

Hopkinton-Webster Refuse Disposal Committee Meeting Minutes (Approved)

January 31, 2022 Hopkinton Town Hall, 12 pm

Present : Barbara Corliss (W), Chris Schadler (W), Sally Embley (W), Bonnie Christie (H), Kristen Cummings (H), Rich Houston (H), Jolene Cochrane, TS Manager, Neil Cass, Hopkinton Town Manager, Dana Hadley, Webster Town Manager. Public: Ginni Haines

The Webster members chose Barbara Corliss to be Chair for 2022. Rich will take the minutes. Neil Cass briefed the committee about our Transfer Station no longer accepting septage. Concord and Allenstown will accept our septage. Neil explained that we have 5 pits that have received septage for many years and have been monitored by Nobis with oversight by the DES. Wells were installed years ago for ongoing water quality monitoring. Every year our facility was inspected and passed by the DES until this year. The DES concerns revolve around the piles of material pulled out of the pits over the years and allowed to dry in place. Essentially, the State wants us to test these piles and come up with a plan to either remove them or keep them in place depending on what the test results show. Neil says if PFAS is found, there is a good chance the piles will remain in place under an approved plan, otherwise we will haul the piles away.

Jolene said the TS received \$ 46,650 in revenues last year from the septage haulers. If we want to reopen the septage lagoons in the future it will have to be done differently and it will cost more. We will have to dewater the septage and haul to a landfill the solids. We currently charge \$ 50 per 1000 gallons.

Barbara wanted a copy of the Operating Plan she remembered Steve Clough may have had an emergency contingency plan that may help us in this situation. Barbara also wondered if the revenue from the new solar array might make up the lost revenue from the septage lagoons. Neil was not sure on that.

Bonnie mentioned that PFAS had been found in the area around the lagoons according to the letter from the State. Should we be concerned about pollution going off site? Neil said residents in the area are on a community well that itself is tested for water quality. On site wells near the lagoons and the residents old wells are tested as well. Nobis is paid \$30,000 to \$45,000 per year to take care of monitoring. Jolene said names from where the septage came from are on each load ticket. These load tickets are reviewed each year by Nobis and included residential and commercial septage and we were not told we couldn't accept commercial septage over those years.

Bonnie said we need to access what's there first. Second, come up with a plan and a timeline. Third, how much is it going to cost. Chris asked what is our Committee's role in this? Neil said this committee would be looked to as decision points were reached and our recommendation would be passed on to the two boards. Members discussed a review of founding documents and possibly updating plans may be in order so we clearly understand our responsibilities. Neil mentioned a memorandum of understanding can be presented to the select boards so that changes at the TS such as fees, etc can be done without having to change the operating agreement each time.

Bonnie mentioned she would like the TS to accept food scraps for composting in the future. Jolene said it would require permits and a change in infrastructure and extra labor costs to do that program at the TS and would be less expensive to do an at home food scrap composting program. Bonnie said our population has gone up only 6% and our waste tonnage has gone up 20% and the food scrap composting program she envisions could save our towns she estimates \$68,000 annually. Kristen is concerned about how much we pay to have our trash hauled away and how we have little control over the cost. Ginni Haines (public comment) would like to test trucks that arrive with septage in the future so there is accountability.

Jolene said our permit for trash is 11,232 tons. In 2004 we shipped 4,599 tons. In 2020 we shipped 3078 tons. And in 2021 we shipped 3,228 tons, an increase of 150 tons. The number of truck loads was the same in 2020 and 2021 but the loads were heavier.

Jolene spoke about recycling revenues going up. Milk jug plastic went up from .56 c/lb to \$1.00 per pound. We had an extra load saved up waiting on the better prices. Plastics need to be stored under cover so the sun doesn't degrade them, extra storage space would be good a good thing for us. If we had more storage a new stream of plastic recycling could be developed at our facility, she said.

Bonnie made a motion, seconded by Kristen to meet monthly. The motion passed 6-0. It was decided to meet the first Monday of the month. Our next meeting will be Monday March 7. Bonnie also would like this committee to have training in the open meeting law. Perhaps Neil could inform us how to do that.

Bonnie made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kristen. 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 1:28 pm.