

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
September 6, 2007

Present: Gogarten (chair), Smith, Knox, Ames, Hultgren (staff), Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

The minutes of the May 9, 2007 were unanimously approved.

Walton reported that the electronics recycling bill has been passed into law. In August there was a signing ceremony at the Glastonbury transfer station. The recycling coordinators of Middletown and Branford put a tremendous amount of time into making this a workable producer-responsibility law. The law goes into effect in 2009. The bottle bill expansion made its way through several legislative committees but died at the very end of the session.

Walton stated that the paint swap, held on May 12, 2007, had poor participation. It was a beautiful day, yet very few people came to drop-off paint and even fewer individuals came to "shop" for paint. It was recommended that we do not offer a one-day paint swap next year.

The committee was updated on the school composting program. A two-compartment compost bin, constructed by Public Works staff, has been placed at Southeast School. It will be modified as needed. Then, as time allows, two modified bins will be built for Vinton and Goodwin Elementary Schools. The food waste from these schools is not going to Southeast, since the composter is too small. Instead Walton and another pig farmer are taking it. The Middle School is handling just their food waste this year.

Fee increases begin October 1, 2007. Staff will send out a press release, update the website, brochures and transfer station poster.

As a follow-up to previous discussions, Walton contacted a Rhode Island resource recovery authority official who uses the same electronics vendor that the Mansfield maintenance department uses. Walton was told that the vendor ships components overseas, except for the leaded glass monitors. They are handled in the U.S. However, the question about where electronics are going to is still largely unanswered since the person she spoke to was not willing to give her specific information.

Walton stated that both Big Y and A&P are selling their reusable bags for 99 cents. A&P moved the bags to a visible location by the cash registers and will continue to carry them. Big Y has an employee group that is working on how to promote the use of the bags. The Mansfield Clean Energy Team has canvas bags to sell. Walton shared a life

cycle analysis comparing plastic, paper and different types of reusable bags to each other. The least energy and resource intensive bag to use is a plastic woven reusable bag. This information will be posted in the bill inserts.

Walton stated that Willimantic Waste Paper is finding used motor oil, collected curbside in Mansfield, occasionally mixed with cans and bottles. Very little waste motor oil is collected with curbside service, but apparently Mansfield's loads of bottles and cans has been contaminated with motor oil more than a couple of times. Staff will send a letter to Mayo & Sons, the single-family contractor, stating the policy of keeping waste motor oil in a separate compartment on the recycling truck and follow-up with Willimantic Waste Paper in a couple of months to see if there is an improvement.

Walton reported that the Festival on the Green is scheduled for Sunday, Sept 16, 2007. Like last year, the food vendors will be supplied with compostable food service. The goal is to reduce the waste stream by 90%. Last year's waste reduction was 85%. Starbucks will be participating as a low-waste vendor by giving out their cold beverages in recyclable containers. Dunkin Donuts will be there but is not participating in the low-waste effort. Volunteers are lined up for set-up, spot inspections and clean-up. This year volunteers will not be monitoring the waste stations continually.

Walton stated that more and more 45 gallon trashcans are being used for the one-can, standard and maxi services. She estimated that 4 or 5 hours a month are spent negotiating conflicts with residents who are over their service level because they are using 45 gallon cans. The committee recommended notifying the trash collector to accept all the trash in 45 gallon cans but state in the bill inserts that only 35 gallon trash cans are acceptable.

It was reported that Willimantic Waste Paper is looking into expanding their plastics recycling to include #3 through #7 as early as next year. Staff will send a letter to them stating that the Town would be very interested in moving forward with this expansion as soon as possible.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2007. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton
Recycling/Refuse Coordinator

Cc: Lon R. Hultgren, Director of Public Works, Members, file, Town Manager, Town Clerk