

TOWN OF MANSFIELD  
Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting  
November 13, 2014

Present: Knox, Ames, Coughlin, Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by chair Knox.

The September 11, 2014 meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Ames/Coughlin.

Walton reported that the recycling and composting rate for Celebrate Mansfield Festival was 53% this year, markedly lower than previous Festivals. Since it was the first year in the new Storrs downtown, it was expected to drop. Discussion of ways to boost next year's diversion included covering the permanent trash and recycle containers to encourage use of the waste stations set up for the festival, having compost information at food vendor booths, using two-sided waste station signs, having an assistant work with Walton all day and enlisting volunteer help earlier to ensure coverage at all the waste stations. Knox will contact the girl scouts to see if they will participate next year. EcoHouse will be contacted in the spring,

The new multi-family contract begins December 2014. The committee viewed a prototype of the sticker that will be placed on the recycle dumpsters. Several larger apartments are switching from recycle carts to the recycle dumpsters. The managers of Clubhouse, Knollwood and Maplewood Apartments are not willing to switch, even though it would save them money. Walton will inspect apartments once the new set-up begins. The committee discussed the idea of providing recycle collection bags for the apartments that have switched to recycle dumpsters. It was advised to pilot the use of recycle bags at one apartment.

The committee discussed the practice of charging for additional recycle containers for single-family service. A year ago there were six households with additional containers and now there are 13 households. These households are charged \$5/month for the additional 65 gallon container (Willimantic Waste Paper is paid \$4.95 per container each month). It was suggested to continue charging and re-evaluate it in another year. The single-family recycle rate continues to stay at 38%. A few residents have asked for recycle service only. After discussion, the committee advised against providing just recycling collection service.

Walton stated that the school compost piles are being actively managed this school year. She goes to the schools each week to mix, cover, and turn the piles. In addition, the E.O. Smith STARR program has involved five 18 to 21 year old students in helping with pile management. The custodians received in-service training on how to compost in October.

Walton stated that the September 27, 2014 Repair Café was successful and another one is being planned for the winter. The group is looking for electricians to help with electrical repairs.

The topics for the spring organic land care workshops will be composting, organic lawn care, rain gardens/rain harvesting, edible landscapes and permaculture. Discussion of invasive plants should be incorporated into the workshop content. Walton will begin lining up dates and speakers.

A draft "near zero waste" policy was reviewed. Walton was asked to research the statistical claims in the policy and bring this information to the next meeting. "Near zero" was a preferred term over "zero waste" or "low waste".

A resident requested that the Town send a letter to UConn President Herbst about the increase in roadside litter when the University is in session. Members were agreeable to sending a letter from the committee but thought it should be sent in the beginning of the school year. The letter should reference the UConn code of conduct. Knox volunteered to draft a letter for committee review.

For calendar year 2015, the meetings will be held on the first Thursdays of the month (January is the exception). The next meeting will be January 8, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton  
Recycling/Refuse Coordinator