

Shutesbury Recycling and Solid Waste Committee

Minutes – March 2, 2010 meeting

Posted meeting convened at the Town Hall at 7:15 pm

Present: Paul Vlach (Chair), Gary Bernhard (Recycling Coordinator), Mino Caulton, Karen Czerwonka, Gail Fleischaker, Meryl Mandell

Absent: Nancy Dihlmann, Ron Essig, Steve Rice

1 – Minutes taker for this meeting: Paul

2 – Review and approval of Minutes from February 3, 2010 meeting. Moved by Gary, seconded by Meryl. Minutes approved, 4 aye, two abstained (not present at meeting).

3 – “Trash Talk” town email series by Gary discussed, recent one praised by all. Paul suggested consistent use of recycling@shutesbury.org return email address, agreed; and Gary said he would mail as PDFs to overcome formatting problems with the web based mail management interface.

4 - School composting project – Update by Gary. The school now expects to start in April/May; at \$60 per month; projecting 80-100 pounds per week. Gary will get weights for our “waste stream diversion” records. They’ll use 20 gallon containers. The RSWC agreed we want to discuss this again before the Fall, prior to reauthorizing continued subsidy from RSWC funds of \$60/month (\$600 for the school year).

5 - Discussion of memo to Select Board and status checks.

Discussed the message we received that the Select Board had concerns about increasing “extra bags” sales prices. Paul will draft a memo to them based on the discussion, withdrawing the request until we have further insight into the base issues. (Memo attached at the end of these minutes.)

Bag sales tracking

Library, Town Hall, Leverett Coop - It was agreed tracking must occur, because these are subsidized bags, representing system costs, not just “bags”. Gary will advise Co-op they must do so, wanted to be able to authorize a service charge, if the Co-op felt they needed to do so. Moved by Gail, seconded by Paul, this “last resort option” was voted as authorized if needed.

Name/address form for TH & Library – Gary will get sales tracking forms to both. Discussion: Form to include cause for need, or use a separate polling? A separate written form survey was decided, to be conducted during bag distributions this year.

Bag distribution this year will include recycled tote bags; the flyer explaining the tote bags; the MRF card stock graphic flyer; the MRF text-style PDF flyer; and the resident survey of bag use, soliciting feedback on the reasons they may need more than 50 per

year. Gary said he would include an offer to help residents understand how to reduce their trash volume, upon request, in a future “Trash Talk”.

During survey content discussion, the upcoming medical waste ban was mentioned. Gary said Arlene Miller had sent him an email with info, which he would forward to the committee to review.

Inventory control / tracking steps discussed again. Gail will create a spreadsheet for Gary to tally the inventory, distributions and sales.

Educational plan/program proposal: No update available.

MRF signs purchase: Discussed - Two Coroplast signs were voted to be purchased by Gary, in conjunction with Becky.

MRF PDF “yes/no” text style flyer was reviewed and discussed. We agreed to distribute this with bags this year. Gail will get authorization from the MRF to make and distribute copies.

Monitoring / rejections

Roadside monitoring and enforcement / rejections slips & reporting from Duseau drivers / RSWC members role / resident reporting? / Talking Trash use?

Gary will meet with drivers; advise them to reject when appropriate, report it by radio to the Duseau office, which will be asked to email a list of the rejected addresses to him at recycling@shutesbury.org

Drivers, and RSWC members, will be asked / expected to notify Gary of consistent non-recycling addresses, too. Gary will follow up with a form letter, advising of the bylaw, and offering house visits to provide guidance and info.

Heavier Bag users: how identified, how to address, what to offer??

Commercial trash? Zero recyclers?

Duseau process information – for weekly pickups and Bulky Waste Days – Gary will have a conversation to nail down their processes, so we all understand them.

6 - open meeting law follow-up discussion:

The new open meeting law recognizes electronic mail, and allows for its use for ***“the distribution of a meeting agenda, scheduling information or distribution of other procedural meeting or the distribution of reports or documents that may be discussed at a meeting provided that no opinion of a member is expressed.”***

Therefore, the following outline was agreed to unanimously:

- there is value in sharing information about ongoing efforts by individuals, especially the Coordinator or those who are assigned to projects

- when this information is shared between meetings, it should be done so in a factual manner, without expressing opinions or advocating actions to be taken
- the flow of information should be one way, with acknowledgments okay, but no substantive or deliberative responses given. Expressing support of the efforts, or offering follow-up questions or suggestions *could* be construed as a violation of the open meeting law statutes
- if group discussions or decisions become necessary, which cannot wait for the next scheduled meeting, then a new meeting should be called for, typically by the Chair or Coordinator
- although we're all reluctant to schedule additional meetings, it was felt to be a necessary step. Paul proposed that we meet monthly from now through the Spring Bulky Waste Day so we can effectively complete our ongoing tasks.
 - Of the members present, it appeared that Tuesdays are the best meeting days to avoid other commitments, and Paul will begin by setting up the next meeting for the third or fourth Tuesday from tonight.

7. Other topics: Tuesday April 6th MassRecycle convention in Worcester. Gary is going. His \$50 fee is covered. Meryl moved, Gail seconded, additional fees for other attendees if needed (RSWC, Town Admin, etc). Gary was reminded to submit for mileage expenses.

8. Next meeting: April 13, 2010 at 7pm at Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm

Attachment below: Memo to select Board, referenced in item #5 of these minutes.

Memorandum

Date: February 9, 2010
 To: Shutesbury Select Board
 From: Shutesbury Recycling and Solid Waste Committee
 Subject: Proposed price increase on additional trash bags

The Recycling and Solid Waste Committee met on February 3, 2010. We discussed the reported concerns you raised in relation to our suggested price increase for trash bags purchased beyond the annual allotment of 50 per year to each household.

After further consideration, we have voted to withdraw our recommendation for the price increase at this time, and request that your Board table or dismiss the matter as well.

Our goals remain to educate and inform our community; facilitate the reduction of trash volume entering the system; increase recycling; and provide responsible disposal options. The suggested disincentive of raising the cost of additional bags, above and beyond the 50 bag annual allotment, was just one component of our plan. Those "extra" bag prices have remained at \$2.00 since we began the Pay-As-You-Throw system in July of 2000.

However, it is our intent to gather additional information about the demographics of those using more bags than the standard allotment; institute a sales tracking system and review that data; and formulate an enhanced educational campaign.

Since we are now entering the heaviest annual period of "extra bag" purchases, we hope to gain insights which will help us to make the overall recycling and solid waste program more effective, and guide us in the best way to further reduce trash and increase recycling. After we have done this, we may find that raising bag sale prices should still be considered as one component, but we are comfortable holding off on that recommendation while we explore other options.

In coordination with Town Administrator Becky Torres, we had been trying to rearrange schedules so our committee members could meet with you during your February 16 meeting. However, in light of our reappraisal and new vote on the matter, we will not plan to meet with you, unless a follow up request is forthcoming.

As we learn more from our continued efforts, we will be contacting you as needed, or to provide updates.

Respectfully,

Recycling and Solid Waste Committee
Gary Bernhard, Coordinator; Paul Vlach, Chair
Karen Czerwonka, Mino Caulton, Nancy Dihlmann, Ron
Essig, Gail Fleischaker, Meryl Mandell, Steve Rice

(These Minutes approved April 13, 2010 - PAV)