

Beverly Waste Reduction Committee
MINUTES: Monthly Meeting, Thursday, April 1, 2021
6:30 PM, virtual

CITY OF BEVERLY
RECEIVED AND RECORDED
CITY CLERKS OFFICE
2021 JUL -6 A 7:55

CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Higgins (Chair), Sandy Burgess, Nancy Dillon, Joyce Herman, Toni Musante (joined after vote on minutes), John Swain, Lisa Willwerth

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: none

INVITED PARTICIPANTS AND GUESTS: Stephanie Bilotti, Gail Garron Bernard, Mary Barthelmes, Amy Henderson

Housekeeping

Committee Chair Higgins opened the meeting, and reminded members about protocol for remotely conducted meetings.

Minutes

February and March 2021 minutes were presented for review and consideration.

Dillon moved to accept the February and March minutes as presented; Willwerth seconded. The motion carried (6-0).

Update from the Mayor's Office

Stephanie Bilotti provided an update on numerous items from the Mayor's office:

- **Recycling Audit.** The City conducted a recycling audit with JRM on 3/24/21 at JRM's GreenWorks recycling facility. It was attended by representatives of the Mayor's office, Engineering, Purchasing and DEP. JRM tipped a load on the floor from the prior day (Tuesday route in downtown Beverly). It was visually inspected, and then a large representative sample was collected, weighed and sorted for contamination. The sample size was 800 pounds, and 200 pounds of contamination was identified (25%). Contamination included a window (glass in wooden frame), which should not have been picked up by JRM. The Committee discussed the importance that JRM not pick up materials that are clearly contaminated and that don't belong in curbside recycling. Other contamination included bagged recyclables, boxes with Styrofoam/packing materials, plastic cups with lids/straws and containing liquid, film plastic (including Amazon mailers), food-contaminated containers, and other items that are not suitable for curbside recycling. There were numerous items that are questionable; specifically, #3 - #7 plastics, which should have been accepted if clean and if a bottle, jar, jug or tub (MADEP's standard for recycling, which all the MRFs have accepted). Next steps include factoring in contamination rates,

and measurement of those rates, for a new contract as well as clear education regarding recycling. Stephanie offered to share the City's notes from the audit.

- **Enforcement Coordinator.** The City has been discussing options for an enforcement coordinator, potentially using RDP grant funds for this position. This position could be integrated with expanded outreach and education, possibly including MADEP's Recycling IQ kit, a program that provides literature and other educational resources and tools. The enforcement coordinator could potentially manage the waste/recycling contract, including holding the vendor accountable for contract terms and conditions.
- **Composting.** The City remains interested in expanding composting. As part of contract negotiations with JRM, the City has asked JRM to outline their capabilities for city-wide curbside collection of food waste. This may be a program that is initiated in the future (perhaps year 2 or 3 of the new contract). The Committee advised that the details of the program are critical, including where the food waste would be delivered for processing and conditions that may be imposed by that facility regarding the allowance for non-food compostable items and limitations on contamination. Stephanie noted that Standley Street will not be an allowable location for food waste composting.
- **Carry-in/Carry-out.** The City is continuing to coordinate with Ellis Square Friends (ESF) for waste disposal associated with to-go meals for the homeless population. As previously discussed, the removal of barrels from public locations has impacted ESF's operations. The City and ESF are collaboratively gathering information and assessing whether the situation will resolve itself as COVID restrictions are lifted. ESF had previously conducted a near-zero waste operation, and has a strong desire to return to that model when possible.

Musante raised a concern about Dane Street Beach. She observed an excessive amount of litter and asked if barrels will be put back. Stephanie responded that the City has had preliminary discussions about initiating a strong carry-in/carry-out campaign focused on increased education, possibly including the assistance of park rangers. Discussions are ongoing about best practices for Dane Street Beach.

- **Meeting with the Mayor's Office.** Martha is working on scheduling a meeting with the Mayor and his staff as well as the chair of the Waste Reduction Committee to further address waste and recycling plans and proposed activities.
- **In-Person Meetings.** As of now, in-person meetings are still subject to gathering restrictions. While in-person meetings are not prohibited, COVID restrictions need to be considered when hosting a meeting that must allow for participation by the public. Stephanie noted that the Middle School has the capability of a hybrid meeting – the Committee could meet in person with the public participating via a zoom link. City Hall does not have this capability.

The Committee thanked Stephanie for this detailed update as well as the City's hard work. We are pleased with the direction the City is heading and welcome the increased resources focused on waste reduction, recycling, and composting.

Earth Day Events and Composting Initiatives

Amy Henderson, a Beverly resident and representative of the local chapter of Mothers Out Front (MOF), provided information on upcoming Earth Month events. Specifically, she has received approval to place an informational table at Aubuchon Hardware in Beverly for the two weekends surrounding Earth Day (April 17, 18, 24 and 25) from approximately 11 AM until 1 PM. The objective is to provide information on curbside and backyard composting. MOF would also like to accept signatures on a petition requesting cities provide drop-off composting locations for residents that for whatever reason cannot participate in a curbside or backyard program. Amy is requesting the assistance of volunteers for the tabling events. The Committee agreed to send out an email to our volunteer database to help identify volunteers. The Committee discussed literature resources for purposes of the tabling, including existing resources available from MADEP.

Lisa Willwerth participated in a meeting with a Beverly volunteer committee working to line up and advertise Earth Month events. The group is planning a series of “Bev Talks” that will air on Bev CAM. Lisa agreed to do a brief talk on our Committee, what we do, and our priorities and objectives for more sustainable waste management practices. Sue Higgins will work with Lisa to compile appropriate information to support the talk.

Old Business and Miscellaneous Items

Lisa Willwerth provided a brief update on Resilient Together. The consultants are working on putting details together regarding goals and action items.

Upcoming Events

- April 20, 2021 – MADEP webinar on composting
- April 24, 2021 – Household hazardous waste collection event (BHS, 8-12)

Other Updates and Discussion Items by Committee Members

Due to schedule conflicts, the May meeting will be cancelled unless priority agenda items are identified.

There was a brief discussion about the potential for a Styrofoam collection event. This will be put on a future agenda for further consideration.

Higgins is continuing to work to secure a clerk that can record the minutes for the Waste Reduction Committee.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.