

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE - May 6, 2026 Minutes

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

PRIOR MINUTES

The minutes from the April 8, 2026, Solid Waste Committee meeting were approved.

UPDATE FROM SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR

- Maine DEP has 12 more days to approve or ask questions on Bowdoinham's Transfer Station license application. They have 180 days in total to respond and we are 12 days away from the 180 day mark.
- There have been citizens whose trash bags are non-compliant with limits as in the Solid Waste Ordinance. Those limits are trash bag must be no more than 30 gallon, weigh no more than 25 lbs, and have a valid trash tag affixed to it. If bags are not picked up the vendor affixes a note stating these limits. We have anecdotal stories of residents using contractor bags (much larger than 30 gallon) and bags being overweight (overweight bags may be a safety issue for vendor personal as they throw the bags to the front of their truck).
Bryan will submit a short blurb to the next Bowdoinham News reiterating the limits.
- Updates on glass recycling are captured below as discussed.
- Casella increase for trucking recycling has gone from \$428/load (FY25) \$441/load (FY26) to \$461/load (FY27)

TRASH TAG PRICING FOR FY27

- Plummer (trash vendor) has verified their rates will increase only \$.05/tag, cap as outlined in their contract.
- MWAC (recycling vendor) has increased their pricing over contractual limits, however hiring a lawyer to address the issue would cost more than paying the increase. They have also stated their preliminary number (\$110/ton) will be finalized in July.
- Last meeting we discussed rounding the pricing to 3 tags/\$10, however when Bryan discussed this with Town Office personnel they noted there were citizens who buy tags one at a time based on financial circumstances and they recommended we continue to price tickets on a single basis.

- Using the new MWAC numbers the pricing works out to \$3.27/tag, rounded to \$3.25. We will present this to the SC on 5/12/2026.

FEASIBILITY OF RECYCLING GLASS - UPDATE

We originally were scheduled to present our findings to the SB on May 26, however during the 4/28 SB meeting David Berry (who was present in our last SWC meeting where this was discussed) spoke about having the SB approve glass recycling (see minute 3:00 in the SB meeting video). Due to that discussion the SB presentation has been moved to 5/12/26.

For complete details see report presented to SB on 5/12, however outlined below are main discussion points:

- Bryan did check with trucking vendors and no vendor he found was willing to ship glass 180 miles (to new Material Recovery Facility - MRF). Main concern is weight of glass. Broken glass (not cullet) weighs approximately 1,500 LB per cubic yard. The trucks used are 40 yard capacity meaning a load of glass would weigh \approx 60K LBS, or 30 tons.
- During last meeting David Berry shared that during the recycling pilot at the Barn he received \approx 2 tons of glass a month. As not all citizens participated in that pilot the actual figures would be more. Rough estimation for ongoing annual cost to recycle glass in the single stream would be:
 - Assumption 1/3 of town citizens participated in the Barn's recycling pilot.
 - 2 tons/month x 3 = 6 tons of glass/month x 12 months = 72 tons of glass
 - 72 tons x est. \$366¹/ton = \$26,352/annually
 - Note, based on citizen accumulation we would anticipate first 6 months of glass being recycled would be higher than above.
- Bryan confirmed both Casella and Eco Maine only use recycled glass in their own facilities for capping landfills and/or in paving on roads they own on their property.
- Bryan also reached out to Topsham where they do accept glass. Topsham only buries the glass they accept, they do not use as recycled material (i.e., used again in some format). Topsham has 95 acres for their transfer station and bury their glass there. Bowdoinham's public works land is over 50% wetlands - we do not have the land needed to bury glass.
- Bryan has tried to contact Sibelco (the MRF in MA) but has received no response. At this point we do not know anything about that location, e.g., size, willingness to accept glass, pricing for glass (e.g., is it a cost or asset to the Town). Again, we have not found a trucker who was willing to truck glass for us.
- After the SB meeting **Wendy will draft an article for the Bowdoinham News** on the resolution of the glass recycling issue. Article will include facts, data, logic behind the final decision by the SB.

¹ The \$366 figure = 2025 calendar year avg of \$332.78 = 10% (to accommodate for FY27 increases) ... please note Casella charges by the ton for recycling and by the load for trucking.

Wendy will update the glass recycling fact sheet and send to SWC members for quick input. Material for the 5/12 SB meeting should be to TM by Friday 5/8.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be **October 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM.** FYI, there is a new Town committee that has been using the Kendall meeting room and Zoom. If there is conflict we are willing to cede the Kendall room to meet in the Graduate room as we are more in maintenance mode than a new committee would be.

DRAFT