



Recycling Committee Minutes

February 17, 2022

6:30pm – Regular Meeting

Via Zoom

Recycling Committee members in attendance: Rolf Olsen, Cathy Gosselin, Karen Lockwood, Susan Accardi, Grace Leavitt, Rep. Jessica Fay

Recycling Committee members absent: none

Town Staff in attendance:

Don Willard – Town Manager

Nathan White – Public Works Director

1) **Called to order** at 6:30pm by Chair Leavitt.

2) **Approval of Minutes**

a) November 18, 2021

Motion to approve as presented by Ms Accardi. Seconded by Mrs. Gosselin.

Unanimously approved.

3) **New Business**

a) Presentation by Tyler Frank, Garbage to Garden, founder. The company was founded in 2012 by Tyler starting out with 12 buckets. The company currently employs 30 people and hauls 25 tons of organic waste per day. The company was set up on a subscription model and is moving towards a municipal contract model. He is currently working on obtaining a municipal contract with the city of Boston, MA. The company has a 94% customer retention rate; the other 6% typically move away out of the service area.

The three main benefits of their services are the households, the town, and the environment. Their collection services offered are curbside, centralized drop-off, or commercial. Curbside is the most convenient for the residents and most effective for maximizing diversion of waste from the waste stream. In addition to a bucket, a jar is provided to collect fats, oils, and grease, which is then turned into soap to wash the buckets. Residents will receive free compost upon request. The town will receive compost at a reduced rate. Currently do not have any customers in Raymond.

Centralized drop-off locations. There is a fee to the town and typically results in a

breakeven situation for the town by removing the organic waste from the Municipal Waste Stream. Yard Waste is not part of the program; only food scraps are allowed. They have never had to close a drop-off site due to contamination. There is some small amount that are tolerable. The cost for the collection and processing of one ton of trash is \$41. The cost for the collection and processing of one ton of food waste is approximately \$50.

Garbage to Garden already has a commercial route in North Windham, servicing St. Joseph's College for many years. North Windham does not have a centralized drop off location, but they have expressed interest in doing that and curbside pickup.

They service approximately 40-50 schools. Partnerships with the towns make it easier to expand the base of customers. For Raymond, centralized drop-offs and commercial routes would be a great place to start. If enough interest, curbside pick up could become an option.

Garbage to Garden has been doing presentations and working with the schools to educate children about the programs.

- b) Presentation by Casella; Chris McHale, General Manager. Market Area Manager for a couple of years. Been with Casella for 15 years in various locations throughout New England mostly in Maine. Raymond has a contract that runs until 2026 with them to collect recyclables and they are the operator of the facility in Lewiston that processes that material. They have ideas on how Raymond can improve the recycling rate by basically educational efforts and community outreach. Erin Banfield, Manager of Municipal spoke about the history of Casella beginning in 1977 as a family business in Rutland, VT and the services provided, such as curb-side pick-ups, transfer stations, hard to recycle items such as baled cardboard, and public/private partnerships with landfill operations. Today, the company employs nearly 3,000 people and is a publicly traded company.

The Raymond recycle rate is currently at about 17%. The reformation of the committee is based on that and with a goal of the town improving the rate and reducing the waste going into the MWS. One of the ways Raymond can improve the rate is by not limiting the amount of material that can go in a bin. The residents need larger bins to put the recycle material in. Casella does not have a firm number on the amount of contamination in the recycled material. Casella is interested in discussing ways that contamination can be monitored. Some of the ideas are:

Put Oops stickers on the residents' bins, circulate posters of what is recyclable, investigate problem areas on the routes, post documents and videos on the town website, present education materials in the schools, offer tours at the MERF facility in Lewiston.

Because of labor shortages and safety issues, Casella is interested in purchasing an automated truck to service the town of Raymond along with other municipalities. This move would require the purchase of the larger containers with the lift capacity needed by the truck. These containers cost about \$50-\$55 each. The cost to the town of Raymond would be approximately \$125,000 for 2300 households. The options are for the town to pay up front and then pass the cost on to the resident or a cost-share option. Casella estimates that they are about a year out from purchasing the automated truck.

Dave McNally, the Ops Manager for Casella in Mechanic Falls spoke. He said that most of the contamination comes from dumpster areas, and that seasonal residents are not sorting. Most residents are conscientious. A poster needs to be put out on acceptable plastics. Packaging makes a difference. Black plastic and the clamshell containers need to go.

Erin offered some possible solutions; Casella has a handout booklet that could be mailed out to residents, passed out to students in schools, or picked up at the library. There is a cost associated with this. Casella can provide a collection poster to residents. They can make a video of the MERF facility in Charlestown, MA and put it on the town's website. Erin asked about the possibility of the school kids doing an Earth Day event. Erin also suggested that third grade kids submit something and make a calendar customized for Raymond. Include the concepts of Garbage to Garden in everything too.

Chris would like to do an audit now to create a baseline for future results to be measured against. He said an audit needs to be done especially in the summer with the seasonal residents.

- c) Mrs. Gosselin had a conflict and could not attend the Recycling 101 class on "There Is No Such Thing as Away" offered by Windham Raymond Adult Education. Chair Leavitt reported on the class and will send out the PowerPoint presentation to the committee members.

Committee Member Assignments:

- Chair Leavitt will send out the Windham Raymond Adult Ed PowerPoint presentation to the committee members.
- Chair Leavitt and Ms Accardi will discuss with RSU #14 Superintendent Howell the possibility of introducing Environmental Information surrounding recycling into the schools.
- Mrs. Gosselin, Town Manager Willard, and Public Works Director White offered to work on developing a poster to present at the next meeting, prior to Earth Day on April 22nd.
- All members work on developing recommendations to the Select Board.

Next Meeting:

- March 24th, 2022

4) **Public Comment** – none

5) Recycling Committee Comment

none

6) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:03 pm by Mrs. Gosselin. Seconded by Ms Accardi.

Unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Lockwood, Secretary