

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

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

Absent: Aubrey Miller (AM) and Nicole Boucher (NB)

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

Public/Guests: Jeremy Gabrielson, Town Councilor-Elect

Call to Order: Kara Lavender Law (KL) Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Approval of November 1, 2018 Draft Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved (5 Yes, 0 No).

Citizen Opportunity for Public Comment Not On the Agenda

Mr. Gabrielson, who will begin his first term as a Town Councilor on December 10, explained that he has been attending meetings of each town committee. The committee introduced themselves to Mr. Gabrielson and provided an overview of 2018 committee goals and accomplishments.

Committee Member Updates & Correspondence

KL reported that she sent a follow-up email to Katrina Vanhuizen at **ecomaine** to inquire about the purchase of household recycling containers, updating the signage on the “Silver Bullets”, and having **ecomaine** staff engage with users of the Silver Bullets behind Town Hall to educate them about recycling contamination. Ms. Vanhuizen responded immediately in support of all three requests. RM will ask his staff to pick up 25 household recycling containers to be sold by the Town at a subsidized cost of \$5 each. Weather-dependent, **ecomaine** will expedite sticker application on Town Hall Silver Bullets and will provide community engagement staff either in late fall or next spring.

MF reported that he reached out to Tania Ferrante at South Portland High School to arrange for a visit to observe the cafeteria waste sorting and recycling procedures that she, together with Brett Kennedy (new Head Custodian at Cape Elizabeth schools), put into place.

Update on Contamination Data for Recycling Containers

TT reported that he had not received new data from RM prior to the meeting, but that he would continue to update the contamination tracking document as new data become available. It was suggested that it might be more efficient for TT to receive data directly from **ecomaine**, but that we should discuss this further with RM.

Webpage and Communication Update

NB was unable to attend the meeting, but it was noted that the new Cape Elizabeth Recycling Facebook page is being regularly updated with new posts by NB, and that the page is growing in reach, with 121 people “liking” the page, and 126 people “following” the page. KL mentioned that she passed on information to NB from the Recycling Partnership, an organization providing new communication and outreach materials, to help create informative posts.

Update of Communication, Collaboration & Outreach with CE Schools

KL and MF reported on a productive meeting they had at Pond Cove School with Principal Jason Manjourides and Head Custodian Brett Kennedy. The group discussed suggestions to improve student traffic flow during waste sorting in the cafeteria, as well as engaging middle or high school students in a program to begin

weighing collected waste, recycling and compost. Mr. Manjourides had already broached the idea of engaging older students with Volunteer Coordinator John Holdridge. Data collection would be in preparation for changes in waste sorting to start tentatively after the February school break, in which yellow bins, previously purchased using grant funds from **ecomaine**, will be placed separate from all other waste containers to collect only empty drink cartons for recycling. The bins would have new signage, potentially designed by students, and would be accompanied by the liquids bucket with strainers to capture straws. It was suggested that perhaps the Pond Cove E-Team (teacher Tom Charltray) could make a short video about the importance of keeping straws out of the carton recycling, and that green “chain links” could be used to mark progress and improvements in recycling collection over time, as a motivational tool for the students. Mr. Manjourides emphasized that if the change is made to only collect drink cartons for recycling, that we must also educate students about why they are no longer sorting other types of recyclables at school (even if they recycle them at home). KL agreed to discuss the current Town waste collection contracts with RM, including whether or not We Compost It weighs material collected only from the schools. KL will also ask RM if the committee budget can support the purchase of two spring scales for waste measurement at Pond Cove.

TT reported on the minutes from the first school Needs Assessment Committee meeting, held on November 28. It appeared there was much discussion about the deficiencies in the Pond Cove/Middle School cafetorium, and a general understanding of the need to make substantial improvements to this space.

CT reported that **ecomaine** has been doing waste audits at regional schools and posting videos, and that perhaps this would be something to consider for Pond Cove.

Other Business

There was a general discussion of potential committee goals to consider for 2019, including an initiative to reduce single-use (disposable) food service items, in favor of reusable. Also suggested was changing school cafeteria straws from plastic to paper, which could be composted along with the straw wrapper. Other ideas included working to minimize school cafeteria food waste. KL had learned from Mr. Manjourides that a group of parent volunteers discussed setting up a collection and donation program after seeing how much unopened food (e.g., drink cartons, cheese sticks, bags of dried fruit) was being thrown away in the cafeteria each day. The group discussed working with sports booster clubs to institute collection of returnables via Clynk, and ways to engage new Town residents about current waste and recycling programs, such as by creating an information packet that is handed out whenever someone acquires a Recycling Center car sticker. The committee wrapped up a productive year, and looks forward to continuing their work in 2019.

Citizen Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 3, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara Lavender Law