

**Recycling and Waste Disposal Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 12, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Ellen Cabral, Chris Kowalski, and Bob Nugent  
Absent- Pat Bracken; Chairman

The committee met at the Hampstead Middle School at 6:45 to review the site for the Household Hazardous Waste Day to be held October 24<sup>th</sup>. Present was, E. Cabral, R. Nugent, C. Kowalski and J. Worthen (Road Agent)

The regular portion of the meeting began at 7:30 pm back in the meeting room.

Guests: Penny Williams, (Tri Town News), Selectman Lindquist, Dave Allen (Casella), Steve Harms, (Buildings and Grounds Supervisor)

**MINUTES**

The minutes were tabled until the September meeting.

**Old Business**

Transfer Station- Mr. Nugent mentioned that he went to the transfer station to observe what things were being brought in. He did state that there was a lot of cardboard that came in. He took some home because they were brand new moving boxes. The committee agreed that there needs to be some alternative for the cardboard.

**New Business**

*Trash issues*

Mr. Dave Allen, General Manager at Casella was present at the meeting to over with the committee some of the issues with trash and recycling pickup that have been going on for the past few months. He mentioned that with the 5 day pick up schedule going down to 4 along with a change in primary drivers and the consolidation of their Brentwood office with the Salem office created a kind of perfect storm. There is a new supervisor, named Brian Goshen that has taken over this route and things have settled down in the last few weeks. The town office reported that instead of getting upwards of 5 calls a day, they are getting only a couple a week now. Mr. Allen said that good drivers are hard to find. They do offer good benefits and have good help, but recently lost a group of senior employees.

Mr. Allen gave some insight into the current situation with recycling. He said the ACR (Average Commodity Revenue), which is a mixed box of recyclables is currently valued at \$30- \$40 per ton whereas in 2014 the value was \$150-\$200 per ton. He said that efficiencies are making it easier at a cost effective rate to process the recyclables. He said that this has actually been one of the best years for Casella because they invested in the core of the business. Recycling is still a core business and Zero Sort is their signature. He noted that there are some challenges with the single stream process (Zero Sort) with contamination being the biggest issue. Two of the biggest contaminants are plastic bags and Styrofoam. Both have recycling numbers on them but are not able to be recycled curbside. He said that the public needs to be educated that it is rigid plastics (i.e. containers, not large plastics such as kid's toys). As the markets weaken they will be looking for better quality materials and will get picky about what is allowed (the aftermarket).

Mr. Allen informed the committee that the Salem office has invested in new equipment and that they recently purchased 17 trucks (which are about a 1/3 of their fleet in Salem) and that most have the containers in the front of the truck. This allows an easier pick up and less wear and tear on the driver and allows them to do the routes faster. At the recycling facility everything is sorted electronically not manually so if someone was to put their recycling in a plastic bag the process would push it aside as trash. Mr. Kowalski asked if there was a way to get to a standard container for recycling. Mr. Allen said that he would want the towns do what works best for

them. There was discussion about the article Mr. Nugent saw regarding recycling being destroyed by the big blue bin (toters). Mr. Allen responded to the article by stating the increase in recycling that is seen is still better than the amount that could potentially be contaminated. If you use a 96 gallon cart which could hold up to 100 pounds and there is 10% contamination, you still have 90% recycling and it is the capture rate they are looking for. There are some communities that do the carts just for recycling. Selectman Lindquist noted that there is a lot of senior housing in town and the large toters are difficult for that population.

Mr. Kowalski asked about composting and what Casella is seeing. Mr. Allen said that the big piece is working with organics. Currently the best solution is for the homeowner to have a backyard composter or a garbage disposal to break down the organics. Collection is tough and super expensive. He stated that the town of Hamilton Massachusetts has trash, recycling and composting pick up. The trash is picked up every other week and the recycling and composting are picked up weekly. He also mentioned that locally there are no outlets. Mr. Kowalski mentioned the service in Newburyport Massachusetts and how people sign up to be picked up. Mr. Allen said there is also a subscription service in Portsmouth NH for composting. He said one of the deterrents the "yuk" factor. There are some split body trucks that could pick up the recycling and trash, but a different truck would be needed for composting. He said the best thing to do is to educate people about backyard composting. He reported that most compost is water, or breaks down to water. In Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts, food waste is not allowed in landfills or incinerators.

Mrs. Harrington asked on behalf of Chairman Bracken, if there were issues within the town that the committee needed to be aware of.

Mr. Allen responded that when he spoke with Brian and the drivers, the biggest issue is the contamination with plastic bags. Ms. Cabral stated that the committee has been pushing no plastic bags and if the recycling is put out in a bag and it is gone, then the resident will assume everything was done correctly. They will need to know if they put something out incorrectly. She would like to see the items left behind even if that generates calls to the office. The same issue came up with cardboard. People don't break it down to a manageable size and it gets left behind, or taken with the trash. They talked about putting stickers on the items left behind. Mr. Allen was concerned with the amount of time it would take the driver to do this. He said that they will look into it and let the committee know when they will start using the sticker process. Ms. Cabral also asked about the new schedule change. She explained that in the past her pickup was consistent within a two hour window. Now the pickup is all over the place. It could be first thing in morning or as late as 8 pm. She asked Mr. Allen if they would be getting back to the consistency they used to have. Mr. Allen responded that the answer is yes and no. He stated that they are always tweaking things to see what works best so it could change any given week. Mr. Allen left.

### Transfer Station

Mr. Harms was present at the meeting to answer questions the committee may have regarding some issues on the transfer station. Mrs. Harrington reported that Windfield Alloy is no longer taking TV's or lightbulbs. Mr. Harms has talked with NRRA regarding the televisions first and because he was full, had the NRRA come in and take the televisions. He actually was full after the June collection day and had the NRRA come out again. They bill \$105 for transporting and \$19 for a fuel surcharge. They bill per pound, not per unit and the cost is \$.145 per pound. Through August 11, 2015 there were 122 television coupons sold for total revenue of \$1,720. The cost for picking up the televisions for the first two pickups was \$1,378.15. Mr. Harms noted that the container needs to be emptied again. It looks like he can get almost two months of collection days into the container. There are three more collection days left in 2015 and it was discussed that if the container is emptied after the second one in October, to hold the November collection until 2016. Whereas the collection of the televisions and lights was unknown during the budget process, there was no budgeting for this. It was explained that Mr. Harms has spoken with a company in Dover that will take the lights. The cost is so much per foot. When

Mr. Harms spoke with the NRRA and they use the same company. The estimated cost would be the same for transporting. There was a suggestion to have two staff drive the lights up and unload them which could save about \$25-\$40.

**Motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm was made by Mrs. Cabral and seconded by Mr. Kowalski and passed 3-0.**

**NEXT MEETING**

**September 9, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Harrington,  
Recording Secretary