

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Recycling Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2017

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

Absent: None

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

Public: Tony Owens, 19 Sea View Avenue, Cape Elizabeth

Call to Order: Kara Lavender Law (KL) Chair, called the meeting to order @ 7:03 PM.

Approval of October 5, 2017 & November 2, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The October 5, 2017 minutes were approved (6 Yes, 0 No) and the November 2, 2017 minutes were approved (7 Yes, 0 No)

Citizen Opportunity for Public Comment Not On the Agenda

Tony Owens, a Cape Elizabeth resident asked to address the Committee regarding food waste. He stated he is on the board of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM), who's efforts include raising awareness about reducing food waste. He is an acquaintance of Ryan Parker, who is the Sustainable Maine Policy Advocate for the NRCM. He would like to connect Ryan with the community to possibly make a presentation to school administrators or the community as a whole.

Tony's hope is to raise awareness about the amount of food waste in the school lunch programs. He spoke about "Food Sharing" programs, which allows food to be shared in compliance with USDA regulations. He asked the Committee for guidance on how best to proceed to get messaging out in the community.

KL provided an overview of the Committee's efforts over the past year in the schools with administrators in the schools. Based on their presence in the PC/MS cafeteria, there is a sense that some food is being wasted and that there's room for improvements.

MF suggested Mr. Owens meet with the school's Nutritionist to discuss the issue, but said there may be administrative obstacles to change behavior with the lunch protocols. It was also suggested that it might be wise to delay the conversation until after a new Superintendent is appointed.

CT suggested having a Pond Cove Parents Association event, such as a "movie night" to get messaging out.

MF thought it might be helpful to have Tony attend a future school-related meetings.

To wrap up the dialogue, Tony will contact Ryan Parker and have him connect with KL, since she has established contacts at the appropriate leadership at the schools.

Committee Member Updates & Correspondence

No updates or correspondence was noted

Update on Retail Packaging Ordinance: Approval, Outreach Planning and ecomaine webinar – Kara

KL reported that the retail packaging ordinance was approved by the TC at their meeting on November 13th. The ordinance took effect December 1st and RM reported that local businesses have been notified of the bag fee. Both he and TT noted on a recent visit that the IGA has signs up at each register to advise customers of the new bag fee.

There was a general discussion about how to assist businesses with signage advising of the new requirements. AM offered to research images on-line that could be used on signs. These would be distributed to businesses.

There was a discussion about having some reusable bags made up or distributing some of the remaining “Chico” bags to the public. KL offered to look into the cost of reusable bags and report back to the Committee.

There was a general discussion about the prohibition of polystyrene packing and containers, which was also passed by the Town Council. It was suggested that some outreach should be done to school booster clubs, the Little League, food catering companies to advise them of the prohibition. RM will contact the School’s Food Service Director (Peter Esposito) to advise him also.

Update on Town Food Waste Collection – Bob Malley

RM reported that Matt Sturgis is going to reach out to Kevin Roche at **ecomaine** to inquire if We Compost It! could deliver an equivalent amount of food waste that that would be collected at the Recycling Center in a year. It is not feasible to bring totes over to **ecomaine** to have them weighed and dumped. **ecomaine** may also require the material to be in bags. An option under consideration is to have We Compost It! take the material directly to their facility and not involve **ecomaine** in the program. RM will report back to the Committee in January with further information.

Update on Outreach & Collaboration with Cape Elizabeth Schools

KL submitted a grant application to **ecomaine** for new bins and signage at the PC/MS cafeteria. TT has been working on signs for the existing disposal bins at the PC/MS cafeteria. This led to a general discussion about current practices in the cafeteria related to the cleaning of trays by the students. MF asked about the schedule of food waste collection at the schools. It appears that We Compost It! is now picking up on Fridays. RM to confirm. There was a general consensus to reach back out to the Principal, Asst. Principal and Curriculum Director after the first of the year. The hope would be to continue the dialog about best practices in the food service program.

Other Business

KL asked about the informational signs that were suggested in the area of the “Silver Bullets” behind Town Hall. RM will follow up on that previous request. MF suggested that the Recycling Center staff could assist with education at the compactors. RM stated that has been on-going since the upgrade project was completed, with an emphasis on keeping plastic bags out of the “Blue” recycling compactors. KL encouraged those present to think about potential goals for 2018. That will be a task to work on after the first of the year. JM will be ordering tee-shirts for the Committee to wear at outreach events. KL thanked TF for his service to the Committee during his term, which ends in December. TF returned the praise and stated he enjoyed his time on the Committee.

Citizen Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda

There was no public comment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, January 4, 2018

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert Malley, Director of Public Works

DRAFT