

Sustainability Committee Minutes - 2/9/2021
Approved 3/11/2021

Alison Anholt-White, Leigh Scharfe, Dana Menon, Su Mittermaier, Carley Cook, Nadia Wetzler,
Allison Ste. Marie

Guest: Greg Federspiel, Town Administrator

1. Approval of Minutes from 1/14/21 - approved

2. Compost site relocation update from Greg Federspiel:
 - The town only received a proposal from Black Earth, other firms took out RFPs, but did not return them. Unfortunately Black Earth's proposal was incomplete, so Town had to reject what they submitted. The Town has contacted Black Earth about their interest in submitting a proposal for a new modified RFP, for a smaller facility, processing only 30 tons/week (which was the minimum capacity from the original RFP). Town would enter into a lease agreement and the winning vendor would construct their own facility (subject to Town's approval, but not according to Town-supplied design). First lease would be for a minimum of 20 years, and would be renewable.
 - Why didn't more companies submit proposals?
 - Speculatively: Could have been a timing issue? Perhaps they knew that Black Earth was going to be submitting, and assumed that Black Earth would put in the most competitive bid?
 - Original proposal had a very specific set of technical specifications - in part tied to the state grant that the town was going to use to help pay for this project. The state grant was awarded in 2017, the Town received a couple of extensions, but the State wasn't willing to provide any further extensions, so the Town lost the grant. The multiple delays were due to:
 - The original grant proposal was submitted without engineering or a thorough investigation of the property, so those had to be finished
 - State Requirement was to go through a state approval to re-use the land fill, which was a 1.5 year process.
 - The Town can re-apply for a grant in the future, if we want to expand the project up to the original size and plan. The scaled back project removes the monies from the State grant from the project budget.
 - State requires adding 18" to the cap to the existing land fill to use it as a compost site. The Town has money set aside for that effort.
 - Will have to go through the RFP process again. Pending approval from the Board of Selectmen, would release an RFP by March. Hopefully by April we will have selected a vendor, hopefully construction could begin in the summer. Goal would be to move everything off of the School Street site by the fall.

- The winning bid has to commit to continuing to accommodate all of Manchester's compost waste, regardless of their input from other municipalities/sources.
- The Town of Manchester would receive either a tipping fee for compost received from other towns, OR a reduction in cost to Manchester for compost collection/processing.
- The original composting structure was a fabric membrane roof. The Town had looked at solar panels on the landfill itself around the transfer station & composting facility, but the slope is too steep.
- Town's contract with Waste Management expires in June. Will most likely go out to bid in the next month, looking for some competition. Waste Management's prices have increased greatly. Other companies in the area include Casella and JRM.
 - Nadia Wetzler: JRM, is able to recycle more types of items than Waste Management. Alison Anholt-White: Casella also does. Our current contract with Waste Management makes it harder for us to save money with composting, because Waste Management charges a fixed fee for haulage, regardless of the weight of the bags. We would save on disposal, but not on haulage.
- Alison Anholt-White: can we find out what Waste Management does with the recyclables they collect? We have no idea what they're doing with it. Greg Federspiel: maybe as part of the RFP, we could request that information from applicants?
- We should look at making composting compulsory. The Sustainability Committee needs to take the lead in educating the public on why this is necessary and helpful.

3. Manchester LCD updates (Dana Menon)

- Manchester's water supply has a total capacity of about 300 million gallons per year, in the past few years we have only been using about 200 million gallons per year.
 - Alison Anholt-White: are there limitations on new sewer hook-ups? Greg: there is some capacity at the sewer treatment plan. Our plant has a capacity of 670,000 gals/day. We currently average 400-500,000 gallons/day. The town sewer line on School street stops south of Rte 128. The typical 3 bedroom house uses 330 gallons/day of water, With our 100,000 gallons of additional capacity, we can take on a lot of development.
 - Nadia Wetzler: calculations taking into account future drought conditions?
 - No net-gain to stormwater off the site, no net gain to nutrient loading off the site (fertilizer, waste water).

4. Zero Waste Challenge (Alison Anholt-White and Leigh Scharfe): We will be partnering with the Parks & Recreation Department. Hopefully it can be an annual event! It will be over the April vacation week to get families involved. The "winner" will be announced on

Earth Day. We will create laminated cards to go on people's doorways to show they are participating in the challenge.

5. Leigh Scharfe has created an Instagram account for the Sustainability Committee. "MBTS Sustainability Group". The Facebook page can be linked to the Instagram page. Town Communications director will also share our posts. Also put them up on "Manchester The What When Where How" Facebook page. Also NextDoor. Also, the elementary School (4&5th graders) will be re-starting the green team - opportunity to collaborate with them on future initiatives.
6. Next meeting date Thursday, March 11 at 8:00pm
7. Future meeting dates: March 11, April 8, and May 13, 8:00-9:00pm