

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Recycling Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2018

Present: Chair, Kara Lavender Law (KL), Matthew Faulkner (MF), Jennifer MacDonald (JM), Aubrey Miller (AM), Tim Trachimowicz (TT) and Chelsea Torrey (CT)

Absent: Nicole Boucher (NB)

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

Public/Guests: Dr. Donna Wolfrom, Superintendent of Schools, Cape Elizabeth

Call to Order: Kara Lavender Law (KL) Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Approval of August 9, 2018 Draft Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved (4 Yes, 0 No)

Citizen Opportunity for Public Comment Not On the Agenda

Visit by Donna Wolfrom, Superintendent of Schools: Discussion of Collaboration and Outreach in Cape Elizabeth Schools

KL provided some background on the Committee and previous engagement with the schools for the Superintendent's benefit, such as assisting Pond Cove students sort their lunch waste, outreach to the janitorial staff, assistance in drafting a proposal to **ecomaine** for new signage and waste bins for the PC/MS cafetorium, and reaching out to the high school environmental club and to Cathy Stankard about assisting with science curriculum. Dr. Wolfrom reported that she assisted Pond Cove students at lunch during the first week of school and was impressed with their knowledge of proper waste sorting. There was discussion about proposed improvements to waste handling (post-collection), such as a compactor for recycling (suggested by Perry Schwarz at a previous meeting) to reduce reliance on plastic bags to transfer contents from bins to the collection container.

Continued Discussion of Contamination in Town Hall Recycling Containers

KL reported that she contacted Erik Street, Yarmouth's Director of Public Works, to ask about the success of signage in reducing contamination in the town's unmanned 24/7 single-stream recycling containers. He reported that it was difficult to measure progress, but that representatives of **ecomaine** spent half a day at the site to engage with users. JM will contact Katrina at **ecomaine** to inquire about a similar program at the Silver Bullets. KL contacted Lissa Bitterman at **ecomaine** to ask for a spreadsheet of contamination data for Cape Elizabeth, for the Committee to better track trends and for use in outreach efforts. She also passed on the Committee's suggestions for larger lettering ("Recycling Only") and large graphical signs ("Don't bag recyclables") on the containers, but she had not yet received a response. TT had already pulled contamination data from **ecomaine's** emailed reports and computed estimates of potential fees for contamination reported in recent months (~\$1000/month). He suggested paying someone to monitor the Silver Bullets periodically, such as a peak times, or in random checks. The Committee also discussed engaging local groups involved in public service to monitor and record data at the Silver Bullets (e.g., # of plastic bags) and to engage with users.

Webpage and Communication Update

NB worked with the Town's webmaster (Wendy Derzawiec) to update the "Silver Bullets" page on the "Cape Recycles" section of the website to address some of the most common contamination items observed. She has also continued to submit posts for the Town's Facebook page. The "Do Not Bag Recyclables" sign has been designed and is ready to be printed for display on sandwich boards at the drop-off lanes at the Recycling Center.

Continued Discussion of Collaboration & Outreach with Pond Cove School

KL reported that Pond Cove Principal Jason Manjourides would appreciate Committee volunteers to help students sort their lunch waste anytime. KL will set up a schedule for the week of Sept 10. KL also reported that Volunteer Coordinator, John Holdridge, accepted the offer for Committee members to help train regular lunchtime volunteers in proper sorting. Once he has a group identified, he will reach out to KL to set up the training. KL emailed Tania Ferranta, a high school teacher who successfully set up food waste collection in South Portland schools, and invited her to join a Committee meeting to share lessons learned. Tania cannot attend a meeting but will talk with KL by phone. AM reported that Maine DEP has published school curriculum materials on waste and recycling for middle and high school students. MF will reach out to Cathy Stankard to discuss incorporation of these materials, and the idea to set up a yearly field trip to **ecomaine** for all students in one of the middle school grades. CT will draft an announcement about the upcoming **ecomaine** Open House and send to Superintendent Wolfrom for email distribution.

Committee Member Updates & Correspondence

KL reported that she replied by email to a resident who had contacted councilor Jessica Sullivan with concerns about contamination in the Silver Bullets. KL also contacted a resident who had asked the Committee about vetting private haulers to ensure recyclables were being properly handled, to inform him that private haulers are not allowed to dump MSW at the Recycling Center, so vetting is not possible. The resident reported that he had started using the **ecomaine** blue bin to collect recyclables and dump them himself into the Silver Bullets. KL suggested that the Town look into subsidizing blue bins, since residents seem to want them. CT reported that they cost \$7 each; KL will discuss the idea with RM. TT reported that at a soccer game at Hannaford Field, the snack shack was in total compliance with the packaging ordinances, using no PS foam and not handing out plastic bags.

Other Business

A reminder that Home Composting 101 will be held at Community Services on Oct. 1 at 6pm. NB will attend as the Committee representative. The Committee plans to create a scarecrow for the PCPA Scarecrow contest, using reclaimed and recyclable materials. CT noted materials in the wood collection at the Recycling Center that could potentially be used as the posts for all entries; she will discuss feasibility with RM. The Committee thanked Dr. Wolfrom for attending the meeting during the busy first week of school, and for her positive response to their ideas.

Citizen Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 11, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kara L. Law