

Final Minutes
Hopkinton Waste Reduction Committee
January 21st, 2021
(the 21st day of the 21st year of the 21st century)

1) Roll call and opening meeting statement.

Present: Sally Embley, Bonnie Christie, Mary Carol Schaffrath, Jeff Donohue, Kristen Cummings, Virginia Haines, Diane Myler, Elizabeth Gilmore, Abigail Stone

Absent: Pat LaPree, Rosalie Smith,

The meeting was called to order at 7:03.

2) Review and accept December minutes

The December minutes were amended as follows: Mary Carol was absent at the December meeting. The legislature mentioned in regards to the plastics class was the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act. There was confusion between the acronyms of the Hopkinton Waste Reduction Committee (HWRC) and the Hopkinton-Webster Refuse Disposal Committee (H-WRDC). The H-WRDC is responsible for Transfer Station policy. On page 2 in regards to food composting at the school, the last name 'Rothe' is incorrectly spelled as 'Roth.'

Mary Carol moved to accept the December minutes as amended and the motion was seconded by Jeff. All were in favor.

3) Discussion of legislature in 2021

Bonnie recommended Waste Dive as a good source for information about upcoming federal legislation, such as the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act, the Recover Act, and the Recycle Act. Bonnie offered to help contact NH Senators and Representatives to persuade them to co-sponsor the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act. Now is a particularly good time to press the issue, as the BFFPPA is going to be reintroduced in the new Congress by Massachusetts Rep. Katherine Clark.

4) Transfer Station Budget

The Transfer Station budget has not been finalized. Currently, the requested budget represents an increase of approximately 7.5%, or ~ \$43 - 45,000 in order to cover maintenance costs and a new trailer. Revenue from the Transfer Station has been going down.

5) Food Waste Diversion/Composting Updates

Kristen has contacted several composting companies, including City Compost, Bootstrap, Grow Compost, and Casella in order to determine the potential costs of composting in Hopkinton but research is still ongoing. Because of NH restrictions regarding meat and dairy products in compost, these companies all truck compost out of state. This increases costs to the point where they might become prohibitive.

The Committee discussed composting in Vermont. Vermont has statewide legislation that bans the disposal of food scraps in landfills. The possibility of instituting similar legislation in NH was raised, but this does not offer a timely solution. However, Lebanon, NH composts on-site. The Committee generally agreed to learn more about the Lebanon composting facility and to visit at some point in the future. The Committee discussed alternatives if composting through a

private company is not cost effective. This would be a matter for the Capital Improvement Committee (chair: Chris Hadgdon). Specific costs and volume/tonnage capacity would have to be identified before the proposal could move forward.

It was noted that the Hopkinton-Webster Refuse Disposal Committee, not the HWRC, is the organization primarily responsible for transfer station policy such as this.

6) Pay As You Throw Program/Fee Structure Discussion

The Committee discussed ways to respond to opposition to Pay As You Throw programs and other waste reduction initiatives. While there is often strong opposition, Bonnie noted that not everyone shares this view and that the Committee should continue to work on this issue.

Kristen proposed that the reason that the PAYT program presents an issue at the Transfer Station is because Webster does not have to participate in the program and without enforcement there is little incentive for residents to obey the ordinance. The Committee established that enforcement of the town stickers and green bags is very necessary, though difficult because the Transfer Station lacks the manpower. Revenue from the green bags has decreased significantly over the past few years, perhaps partially due to the suspension of the program during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research continues on the PAYT program in other NH towns and will hopefully yield solutions and insights on how to improve the program in Hopkinton.

Kristen proposed that the Committee send out a reminder to Hopkinton residents reminding them to use the green bags. She emailed a draft of the message to the Committee members.

Bonnie mentioned how students in Hopkinton are very interested in climate change and suggested that the message include how methane from landfills is a potent greenhouse gas and is very harmful to the environment to encourage waste reduction and sustainability. Jeff raised concerns about mixing the message about the green bags with a message about climate change. Instead, there could be two separate messages sent at different times.

The message(s) could also be spread through Hopkinton School District newsletters or organizations.

There was a debate over whether to send the draft as worded by Kristen tomorrow or after further review during the February meeting. This led to questions about what trash required green bags, as there are some exceptions, but what they are is unclear.

The Committee generally agreed that the Transfer Station fee structure needs to be revised.

Jeff moved that Committee members would email Kristen with changes to the public message and the Committee would agree to a final draft by Wednesday, January 27th, at which point the message would be sent in the town email. The motion was seconded by Kristen.

7) Hopkinton School District Climate Change Group

Bonnie updated the Committee on the progress of renewable energy initiatives in the Hopkinton School District. Superintendent Steve Chamberlin and School Board member Norm Goupil are moving towards a resolution to implement renewable energy in the HSD.

8) Other

Bonnie shared the details of her meeting with the Conservation Commission on Tuesday. They discussed Earth Day and how the HWRC will not be hosting a roadside cleanup on that day. However, the Conservation Commission is interested in working with the HWRC to host Cindy Camp of Leave No Trace Refillery. The mobile Refillery could potentially be parked at the Transfer Station. This needs to be worked out with Jolene.

****Agenda Item For February Meeting: Confirm what the HWRC is doing for Earth Day****

Jeff notified the Committee that the deadline for the Town Report was January 28th if anyone wished to contribute.

Motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Next meeting is February 18th, 2021 at 7:00 pm EST.