Transfer Station Committee Meeting Minute
December 14th, 2021

Present: Chris Jensen, Barry Zitser, Nancy Strand, Andrea Bryant, Margaret Gale, Betsy Phillips, Katherine Darges, Julie Seely (via Zoom)
Guest: Rep. Tim Egan, Grafton District 2 (Sugar Hill, Franconia, Lisbon, Lyman, and Monroe)

Cheryl Jensen from the Conservation Commission introduced Rep. Tim Egan, who was invited by the CC to speak about several bills he was involved in, hoping to get them passed. The Conservation Commission will again address these bills in their next meeting on January 27th. They are:

* HB 1571. Increasing fines for littering and directing revenues to the fish and game department.
* HB 1652. Relative to the recycling of beverage containers.
* HB 1406. Authorizing municipalities to collect compost.
* HB 1122. Authorizing municipalities to collect and resell construction and demolition debris.

Rep. Egan presented his background for getting into politics, the pathways for the four bills and what he expects for them, emphasizing finding common ground with both sides of the aisle. He then took questions from the people attending.

Barry presented a resolution in support of the bottle bill that was reviewed with some changes requested. Barry agreed to revise the resolution per the discussion and submit for approval at our next meeting. The committee also expressed appreciation for the opportunity to collaborate with the Conservation Commission in having Rep. Egan attend.

The committee approved unanimously a new issue of Just Be Greener with the main topic being about plastics.

An update on the textile recycle bin was provided by Nancy with a date provided by Apparel Unlimited of January 12th. Several committee members plan to be there for the delivery. The issue of Just Be Greener that focuses on textile recycling will be published not long after the bin is in place.

Barry reported on the Infrastructure Bill that passed both the U.S. House and the Senate in November. It contains a consumer recycling education and outreach program to improve the effectiveness of community and residential recycling programs. Barry recommended that we notify our interest in applying to the EPA for grant funding before we even know what the application process is. A resolution was written that asks the Select Board to give authorization to the TSC to investigate these grants and that any communication that goes along with this be approved by the Select Board (through the Select Board liaison). The resolution was approved unanimously.

Barry provided an NRRA Annual Meeting Report. They reported an annual net return to its members of 1.8 million dollars for recycling efforts. This includes transportation expenses, and recyclables handled at a cost.

Nancy mentioned that she investigated tire shredding machines recently and found some available for under $5k to up to $150K that could convert tires into mulch. Margaret expressed some concern about what residue is put into soil from recycled tires. Others mentioned that perhaps this type of material is best used for road shoulders or other applications but not in your garden.

The committee reviewed what the communications protocol are when we have good ideas or any information that is meant for all committee members. In general, these things should be sent to Nicole McGrath with a note asking to distribute to the committee members. Any responses should be directed to individual members but not a group response.

NH Solid Waste Meeting Group has met twice as of the date of this meeting. Barry believes that if this working group comes up with anything significant, the NRRA will post it in their newsletter. Also, Jon Swan has been attending the meetings and will probably post any pertinent announcement.

Casella’s Food Waste Program sent out a letter touting a new Food Waste Program. Barry sent a notice of this to Cory Anne at CET because she knows Casella’s Regional Food Waste Manager to see if she could get more information on this program as we’ve not seen any details.

CET (with a grant on food waste diversion) is coming to Bethlehem on the 22nd of this month to meet with Reklis, Wayside Inn and possibly Bethlehem Elementary School. Barry has also tried to contact Adair, The Maplewood, and Rosa Flamingos. The committee gave Chris Jensen kudos for the great article in the Bethlehem News about this program.

There was some discussion of other food waste diversion pilot programs – towns of Lebanon and Keene. Keene’s pilot program was thru NRRA. Barry agreed to reach out to his contacts at NRRA to see if Bethlehem would be eligible for a similar pilot program.

Discussion was held on the possibility of soliciting public input regarding what kind of transfer station is needed and what challenges the public believes they will have. Barry pointed out that we would need Select Board approval to hold anything like that. He also mentioned that future grant money might allow us to gather information from the public. Nancy mentioned we could use Survey Monkey – probably for free – to put out a 5-question survey through our town newsletter. It was generally agreed that it’s important to get full information to the public on various options, especially things that will require a vote from the public.

Chris Jensen thought it might be time to re-work our comprehensive plan for the transfer station site. Even though we don’t have exact costs, we could indicate where various things would go – basically saying this is the transfer station of our dreams. It was agreed to start that in our next meeting and using the interim report that was submitted to the Select Board years ago as a starting point . Barry also suggests we reach out to the new head of the Littleton transfer station to come to a meeting so we can explore what the cost would be to use that facility.

Minutes from the last meeting were approved unanimously.

The next meeting was set for January 18th, 6pm.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned.