

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE - 6.12.2024 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

Minutes from the 5/29/2024 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

Introduction: State Law (Title 30A, Subpart 4, Chapter 141, §3004) states that public Ordinances can only be changed by the vote of citizens, e.g. through ballot or Town Meeting. This was confirmed by the Town’s attorney in both an email (2/20/24) and in comments on the revised Ordinance draft. The current Ordinance, dated in 1994, hasn’t been amended by Town vote and is out-of-date. That Ordinance covers both the ‘what’ needs to happen as well as the ‘how’ it should happen.

The revised Solid Waste Ordinance has been through public hearing (that had great input) as well as extensive legal review. Much of the feedback on the legal review was to bring the Ordinance draft in alignment with State laws that apply, including using State language in places.

The revised Ordinance is structured in three parts:

<u>Document</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Ability to Change</u>
Ordinance	Outlines what is covered	Citizen vote (Town Meeting, Ballot).
Rules	Outlines how provisions in the Ordinance are to be covered, includes fees	Can be changed by majority vote of the Select Board after a public hearing at least 30 days prior to changes.
Lists	Update of current lists, communicates to citizens	Change by experts, e.g. Solid Waste Director, with TM input.

Public Comment: Input via email including adding a word into the definition of Agricultural Waste in the definition page. As this definition was from legal and is the same definition used in State law we are uncomfortable with making that change. Then change suggested was to add the word 'containers'.

Also from email was a comment regarding the Ordinance including reference to a Transfer Station (TS) while the Town is currently in the process of obtaining the TS license. According to Solid Waste Director while the Town has started the process it may take up to one year. We will alter language in the Ordinance to state the Town shall actively pursue a Transfer Station license and portions of the Ordinance dealing with TS will become effective immediately upon approval of the TS license.

Public comment regarding residents who use commercial haulers, §7.3 states such trash must be in "... plastic trash containers" and while that may be interpreted as including plastic bags to add clarity we will include clarifying language showing that term includes plastic bags.

Further public comment; opinion Solid Waste Committee should not spend time investigating a subsidy program for residents who may not be able to afford trash tags. There is no reference to a subsidy program in the draft Ordinance.

SWC believes there may be a way to help lower income residents through donations only (no tax implications) if we can find appropriate distribution channel. That may not be possible, but we are having discussions to see if we can make that happen. We do not believe adding administrative burden to the Town Office employees (who are already very busy) so distribution channel needs to be outside of Town Government.

There were no further public comments.

Trash Model Comparison: All indicated the summary reflected their conversations accurately, but there are a couple of edits to make, including adding pricing info in some of the comments and fixing some typos.

General observations:

- Majority of towns use a transfer station model where residents bring trash to a central transfer station. Many years ago Bowdoinham had a dump model which is somewhat similar as residents brought trash to a central site.
 - As Bowdoinham has applied for the Transfer Station license a couple of months ago we should have an approval before the end of our current trash hauler contract should the Town chose to adopt this trash service model.
- Many towns have budgets much larger than Bowdoinham's and while that may be due to different factors in general Bowdoinham's Solid Waste Department is very efficient.

- No town has a town sponsored subsidy program. The town of West Gardiner does pick up trash for seniors at times if they have time and receive a call for help. No other town provides pick-up services.

Next Steps; we have time to do this but we have decided that we should explore alternatives so we can present options to the Select Board. These options include:

- Investigating what it would take to continue a curbside program.
 - Casella is changing their curbside method to utilize mechanical pick up. **Wendy** will connect with Casella to get information on that method, including some estimated costs, including how much for the barrels and who pays.
 - **Bryan** will connect with other haulers (e.g. Kevin Smith, David Brown) as well as confirming Plummer retirement to see if we have options there.
- Investigating/estimating costs for using a Transfer Station model where residents would drop off trash at central location. We have tonnage figures as well as hauling figures so we can estimate. We would also need compactors, based on the Big Red compactor we just got for recyclables the cost should be \approx \$20K (Big Red cost \$16K although \$20K was approved). A new compactor would be \approx \$30K, but we do not believe we need new.
- Investigate cost to bring trash pick-up in-house. This would require hiring an employee, and obtaining appropriate truck(s). As Casella is moving to mechanized collection there may be some used trucks available. We would need to move trash to a two day/week schedule, e.g. one side of town on one day and the other side of town on another day.

NEXT MEETING Our next meeting will be held on June 26 at 6:00PM and the agenda will be legal review of Ordinance (as long as Town Attorney can meet this) and review of draft presentation for Select Board (Wendy to draft).