills. See attached. Basically, there are services in the Boston area for curbside pick-up but they have not yet extended to include this region. Some organizations, like 'The Epilepsy Foundation' or Goodwill' work with schools; by placing collection bins at the schools, the school can also earn some money. The other option is to have 'collection' days quarterly in WB. This options all garners extra points to earn DEP grant monies for more recycling efforts.

**New Business:**

**FY 2017 Annual Report:** Draft of the Annual Report was briefly reviewed: We agreed to include the discussion points of the past year's 4 SWAT meetings knowing that 2017 has been a 'preparatory' year for our contract renewals. We agreed to include the summary of the fiscal year 2017 spreadsheet. deRivera agreed to write a draft of the report for peer review.

**Next Meeting:** SWAT agreed to meet on April 12, 2018 at 3 pm

**Adjournment:** At 4:15 pm, deRivera made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Henry. Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by,

Julianne deRivera, Chair  
SWAT