

SOLID WASTE COMMITTEE - September 24, 2025 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

Minutes from the April 9, 2025 SWC meeting were approved.

UPDATE FROM SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR

Transfer Station Application: The meeting with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on the transfer station application originally scheduled for April, 2025 was postponed until September 25, 2025. The SWD had been using the successful Vinalhaven application as a template; that application was 90 pages long, our current draft application is 137 pages long.

The entrance permit, needed for the transfer station, has been approved.

After the application is submitted it will be approximately 6 months before we hear response(s). In addition the ME DEP is introducing an online application process (software called MELS) this October meaning Bowdoinham's application will be the first to use this system. We are hoping that may improve response time and that we don't experience any glitches.

Next steps are to notify abutters and hold a public meeting.

New Fork Lift: The new fork lift (replacing the 37 year old one as discussed in April meeting) is working well and employee training is also going well.

Battery and florescent light recycling: FedEx will stop accepting recycled batteries shipping on 9/30/25 and will stop accepting florescent bulbs for recycling on 10/31/25. Batteries are shipped to Georgia and florescent bulbs are sent to Wisconsin. As these are government programs we anticipate at some future point these items will again be recycled, but until/ unless that happens we will need to stop accepting these items.

We discussed how to communicate this to the public, including updating the May, 2024 Recycling List as well as putting on the white boards and just talking to public as they come to the recycling center.

*New license plate numbers and recycling stickers:* As the State of Maine is issuing new license plate numbers they are out of 'sync' with the numbers on the Recycling stickers. The Recycling center will just reissue stickers with new numbers, citizens just need to request with their new license plate numbers. [As and FYI, EZPass needs to be updated too, there have been situations where drivers have gotten bills for cars with new numbers.]

### COMMUNICATION IDEAS

*Article on glass recycling:* Bowdoinham stopped accepting glass for recycling  $\approx$  5 years ago however periodically citizens will raise the issue. Most recently in Apr-May, 2025 timeframe on the Bowdoinham Friends and Family on Facebook (however we haven't heard much since then). We discussed whether or not publishing an article on the reasons why we don't recycle glass (some of this economic but there are other reasons) would be helpful. After discussion we decided to do an article (no rush). Wendy will draft something after getting input from Bryan and share it with the other committee members for input.

*Signage for Recycling Facility:* In the past (including the 4/9/25 meeting) we discussed would different, larger, signage at the recycling facility help. Currently we use white boards that are medium size and a bit crowded with text due to size. Critical to this signage would be easy to change (for example the current changes to batteries/bulbs). Due to the need to change a larger, painted sign may not meet the need, however both blackboard and whiteboard paint is available (external) meaning a larger sign (maybe even painting the end of Big Red) may be plausible. The SWC decided to leave this issue in the capable hands of the SWD, so if it would be a good idea (i.e. if the view is worth the climb) Bryan can implement.

### NEXT MEETING

We discussed whether or not the SWC should move to an ad hoc only basis or continue to have periodic meetings. Wendy discussed the issue with the Town Manager who communicated whatever the SWC decided was fine, but we should communicate in letter to the Select Board. It was decided we would continue to have periodic meetings every 4-6 months but be available on an ad hoc basis for any issues arising between meetings. Wendy will draft letter to Select Board and get input from SWC members before sending.

Our next scheduled meeting will be **April 8, 2026 at 6:30PM.**