

## DRAFT MINUTES, 6/10/21 Solid Waste Committee

The Solid Waste Committee met via electronic connection on June 10, 2021.

Committee members in attendance were Jack Cushman, Andy Scherer and Alex Thorngren. Claudette Brochu represented the Select Board and Linda Cook attended as a member of the public.

As there are only three members who make up the quorum for all business there are no roll call votes — any decisions are unanimous and by consensus.

Covid remote meeting notice was read and previous minutes approved.

Old business: the committee reviewed continuing steps to gather data about costs and revenues at the transfer station; and to reach out to public works staff and workers at the transfer station to solicit their views of best practices.

Scherer will be arranging a meeting during working hours at the transfer station.

Committee discussed importance of working with town manager and public works staff in developing any proposals. Brochu noted that committee reports directly to Select Board.

Committee discussed beginnings of a program of regular information sessions with the public to educate them on best practices. The first of these may be with Ham Gillette of the Upper Valley waste management district on composting, our suggestion is to hold this in September and follow up with a series of monthly presentations on “themes” such as battery recycling etc.

Brochu said she had reached out to a shredding services contractor for information on holding a shredding event at the transfer station, the cost would be \$1000 for a four hour event and \$1600 for an eight hour event. She recommended asking public works if there is money in their budget to support such an event, and the committee will look into it.

Brochu also provided the committee information and contacts on a Thetford program for recycling of clothing and other fabrics.

The committee discussed the prospects for returning the transfer station to pre-Covid operations. Members of the public have asked about traffic patterns, masking requirements, and the reopening of the used book shed and the re-usables table sometimes known as the Plowshare table where members of the public drop off reusable items and others pick them up free of charge.

Brochu said the issue was discussed at the Select Board meeting on 6/9 and that decisions might come soon.

The group discussed whether any changes to the sharing table operations might be introduced at the time of reopening or subsequently.

We believe transfer station operators consider the sharing table an ineffective operation because many items left there are not appropriate for reuse, are not wanted by anyone on the day that they are left, or otherwise become “orphan” items that need disposal. There is no mechanism for advertising what’s available or holding onto it as inventory. Therefore it is up to the workers to dispose of these items at the end of the day, People leaving this kind of item would be charged to put them in a dumpster for disposal. Therefore the table ends up being both an additional cost for the transfer station and a loss of revenue, with limited recycling value from reuse. On the other hand, the operation discourages waste and encourages reduced consumption.

The committee invites public comment and will consider these issues further.

There were no additional public comments.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Jack Cushman, chair.