

## SWAT zoom meeting minutes - October 8, 2020

Present: Norma Chanis, Julianne deRivera, Duane Henry, Nancy Lucier (Town Administrator), Brian Van Dam (representative from Republic)

Absent: Barur Rajeshkumar

The meeting began at 1:30pm

Chanis motions, Henry seconds approval of SWAT minutes from August 13, 2020. The minutes were passed unanimously.

Lucier introduced Brian Van Dam, a representative from Republic, who Lucier had asked to work with SWAT on any ongoing issues. Van Dam noted that the driver, Al Greene, was satisfied with WB's curbside trash pick-up in general. He was placing a few stickers whenever there was an issue with inappropriate trash; like extra large cardboard boxes not folded to the 3'x3' size. Van Dam clarified contamination issues in recycling. For example, any aseptic container like milk cartons or juice boxes (plastic coated cardboard) are not accepted as there is no place for them to be recycled locally. Hartford, CT does have a material recovery facility but it is limited; these items can be recycled into insulated wall boards. Also, black plastic food containers for takeout from restaurants are also not recyclable. Van Dam noted that just because there was a recycle number on an item, it was not automatically recyclable. In fact, it is mostly numbers 1 and 2 that are; the higher you go (#7) there is no market. As oil becomes cheaper, it becomes cheaper to make new plastic than recycle old plastic. Van Dam suggested we need legislation to stop production of certain plastics. He also recommended more education on how to recycle; eg., cleaning glass jars thoroughly- capturing the glass jars is most cost effective at reducing tipping fees because they weigh so much more than plastic. Having school children compete for 'most recycled/lowest trash' will also educate their parents. Lucier was pleased that she heard few complaints from the citizens of WM about Republic and that Republic had few complaints about the town.

Next up, Chanis spoke about Black Earth Composting who has been reaching out to WB offering weekly curbside pick-ups for about \$3-4 per week. She noted that the regional recycle center is currently overwhelmed and will not be able to accept the town's compost as a service. Chanis had attended a webinar about composting where other towns spoke to their composting programs ranging from curbside pick-up (partially subsidized by the town) to a town wide dump option. She reinforced the importance of composting as 28% of trash is organic material that could and should be composted. The easiest way is to compost at your home; Chanis stated that the compost bins that come into the regional recycle center sell out as soon as they come

in. City Compost does service a few homes in WB currently. Lucier suggested SWAT post this information on the SWAT website and DPW website.

Lucier is also pleased at the good turnout for the town wide clean up day October 3rd from 9am til noon followed by a B-B-Q at the senior center. Henry was the town winner for most yellow trash bags filled (#13!). Chanis was impressed by the young people participating; 22 National Honor Society students and a large number of Scouts. Raj took many pictures submitted to 'The Item.' deRivera will contact WHOC via DPW to obtain a schedule for coming to WB on an ongoing basis to pick up litter. Lucier had sent an email to Jim O'Day wondering about a bottle bill for nips.

The Pink Bag Program was discussed next. Our monthly average is between 5000 and 11000 pounds collected and thus diverted from the landfill or incinerator. Lucier has the full list of figures.

We then focused on the Trash/Recycling numbers on SWAT's FY 2019 spreadsheet. Henry and deRivera agreed to work on filling out the spreadsheet before SWAT's next meeting.

Next Meeting: SWAT will meet December 10, 2020 at 1:30p

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Submitted by  
Julianne deRivera, Chair SWAT