

## Sustainability Meeting 1/12/23

Those in attendance: Alison Anholt-White, Chair; Sue Henderson, Louisa Mackintosh, John Croft, Anna O'Leary, Chuck Dam, DPW; and Lisa Willwerth, Beverly Waste Reduction Committee (guest).

The meeting started at 7:30 PM

We welcomed John Croft, our newest member.

1. The minutes from 12/08/22 meeting were approved
2. Alison and Sue attended the Zoom meeting with the Select Board on 12/19/22 where John met to be approved as a new member. The purpose of meeting was to discuss with the Select Board the eventual implementation of a mandatory ban on compostables in the trash. Currently just under 40 percent of residents put out a green compost bin regularly. The Select Board proposed that more education would be helpful plus clearer instructions on the Black Earth website about what is permissible and procedure. Alison will work with Black Earth to refine composting instructions.
3. Sue presented a preliminary action plan she has started for long range planning purposes. The plan will include the areas we want to address and steps to take for reaching them plus a timeline. The Committee members all agreed that this is a great idea. We will work on this more at subsequent meetings. Community education is an important part of the process.
4. Alison has been working with Maddie Willwerth at the Manchester Library to arrange one or more events for educating the public about trash/recycling/composting etc. Chuck Dam is going to speak to the trash hauling company, Republic, who now owns JRM, to request that a representative speak at the library about proper procedures for recycling and trash disposal. We can have more than one educational event at the library and need ideas for others. The time frame is late April – around Earth Day.
5. We learned from Chuck Dam that the Town does not pick up trash from restaurants so they have to make their own arrangements. We know that the State law has changed with regard to the amount of food waste that can be put into the trash being cut in half. We don't know what restaurants pay for trash hauling vs. what it would cost for Black Earth to pick up the food waste separately. More knowledge about this would help us come up with a strategy for getting restaurants to agree to compost more or all of their food scraps and comply with the law. In Beverly there is a separate non-profit, Green Beverly, that works with restaurants but Manchester is so much smaller. A strategy for communicating with stores and restaurants will be in the long range plan.
6. Social media: Anna has agreed to help with this when she has some time. We like Sue's idea of having weekly tips in the Cricket and need people to come up with some of these.

Here are some things we learned from Chuck:

The Town would be willing to consider going from orange bags to a standardized bin system. This would eliminate a layer of bags and would also reduce the amount of trash spread by animals who break into bags, reducing the number of people needed on the collection truck as the bin would be picked up and emptied by a device on the truck.

The beaches and parks frequently have overflowing bins leading to animals and wind spreading the trash. Some cities and towns have adopted a carry in, carry out system where bins are just not put out. The committee will discuss the pros and cons of implementing this. Of course there will always be people who will litter but those who don't might be more conscious of the waste being generated and try to bring their own reusable containers in the future or go without or simply bring their trash home to be disposed of. Would this pass a vote in Manchester? The Town has also put water fountains in more places for refilling personal water bottles. We think that more of those would help reduce the need for buying drinks in disposable cups.

Now that Republic owns our trash hauler, we will probably be moving to digital accounts and better education around the proper ways to dispose of recycling to better insure that it makes it into recycling instead of the incinerator.

Wheelabrator, who owns the incinerator, is the only show in town and can name its price. The costs have been rising steeply and may get to a point where it's just too expensive. All the more reason for us to start now in changing residents' habits around recycling and composting.

Getting people to USE LESS is the main goal here. Disposing of waste responsibly is the second.

We learned that the Town of Manchester has been slowly implementing an electrification plan for vehicles. Town Hall now is heated with heat pumps which use much less energy than the old heating system did. They are looking into a geothermal option at the water processing plant. There is not enough land or roof tops for solar to be a good option. An electric vehicle charging infrastructure is also in the planning stages.

Action Plans:

Ideas for our long range plan – Sue is going to send out a cleaner copy of her template.

- List of topics to work on for our action plan

- Dates and topics for the library activities

- Social media ideas

- Tour the Republic facility and the Wheelabrator as well

- Talk to Crosbys and restaurants once we have more information on composting costs and availability

- Educate our family and friends

7. The meeting ended at 8:45 PM. Next meeting date 3/2/23 at 7:30 PM