



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

Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2019, 1:30 PM, Town Hall Meeting Room

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

Also Present: Nancy Lucier - Town Administrator, Adam Jankauskas (Operational Manager, City Compost)

Members NOT Present: None

The meeting began at 1:30 PM.

Minutes: Motion to pass the Minutes of the meeting held October 10, 2019 was made by Henry, seconded by Chanis, and passed.

City Compost Presentation: Adam Jankauskas, Operational Manager of City Compost [C.C.], began his presentation with the history of City Compost, which he founded in 2013 when he realized a need to divert compost from the state's landfills. Composting is a valuable practice as it also decreases greenhouse gases (methane and CO₂) and decreases the need for chemical fertilizers when used on crop fields. Compost restores the bacterial and fungal network in the soil and increases the water retention in the crop fields. C.C. not only takes vegetable and fruit matter but also animal products including bones. These materials will compost, albeit over a longer time period, worms and heat destroy the potential pathogens. C.C. even includes paper towels, napkins, paper plates, utensils, and even ice packs. It does not include animal waste, though.

C.C. has approximately 7 acres of land, mostly in the Leominster/Gardner area, where the composting occurs. Currently, C.C. serves 2,050 homes and businesses in Central Massachusetts and Providence, R.I. C.C. provides whatever pick-up schedule is required by its clients. Individual homes may only need monthly pick-up, whereas larger customers, like Bentley University, require several pick-ups a day.

The costs for these services vary accordingly. For the single home participating, it may be as low as \$3 - \$7 for curbside compost monthly pick-up and delivery of a clean, lidded 5-gallon replacement bin with or without sawdust. C.C. will even track the weight of the compost, so figures can be compared with the lowered town trash disposal tipping fee.

Towns that demonstrate composting services will earn RD points from the DEP, which are redeemable. CC also services daycare facilities. CC is starting a partnership with Mt. Wachusett Community College, Worcester State University, and a high school in Gardner. Jankauskas noted there are several homes in West Boylston that are already participating. He thought he could begin a curbside leaf pick-up program where people can opt in. Henry was concerned that the food scrap pick-up had a steep learning curve for people. He commented that he has seen some people put their potted plants in their pots into their

trash! Henry also commented that a lot of houses were built with garbage disposals which “solves” their food scrap problem.

Jankauskas wondered if he could work with our schools. He noted that the schools are already paying for their food waste and his service may be on par with that cost. Lucier also wondered if Town Hall paper and cardboard waste could be picked up as well. Jankauskas noted that this paper and cardboard were a valuable commodity as they were not contaminated (unlike the paper in our Single Stream recycling bins, which have no monetary recycling value). He agreed to draw up an educational pamphlet.

He was also gracious enough to email SWAT his CC presentation in PDF format. Jankauskas offered comparison figures from Waltham’s Town website, where they compared their 4 potential collectors of compostables that residents could use. Chanis noted that another composting company from the Boston area, ‘Black Earth,’ was interested in working with our town, as well. Lucier if wondered we could present these as options for our residents to consider using.

Pink Bag Program for Recycling Textiles and Small Household Items:

Lucier was pleased to announce the figures from the first month of the Pink Bag program in November. During that month, the town collected 11,077 pounds of textiles for which the town received a check for \$110 from the collector, Simple Recycling.

Trash Contracts Expiration:

A general discussion was held on our upcoming trash contracts’ expiration. Chanis and Henry are working on this. They are using the Northboro RFP and suggesting W. Boylston-specific adjustments be made to W. Boylston’s RFP. All agreed that the cost of trash disposal is increasing. There are no tipping fee figures reported under \$100/ton, in part because of increased contamination rates from Single Stream and decreased income from the sale of recyclables. Casella will not allow Single Stream to revert back to Dual Stream as their facilities were all upgraded to manage only Single Stream trash. Chanis has spoken to Casella and they plan on using their rejection stickers more liberally and are also working towards more education to decrease the contamination rates. SWAT agreed to have a secondary meeting January 2nd at 1:30 pm to further discuss the RFP and contracts. Town Counsel will need to review the RFP by February. DEP may be able to offer comment as well.

FY 2019 Trash/Recycling Spreadsheet:

We then focused on the Trash/Recycling numbers to complete SWAT’s FY 2019 Spreadsheet. Wellington had received the needed numbers from the DPW, but the Town’s cost of producing the Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) trash bags seemed to only include the first half of FY 2019. She has emailed the DPW asking for clarification. Even without these numbers, it could be seen that the Town’s trash tonnage has gone up, its recyclables tonnage has gone down, and its recycling rate has dropped from 32% last year (FY2018) to only 29% this year (FY 2019). The general trend was not encouraging.

Sustainability Group at the Library: Chanis has volunteered to work with Anna Shaw, head librarian, to start a Sustainability Group at the library. Their first meeting is tomorrow, January 13th at 1 pm and they plan to continue to meet monthly. Topics covered will include green cleaning concepts and other ideas to foster a “greener” town.

Next Meeting: SWAT will meet February 13, 2020 at 1:30 pm, plus January 2, 2020 at 1:30 pm (see above) to further discuss Town Trash RFP/Contract, both at Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 3:23 pm.

Submitted by

Julianne deRivera, Chair SWAT