

**Town of Cape Elizabeth
Recycling Committee
Virtual Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2020**

<https://meet.google.com/pct-zjtn-qoi>

Ability to join by phone: 1-716-562-8174 (PIN: 605-765-894#)

Present: Chair, Matthew Faulkner (MF), Jennifer MacDonald (JM), Aubrey Miller (AM), Kara Lavender Law (KL), Bruce Rayner (BR), Nicole Boucher (NB)

Absent: Tim Trachimowicz (TT)

Staff: Robert Malley (RM), Director of Public Works

Public/Guests: No members of the public joined the online meeting.

Call to Order

Matthew Faulkner (MF) called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Approval of June 4, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes

The June 4, 2020 meeting minutes were approved as written by a roll call vote.

6 Yes, 0 No

Citizens Opportunity for Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

No members of the public joined the online meeting.

Follow up discussion by the Chair with the Town Manager related to Applicable Sections of the Health & Sanitation Ordinance (Chapter 11) being redundant with recently Passed State of Maine Legislation (L.D. 1532 and L.D. 289)

MF reported on a conversation with Town Manager Matt Sturgis about addressing the State legislation on plastic bags that supercedes the Town ordinance, and State legislation on polystyrene foam, which is slightly more restrictive than the Town ordinance. In response, MF drafted an informational letter to Town Council on behalf of the Committee. RM noted that there is still a question about whether the Town ordinance needs to be revised by amending and/or striking language. One suggestion was to amend the Town ordinance to state that the Town follows State law, but will revert back to the Town ordinance in the event the State law is rescinded. MF will follow up with Matt Sturgis on this to suggest that Town Council consider forwarding this question to the Ordinance Committee.

Webpage, Communication and Social Media Update

NB reported that posts on the Committee Facebook page indicate that people strongly want the Swap Shop to reopen. RM reported on discussions with Town Manager Matt Sturgis about social distancing in the Swap Shop, which they do not feel can be sufficiently managed at this time. Further, there is concern that once the Swap Shop does open, the amount of people and material coming in will be overwhelming because so many people have been storing material after house cleaning projects during the pandemic. The Recycling Center is seeing an increase in tonnage

disposed, likely in part because the Swap Shop is closed and items are no longer diverted for reuse. RM said that Matt Sturgis agreed to reassess the decision on the Swap Shop closure on September 1. NB suggested that we inform residents via the Committee's Facebook page about the "Buy Nothing South Portland/Cape Elizabeth, ME" Facebook page, as an alternative to the Swap Shop. RM reported that new Recycling Center fliers have been printed on recycled paper and are ready for distribution in the Cape Courier.

Recycling Center Update

RM reported that new staff member, Tim Gallagher, started at the Recycling Center, filling a recent vacancy. The extremely hot summer days have been very challenging for the staff. RM reported a ~20% increase in municipal solid waste disposal since July 2019 (from 190 tons to 230 tons), and an increase in bulky waste, possibly due to fee waivers during the pandemic. After Labor Day the town plans to begin collecting fees again, once a mechanism to ensure safe transactions is designed. There is also discussion about reopening the bottle redemption center by putting collection containers outside the building. This would require staff to rotate containers, bringing full containers into the building for collection by Broadway Redemption, and moving empty containers outside for patrons to fill. Pending discussion with Broadway Redemption, bottle collection could resume after Labor Day.

Review of Committee Goals & Work Plan for Remainder of 2020

Much of the Committee work plan cannot be carried out due to the pandemic, such as working with schools on compost collection and in-person community education and outreach. NB noted that many families in the community are opting for remote learning for their children in lieu of in-person school, and that there may be potential for education/outreach through parent-organized groups that are coordinating lessons and outdoor play. Paper shredding events have been cancelled for the remainder of 2020, but the Household Hazardous Waste collection day is currently still planned for November 7, 2020.

Discuss Potential Meeting(s) with other Municipal Recycling Committees

BR suggested meeting with other municipal recycling committees to share best practices. RM noted that the incoming Cape Elizabeth Director of Public Works, Jay Reynolds, comes from the same position in Falmouth, where there is a very active recycling committee with a broad scope. MF will invite Mr. Reynolds to give an informal report on the Falmouth committee's activities at the September meeting. RM also suggested reaching out to Julie Rosenbach, Sustainability Director of South Portland. Suggestions for information exchange include having joint committee meetings, attending another town's committee meetings, or assigning Committee members to specific towns to learn about their activities. KL reported that a similar exercise had been undertaken by the Committee in 2014.

Committee Member Updates & Correspondence

KL reported on a webinar she attended in which Sarah Nichols of National Resources Council of Maine described the proposed extended producer responsibility (EPR) legislation in Maine. She found the webinar to be very informative both about the content of the bill and the process followed to draft it and solicit stakeholder input. She suggested inviting Ms. Nichols to a future virtual Committee meeting. The timing of an invitation will be discussed at the September meeting.

Other Business

MF mentioned that he had the opportunity to meet incoming Director of Public Works, Jay Reynolds, during the hiring process, and that we are incredibly fortunate to have him. The Committee looks forward to meeting him and welcoming him at the September meeting. The Committee once again thanked RM for his many years of service to the Committee and to the Town, and wished him a healthy and happy retirement.

Citizens Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda

No members of the public joined the online meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, September 3, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Lavender Law