



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

Solid Waste Advisory Team Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2017

3 PM

Town Hall, First Floor Board Room

Members Present: Chair Julianne deRivera, Norma Chanis, Duane Henry, Elise Wellington

Members Absent: Barur Rajeshkumar

Guest Present: Megan Kelly

Chairman deRivera called the meeting to order at 3 PM.

Minutes: Minutes of our previous meeting, held on October 19, 2017, were unanimously approved.

Introductions were made and Megan Kelly spoke about her past experience as a science teacher in the Bahamas working for sustainable schools. Now living in West Boylston and teaching part-time, she is very interested in recycling and sustainability.

OLD BUSINESS:

Presentation to Board of Selectmen on Nov. 1, 2017:

deRivera spoke about the presentation she and Elise made to the Board of Selectmen on November 1st, reviewing the initial success of PAYT and the impending changes from the December 2018 closing of the Casella landfill, the declining reimbursement for recyclables, the increasing cost of disposal, and the end date of our trash contract in 2020. In response to these facts, SWAT recommended an increase in the town bag fee. Two different scenarios were presented with their consequent financial outcomes. Unfortunately, the BOS noted that the 1992 Proposition 2 ½ override was probably already covering the cost of the town's trash, so that they saw no financial reason to raise the bag fees.

Henry noted that in his reading of the town's trash contract, it would expire in January, 2021, and that it mostly protected Casella's financial interests. deRivera wondered how we could connect with surrounding towns re their trash contract renewals (to see whether they are now being charged more for trash disposal and whether free pick-up of recyclables is ending). Chanis said she would contact Missy from Shrewsbury (with whom she had already worked) to get their contract, and she could also get Holden's contract.

Landfill vs. Incineration: This led to a discussion of landfilling vs. incineration of trash. Henry said he thought landfills were cheaper because more of them were being built than incinerators. Chanis reported that she was very impressed with the high standards of Wheelabrator's incinerator in Millbury when she toured it. Its ash was cleaned of toxic materials before being sent to a landfill. Megan Kelly said it all depends on how tight the regulations are (and whether they are being enforced). Henry commented that no one wants either of these facilities to be built near them!

Plastic Bag Ban: This led to a discussion about encouraging the BOS to support a plastic bag ban, as Shrewsbury has done. Missy had spearheaded Shrewsbury's effort and Chanis said that Missy might be willing to speak to SWAT on this topic. For example, whether to ban bags all over or only at large businesses, like Walmart.

Educational Efforts: Megan Kelly said that the Bahamian school where she taught had already started "The Green Flag Program" when she began teaching there. It banned plastic water bottles in the school, put timers and

motion sensors on the lights there, and had recycling bins in all the classrooms. They also collected for re-use the students' end-of-the-year locker detritus so that it wouldn't go to the landfill. She highlighted the numerous contests in her school between the different grades as to who collected the most old shoes, or bottle caps that could then be made into art. They also had a contest among the grades for making the best recycling video, with the winner being aired on the local cable TV station.

Henry noted that we need to reach out again to our local cable director, Blaney-Anderson, so we could begin working on projects by September 2018. Henry reported he had emailed his article on where to take hard-to-get-rid-of trash to *The Item* last week.

Welcome Baskets for Newcomers: Chanis reported that the welcome baskets will debut in 2018 and will contain the DPW flyers for trash collection and recycling information, as well as the Wachusett Regional Recycling Center's flyer. deRivera noted that the DPW flyer did not have SWAT's website, but did have the DPW's website.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next Meeting: February 8, 2018 at Town Hall at 3 PM.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 4:15 PM passed unanimously.

Submitted by,

Julianne deRivera
SWAT Chair