



# Town of Harpswell

P.O. Box 39  
Harpswell, ME 04079

## Recycling Committee Minutes

April 17, 2024 at 4:00 pm

### Harpswell Town Office

Members: George Barker, Philip Conner, Gina Snyder, Jack Stokinger; Facility Manager: Chuck Perow; Selectboard liaison: David Chipman - absent Bob Eaton

Meeting called to order: 4:02 PM

Approval of Minutes from March 20, 2024 meeting with no changes unanimous

New Business Discussion:

#### A. Manager's Report

From the storms, facility will reduce price on brush as of April 23, from \$175 down to \$100/ton, for storm relief; there's also some impound to be handled.

Chipper budget will be exceeded this year.

Latest pricing: MSW is \$128 and recycle is \$146/ton (but recycling is down \$31/ton so far this year).

#### B. John Gilliam Day planning:

1. notification of stores for supplies & 2. distribution of supplies - If store isn't open, Dave can put a box on the stairs.

3. goodie bags – recreation committee and/or conservation are doing this.

4. trucks, trailers, and people for road pick up – Dave to take Chuck's trailer, and with George will do the Neck and west side of Mtn. Road; Phil has a friend with truck and will do Rt. 24 north and Mountain Road to Town Office, and Cundy's Road; Gina (and maybe her husband) can do Rt. 24 south of Mountain Rd. (Orr's and Bailey Islands).

5. no late access to recycling center – closes at 4PM.

Also, Dave checks around on Sunday to see if anything missed.

Timing: Pizza 1:30 at Grange then pick up. Transfer station open to 4.

Discussed: in future will need more help with pick up e.g., the other committees. Asked if recreation had someone with a pickup who could help, but the response came back negative.

NOTE: Shoreline clean up same day, coordinating has been difficult, potential for issues at the transfer station.

C. Review current version of Comprehensive Plan re: Recycling.

See Comprehensive Plan on Town website pages 232-235 plus review other sections – TBD: Timing is uncertain as of now. Still need to check on references.

D. Schedule of tour of recycling in Auburn. Currently, there's no account manager, when an account manager has been hired, Chuck will be able to schedule with them (they are willing to offer a tour with their representative when they have one for Harpswell's contract.)

E. Recycling Dilemma: see: <https://plasticmakers.org/pm-home/>

Good letter from Chuck, detailed response from Representative Pingree, but not particularly up to date. E.g., the referenced bill appeared to be languishing.

Dave can send the letter also to Senators King and Collins.

It does seem as though improving the results and decreasing the costs of recycling would take a federal response. But states run the solid waste programs. Lack of market continues to be the issue.

F. Purpose of this committee – report the bad news? There's a limit to what can be done at local level. Recycling is mandated, we have a three-year contract, as the contract rolls out we can assess viability. Committee can evaluate it as the contract comes to term.

Option of waste-to-energy (WTE), used to be landfill and WTE with higher price per ton. Waste management was \$82/ton for landfill; Casella was \$120 for the MSW to go to the WTE plant, however, PERC has been diverting from WTE. So the trucks pick up and we don't control where it goes.

It's not just per ton that affects whether the contract will be more or less cost-effective: there's the size and cost of dumpsters (which affects the number of trucks and how much trucking and how far the waste is hauled); what they do and don't accept (s.a. tires); where they take it.

Casella says for each 10 tons of MSW, they send 10 tons of MSW to PERC, not necessarily the load from Harpswell (all local loads are dumped in West Bath and repackaged into semi trucks). (If diverted from PERC, goes to Norridgewok (Juniper Ridge)). It appears that may be no advantage to having the contract specify PERC.

Some residents use haulers that are not coming to the transfer station. These haulers don't generally recycle. If they do come to the transfer station, there are rules in place for local waste haulers to recycle.

Mission statement included coordinating, partly due to the concept of having a green program.

Concept proposed as discussions have been ongoing on upgrading Town Facilities in general. Set up a 'Consortium of committees': including Energy Tech; Recycling; Emergency – e.g., a representative from each committee to coordinate the 'campus'. For example, a transformer on the property so that the three-phase can be used in multiple buildings. This could lead to a

campus power grid - for example solar on the roof of the transfer station and a couple of pedestal installations. This might be sufficient to run the transfer facility.

Suggestion: with the next phase of upgrades on the calendar, organize to produce a video of before and after Capital improvements at the A. Dennis Moore building, like what Jack did previously regarding the planned improvements.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:15 PM

Next meeting of this committee is May 15, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted

Philip Conner