

## SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE - 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 meeting minutes approval

Meeting was called to order with a quorum of 3 members. While we had a quorum of the committee for meeting with the absence of Paul Denis we did not have the quorum of members who were present at last meeting to approve minutes from 8.2.2023. That said, Pat and Bryan both agreed draft minutes captured the 8.2.2023 meeting without changes. We will vote to accept at next meeting (9.13.2023).

### Committee composition

We have had one resignation from the committee, while the committee can operate with 4 members it was decided the committee members would solicit individuals to fill out the empty position. New individuals will need to go through the process; fill out application and be approved by the Select Board.

### Trash Services - RFP

(FYI, for purposes of clarification where these minutes refer to *recycling* that text will be italicized.)

Our current trash hauler is looking to retire at the end of the current contract (6/30/2024) however due to budgeting and town meeting requirements we need to have a new hauler identified and approved by the Board of Selectmen by end of December.

Bryan provided the group with the current contracts for both Casella (*recycling*) and Plummer (trash hauler).

Bryan is in the process of obtaining feedback from surrounding towns on their approach to both trash and *recycling*. Towns he's contacted or is in the process of contacting include Richmond, Bowdoin and Topsham.

Richmond → While Richmond does have a *recycling program*. It does not have a program for trash removal. Richmond's *recycling approach is a facility where their citizens can bring recycling. This facility is also a transfer station, but does not collect trash.*

Bowdoin → Bowdoin has an ownership stake in the trash disposal facility in Auburn. Bryan still is working on connecting with the appropriate person in Bowdoin to gather more information on their program.

**Bryan will continue to contact other municipalities to gather information on their models for both trash and *recycling*.**

We again reiterated the Committee was not comfortable providing advice that was in contrast to State statute regardless of other towns' approaches. The current applicable Statute is Title 38: Chapter 13: § 1305, that states, "Each municipality shall provide solid waste disposal services for domestic and commercial solid waste generated within the municipality ...". The minutes from the 8.2.23 meeting contains a link to the entire section.

Bryan also provided a definition of transfer station vs. what Bowdoinham currently has. A transfer station can accept anything, for example bulky waste (currently Bowdoinham can only accept bulky waste 2 times annually). Transfer stations often store items to be disposed of until critical mass for disposition is obtained. Bowdoinham does not currently operate a transfer station and is not licensed to do so. This has been put on hold until final decision is made on where the town will operate *recycling*. The old barn on Post Road is not able to meet set back requirements to be a transfer station, while the public works location on Pond Road does. If the town decided to use the old barn for recycling we could have a separate facility for a transfer station; this option would need to be explored more fully should the town move recycling back to the barn on Post Road.

Trash Hauling RFP

The committee agreed to a 'middle of the road' approach to the RFP. This would be something in writing, however we will keep scope in check to encourage responses. We will call those vendors in the market to gauge their interest, and encourage a response, before we send an RFP. It was also mentioned newspaper ads soliciting vendors to respond might be an option. Trash hauling for the town has not gone through an RFP process in quite a while.

There was some discussion regarding cost and revenue. To facilitate further discussion here

**Bryan will provide the following figures for trash (*not recycling*).**

- **Current tonnage,**
- **current counts on number of bags hauled,**
- **current count on number of trash tickets sold,**

- **current cost of the program, both what is covered by ticket revenue and what the town pays in addition to the revenue.**

Our current trash disposal is in West Bath, operated by Casella. There is also a disposal facility in Auburn. A new trash hauler may prefer using the Auburn facility (Maine Waste Energy) which would require Bowdoinham to change contracts for that piece as well.

**Bryan will identify who possible vendors in the trash hauling market are, including larger vendors (e.g. Casella) and local vendors.** It is possible that Plummer will be sold and may be an option to continue this service for Bowdoinham. Bryan will know this by early December.

One option discussed was bringing the service in-house and having Bowdoinham provide trash hauling ourselves. During this discussion it was mentioned this would have an impact on staffing and equipment. While this may be a viable option, given our timing it may not be viable for the current process. The Committee recommended we look into this more as a possibility in the future.

*Recycling discussion; Bowdoinham has done single source recycling for years. When recycling was in the Post Road barn although the public sorted recycling it was co-mingled before shipped out. The two things that are separated are corrugated cardboard and metals. Metal cans are not in the metal group as the cans would fall through the machines at Casella.*

#### Public input

We agreed to obtain public input on our current approach to trash, e.g. pick-up. Given timing and the cycle of the Bowdoinham newsletter (we believe next newsletter would could use is in the November timeframe, too late to meet our December deadline), the decision was made to do a short survey via postcards. **Pat will provide initial thoughts on survey questions and send to committee members prior to next meeting so we can finalize then.**

#### Recycling and updated Solid Waste Ordinance

Given the deadline to address the trash hauling issue we agreed that the next 3 Committee meetings would focus on the trash hauling issue only. When we get to *recycling we will be looking for more robust public input. We also discussed not addressing where recycling takes place, but what the goals and parameters of that program would be.*

**Next meeting will be September 13, 2023 at 6:00PM**