

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE - January 8, 2025 - Minutes

<u>Attending</u>	<u>Not in Attendance</u>
Wendy Cunningham	
Paul Denis	
Pat McDonough	
Paul Tabor	
Bryan Benson, Solid Waste and Recycling Director, Staff	

PRIOR MINUTES

Minutes from November 12, 2024 were approved. We also agreed minutes from this meeting would be published in draft form as our next meeting is not until April.

UPDATE FROM SW DIRECTOR

Bryan heard from an individual who has established a trash service much the same as our current vendors - Dave Kelly. Dave asked for information from public on FB, the answers he received due to that forum do not lead him to believe a private service would be advantageous he would be interested in the Town contract when it comes up for renewal. He established his business just after our last RFP was issued so was not an option at that time. One concern might be this is a single person operation so if/when we explore that as an option we would need to ask the question about contingency plans. At this time the Select Board has renewed our contract with Plummer to be valid through 6/30/2026, but when that contract comes up for consideration (1Q26) we can reach out for pricing from this vendor.

Transfer Station Application update - Bryan has met with DEP to review what has been done to date (site plan, etc.) and has received positive feedback. There is still a way to go before the final application is ready to be submitted. Vinalhaven has just gone through the application process and DEP will share their application with Bryan to help. One consideration though is Vinalhaven (as an island) doesn't have the same set back requirements.

The actual application from Vinalhaven is 90 pages long so this is an arduous process that will take time - possible timeframe estimate of June, '25. After application DEP can take approximately 6 months so approval may be around end of 2025. These are estimates only. Wendy volunteered to help with the application if that may be useful.

Also based on our site (there are some wetlands on that land although we are not proposing doing anything on those wetlands) other State departments may need to review the plan. Bryan will let us know if/as that happens.

There has been some increases in the volume of recycling as the private Recycling Barn has suspended their pilot program so that recycling comes to the Town at this point (as appropriate). While we don't have an estimate the amount of increase at this time it may increase the budget/cost of the Towns program a bit. On the positive side corrugated cardboard, where we make some money, has gone up too.

SELF-SUSTAINING TRASH TAG PRICING FOR FY26

We do not have final figures for everything, but based on estimates the trash tag pricing would be at \$3.19, rounded up to \$3.25. Here are the estimates:

- Tonnage - prior year tonnage was 260, however the number of tickets has gone up \approx 10% (33.1K vs prior of 30K) so we estimated tonnage increase of 10% to 286
- Maine Waste to Energy pricing hasn't been received yet, however their contract allows for CPI based increase from 2%-4%. Based on current economy we have used the 4% to estimate FY26 pricing.

Last year the math had the increase at \$3.122. We round these prices to the next \$.25 for administrative ease and the Select Board chose to leave the pricing at \$3.00/tag, i.e. a 'deficit' of \$.122/tag or based on 30K tags annual of -\$3,660. The \$3.00 pricing has been in effect for about 4-5 years. Question on whether the 'overage', i.e. the \$.06 difference between the \$3.19 and \$3.25 (or \$1,980 annually based on 33K tags) would go to 'general fund'. As the prior year 'short fall' came from SW budget this principle should continue to apply. In addition we don't know the actual difference between tags revenue vs. actual costs until after the fiscal year is over.

Our next meeting isn't scheduled until April, however based on the flexibility inherent in the new Ordinance we don't have a deadline to make Town Warrant so we will review at our next meeting when we have actuals then make the recommendation to the Select Board.

In general the format, including Ordinance and Rules language, looks good, but that too will be finalized in April.

COMMUNICATIONS

We agreed articles in the Bowdoinham News (published quarterly) would be helpful and discussed a couple of ideas, including:

- Highlighting top areas of 'confusion' in recycling, for example how shrink wrap needs to be removed from containers or removing the sprayer from spray bottles. Per public

comment this should also include the consequences of not doing this. Should also contain information on what residents should do if they have questions about items.

- Why we don't currently recycle glass - we've had inquiries about this - including the fact that we continually review what we can accept and should recycling glass ever become viable again we will recycle that again.
- Profile of the staff, with individual factoids.
- Income we receive from recycling, e.g. metal and corrugated cardboard, this may increase the recycling of those things.
- General article on global recycling (EcoMaine has resources we can tap into for that)

Wendy will take a stab at the first subject, working with SW staff to see what they see as top items that are not well known. Wendy will also reach out to EcoMaine to see where we might be able to tap into their resources. The next issue of Bowdoinham News has a deadline of the end of January. For the next articles we'll see if another committee member can write an article. Bryan will have all input and editorial approval on these articles.

We also discussed the opportunity to put a large poster type information piece on the end of the recycling compactor. Two options; one would be having it done professionally by Banana Banners. We do not have any budget for that so we would need to fundraise to get that done. Another option would be a wooden sign that we would look for volunteer labor and materials to produce. These can be discussed again at our next meeting.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Paul D.'s and Paul T.'s terms on the committee end on 6/30/2025. They will both consider renewing and will let us know in the April meeting. At this point as the major tasks are done the committee should not take a great deal of time.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2025 at 6:30PM. This is flexible and will be finalized closer to the actual date.