



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

Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2019, 1:30 PM, Town Hall Meeting Room

Members Present: Elise Wellington, Norma Chanis, Duane Henry, Julianne deRivera, Nancy Lucier - Town Administrator

Members NOT Present: Barur Rajeshkumar

Meeting began at 1:30 p.m.

Minutes: Henry motioned to approve minutes from April 11, 2019, Wellington seconded, motion unanimously approved. Henry motioned to approve minutes from May 28, 2019, Chanis seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Town Administrator's Report: Lucier announced that Gary Kellaher is working part-time as Interim DPW director for West Boylston, but a full-time employee is needed for the DPW Director position, and he cannot work full-time. Lucier also reported the surprising news that our trash and recyclables collector, Republic, is proposing an increase in their rates secondary to the increase in the cost of dealing with recyclables, from \$66/ton to \$72/ton. After looking at Republic's existing contract, Wellington noted that this contract states that the only allowable reason for a fee hike during the contract period is when a change in our federal or state laws or regulations causes an increase in costs.

Where is Town's Trash now Going?

Wellington wondered where our trash is now going since the Casella Landfill in Southbridge closed 6 months ago. deRivera contacted Paul Degnan from Casella, who replied that half West Boylston's trash is going to out-of-state landfills in New York (Johnstown and Morrisonville) and New Hampshire (Bethlehem). Half is being incinerated out-of-state in Maine (Orrington), New York (Hudson Falls), and Massachusetts (Rochester). Concern was expressed with the costs and pollution caused by having to haul our trash so far away!

The Wheelabrator incinerator in Millbury was referenced in the T&G 6-10-19 because of being one of the dirtiest waste-to-energy plants in the country due to its emissions (nitrogen oxide & sulfur dioxide), but it is still meeting the limits established by the EPA and DEP. It underscores that our need to reduce waste must be our top priority.

Proposed Composting at West Boylston schools: deRivera agreed to contact Adam, CEO of City Composting. to give a presentation to SWAT, which can collate the information for Elizabeth Schaper, Superintendent of WB Schools, to help decide if this effort would be financially viable. Hopefully, Adam has information from other schools in the area that he has worked with.

Proposed Pink Bag Recycling Program for Textiles: Chanis and Wellington attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting May 28th, where Stephen Lisaukas, Vice president of Government Affairs and Regional Vice president of Municipal Partnerships at Waste Zero, presented its 'Pink Bag' program. The BOS unanimously approved going forward with the program, with SWAT's support. Lucier is awaiting WasteZero's proposed contract and will obtain the town seal to affix to the future WasteZero mailings and other educational material for the program. This

program is going live this summer in Worcester and Shrewsbury. Lucier will post SWAT's announcement of the program on our web site. Wellington volunteered to do an interview on local cable TV explaining the Pink Bag program and will call the Light Dept. to see if SWAT could send out a mailing explaining the program with the Light Department's monthly billing. Lucier will also continue with recycling information on the town's electronic sign. SWAT understands that the roll-out of the pink bag program will be slow as folks begin to understand the new system. In other towns, the weekly use of the pink bags is only 2-3% of the residences. At this time the service only serves residences since the pick-up trucks will be using the same routes on the same days as the town residential recycling/trash pick-up. Hopefully, businesses and apartment complexes can be included in the future.

Contamination Rates: SWAT agreed that it would be interesting to do another audit in a year to assess the reduction in contamination rates as town citizens become more informed. Lucier will also add the DEP Recycling IQ kit to the DPW web site.

Plastic Bag Ban: SWAT continues to consider a plastic bag ban as so many other towns are passing them. Selectman John Hadley is looking into this as well, but it's been reported that the state will be banning plastic bags by 2021. One issue is how you define single-use plastic bags. Another is that there is no way to enforce the ban. SWAT also agreed that WB should consider a ban on **Styrofoam**, as Shrewsbury has done.

Earth Day Clean-up April 27th: Lucier was enthusiastic about the large response and effort expended for this event. Henry reported that he collected more bags of litter on the same route than he did six months ago at the town's last litter pick-up campaign, which was discouraging. Much of what he picked up were "Nips." deRivera wondered how this clean-up could be continued throughout the year. She will find out if the inmates from Worcester County House of Correction in W. Boylston do clean-up for our town on any schedule.

Question re Toters from town resident: deRivera sent Wellington's 4/11/19 drafted response to Lori Rist's email question from last December to her but had not heard back.

Proposed ban or deposit for 'Nips' bottles : The problem of these single-use alcohol bottles, found so often in town litter, was discussed as per article in T&G 6-10-19. Lucier reported that the Selectmen had already signed a request to have our legislators (Rep. O'Day and Sen. Chandler) sign the Nips bill, which would put a 5-cent refundable deposit on Nips to deter them from being thrown by the wayside as litter. SWAT agreed that this deposit would not be a tax because you would get your money back when you return it. SWAT was appreciative of this endorsement.

Next Meeting: It was agreed that our next meeting will be August 8, 2019 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julianne deRivera

SWAT Chair