



Town of West Boylston

140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2018 – 1 PM

Town Hall Meeting Room

Members Present: Julianne deRivera, Norma Chanis, Duane Henry, Elise WellingtonVernon Jackson (DPW Director)

Members NOT Present: Barur Rajeshkumar

Chairman deRivera opened the meeting at 1 p.m.

Approval of previous minutes: Wellington moved approval of SWAT's April 12, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Chanis and approved by all members.

DEP Trash/Recycling Grant Application: Jackson completed grant application for 2018. Members discussed allocation of money from DEP 2017 grant, approximately \$7000; but half already allocated for town's Earth Day. Chanis recommended educational pamphlets (for example; listing how to recycle different items; and some of these lists are already available on the DEP web site, educational videos demonstrating recycling activities, buying transparent totes with covers for the town (opaque are stronger but hide illegal dumping), transporting the town's old computers and tires to the Wachusett Recycling Center, paying for rejection stickers that can be placed on citizens' rejected trash or rejected recycled items and an enforcement person to do it, or having the local schools use the money to upgrade their recycling programs.

Town wide Clean up Day October 13th (rain date October 20th): Chanis and Jackson reported the early ideas for the day, including neighborhood pick-ups led by local volunteers in the morning, followed by community gathering in lieu of the West Boylston Day, where SWAT could have an informational booth.

Spring Clean-up news article draft has been drafted by Henry and will be updated to include information on the schools recycling efforts, in addition to the operating hours for the WB yard waste landfill and recycling tips for odd items.

SWAT's Coordination with the local schools: deRivera met with Superintendent Elizabeth Schaper who gave 3 teachers as contacts. One of the teachers had already responded with interest to work together in the fall when the school year resumes. Schaper noted that the school already recycles paper and was installing new energy efficient light bulbs. Schaper felt that composting (to at least divert organics from going into the trash) was the next challenge for them. SWAT bantered around ideas, such as checking out a DEP mentor to help with this composting program and having the kids or Eagle Scouts build compost bins for the school out of pallets. SWAT also thought it would be fun to have the kids make an educational video for the town's local cable channel much like the WPI kids did for the water department last year, which Jackson recommended and will send to us.

Town Meeting May 21st SWAT Report was presented by deRivera, who stated the trash recycling numbers remained similar to last year's numbers. deRivera did emphasize that neither Styrofoam, plastic bags or hard plastic toys belonged in the recycling bins. Also, that contamination of recyclables was two-fold: trash in the recyclables bin or unclean containers in the recyclables bin.

Meeting with Republic, our Trash Collector: Jackson said that the Selectmen and Town Administrator issued a non-compliance letter to Republic. Apparently, since then Republic has been much better picking up trash and recyclables on the appointed days. Nick is their new driver and is responsive and responsible. Because our contract with Casella is not up until 2021, we have limited leverage to push back on residents' bad recycling practices. SWAT understands that people rarely change their behavior unless it becomes a financial necessity.

'Junkyard Planet,' a book by Adam Minter, was discussed by deRivera and Wellington, who cautioned recycling is not the best solution to our excessive trash. Rather, the most efficient interventions are reducing the trash we generate and re-using our trash. Henry talked about a program in Maryland where prisoners on work duty re-use old housing lumber as furniture grade wood. deRivera presented a new article detailing converting plastics into biofuel. Henry spoke about old landfills becoming 'brown fields' for a town's commons.

Next meeting: SWAT agreed to meet August 9th at 1:00pm.

Adjournment: at 2:15pm. DeRivera made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Henry. Motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by,

Julianne deRivera, Chair

SWAT