

Minutes of SWAT Meeting with Casella, 3/18/2016

West Boylston Town Hall

Attendees: Julianne deRivera, Barur Rajeshkumar, Norma Chanis, Paul Duggan (Casella), Elise Wellington (by phone), Kathy Fahy

Meeting began at 3:30 p.m.

- The purpose of this meeting was to get answers to our many questions on trash collection and disposal as well as recycling. Paul Duggan from Casella attended. However, no one from Republic was able to attend.
- We asked whether the slight decline in our recycling rate was due to our recyclables being too contaminated.
 - Paul said that none of our recyclables last year were rejected because of contamination. He said that since recycled material has become lighter than it used to be, the decrease could be caused by weight alone. There is now less paper and fewer magazines in the recycling stream because more information is online. There is less glass, and plastic is lighter. Weight is down, but not necessarily volume. However, weight is the only measurement they use.
- Julianne asked how long the landfill will last.
 - Paul said that landfills are the answer now. Modern landfills are well-lined. An Open House will be scheduled at the Southbridge landfill. It has not yet been determined who is at fault for the Charlton water contamination. We had a short discussion about landfills vs. incineration. Paul felt that there were pros and cons to both.
- We discussed waste bans. Paul said that loose items are inspected, but bags are not opened. If a load has 10% or more of banned items, it is written up. There is zero tolerance in this case. Casella hires a third party firm to do surprise inspections and the state also does surprise inspections.
- We briefly discussed clear bags. Clear bags really aren't that clear and Paul doesn't recommend using them.
- We asked whether we should go back to dual stream recycling.
 - Paul said no, don't go back. Single stream is easier and we save money by having fewer trucks, fewer bins, etc. It takes a lot of work and equipment to separate single stream recycling.
- We talked about closed bins.
 - Paul agreed that there is more contaminated recycling when using closed bins. Some communities using closed bins have up to 40% contaminated recyclables.
- We asked whether the trash collector is responsible for determining what is acceptable for trash and recycling pick-up and what is not.
 - Paul said that this is a question for Republic. We discussed the possibility of using stickers for bulky items. We will need to discuss this with Republic.
- Paul mentioned that Casella recycles organics for businesses but not homes. Organics need to be really clean. Some companies that deal with organics recycling include

Troiano in Grafton and WeCare in Marlboro. Jordan Farm in Rutland has an anaerobic digester.

- We discussed education. Casella offers tours of their facility. Paul suggested seeing if the school has a Green Team. (Kathy Fahy called Melissa Wallace, assistant principal at Major Edwards about this months ago, but never heard back.) The Casella website has its own education video at casella.com.
- Paul said he would be willing to have Casella look at loads from each section of town and see which load has the most contamination. Then we could focus education efforts on that particular section.
- Paul suggested that we think about using small totes for trash since we don't provide trash containers. The small tote could be free, but any overflow would need to be placed in a PAYT trash bag.
- We decided that we need to schedule another meeting when Republic is able to attend.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Fahy
SWAT Secretary