

Recycling Incentive Grant Committee Minutes May 14, 2014

Present: Louis Russo, Bob Gentile, Thomas Gotowka, Leslie O'Connor, Janice Ehlemeyer, First Selectwoman Bonnie Reemsnyder, Selectwoman Mary Jo Nosal, J Ranelli, Sam Fuchs, Cathy Frank
Absent: Jim Ward, Gary Yuknat, Brenda Moriarty, Paul Gleason
Guest: Winston Averill, Recycling Coordinator from SCRRA

Selectwoman Mary Jo Nosal called the meeting to order at 4:30pm. She thanked Bob Gentile for arranging for Winston Averill, Recycling Coordinator from SCRRA, to address the committee.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Janice Ehlemeyer, seconded by Louis Russo, to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2014 meeting. Motion passed.

Updates

Gary Yuknat has reported to Mary Jo that counters are being installed on trash/recycling trucks. He will be able to proceed with collecting data on the # of households participating in the Town's curbside collection program

The deadline for Old Lyme Events (town newsletter) is this Friday. Mary Jo suggests an update from the Recycling Incentive Committee.

Mary Jo also suggested the committee may want to use Survey Monkey as a way to provide information to and solicit information from the community.

Bonnie suggested using Reverse 911 calling in a selected area to let people know about the survey. Automatic calls would be made with a recorded message alerting residents to the survey and requesting their assistance. The intent is two-fold: to inform about the survey and to test our Reverse 911 calling system.

Other ways to notify residents about a survey were also mentioned. Janice has seen business cards imprinted with the survey link and a QR code so people using smart phones can easily access the survey.

Mary Jo asked that members of the committee volunteer to present Committee updates to the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, and other appropriate groups. She has asked to update the Economic Development Commission at their next meeting.

The main message is that the Recycling Committee is still investigating costs and various options and is focusing on educating the community about recycling issues.

Mary Jo will forward to DSM Environmental a question about trash as a utility; specifically, can we determine which Connecticut towns using UBP or PAYT also invoice residents for another utility (e.g. sewers)?

Mary Jo introduced Mr. Winston Averill – Recycling Coordinator from SCRRRA (<http://scrrra.org/>), who discussed his experiences with municipal trash and recycling programs in both southeastern and northeastern Connecticut.

Many towns have UBP programs but there is no uniformity within the state or region with regard to programs or costs.

PAYT bag or sticker programs are currently in place in Killingly, Putnam, Sterling and Voluntown. East Lyme had a bag program for 6-7 years but then abandoned the program. The reason is uncertain. Coventry recently eliminated its use of PAYT bags.

In towns that use bags, the bags are available at the Transfer Stations, Town Halls and some retail outlets, but the towns manage the bag purchase & delivery.

Committee questioned the possibility of a bag manufacturer dealing directly with retail outlets – Winston does not believe that would work well. The town needs to set the per bag cost based on its program costs, and the town has to be sure residents have ready access so that they will use the bag program.

Mansfield has a program that offers 5 different size carts and users are billed monthly depending on the size they select.

Committee said the administrative costs of running a UBP or PAYT program in Old Lyme would have to be estimated in order to determine the cost-effectiveness. Would we realize enough savings from decreased trash costs to cover those additional program costs?

Committee looked at DSM's projected revenue to the town under a bag program and questioned if the projections were realistic. Mary Jo said she believes the revenue projection is possible, although it would take several years to reach the projection.

The Town is about to sign a 4 year contract with Shoreline Sanitation for its curbside trash & recycling collection. Committee discussed developing a 4 year Recycling Incentive Program that could include a composting component.

Committee asked Winston about how enforcement is handled in other towns. He described scenarios in which certain neighborhoods are targeted: workers are assigned to flip open their carts and note any problems (eg trash in recycling or vice versa). Door hangers or other notices can be used to point out specific issues.

He suggested that Gary Yuknat can provide information on a neighborhood or area that needs enforcement and that would be a good place to start.

He is not aware of any Connecticut towns using PAYT bags in conjunction with automated pick up.

Asked about increasing recycling pick up to every week, Winston suggested the Town instead consider providing an additional recycling container at no charge to those using the program effectively. He spoke about rewarding those who recycle effectively with congratulatory letters, and communicating with those who are not with non-judgmental information (e.g. "we noticed that you are placing some recyclable items in with your trash. We know it can sometimes be confusing. Here is a list.....").

Committee members suggested a field trip to Middletown RI, which we understand is using bags in conjunction with automated carts, according to DSM.

Other suggestions:

Providing laminated Trash/Recycling lists in blue or green to match the carts

Mar Jo asked that members email comments and edits on the Recycling newsletter update to her by Friday noon. The survey will be announced in the newsletter.

The Survey will need to be completed and available by mid-June when the newsletter is mailed to residents.

Next Recycling Incentive Meeting: Tuesday, May 27 4:30pm

Thomas suggested that subsequent Committee minutes restate the Committee charge:

A Committee was formed by the BOS on 3-17-14 for the purpose of evaluating a grant opportunity. The purpose of the DEEP's Recycling Incentive Grants is "to incentivize municipalities and regions to modernize pricing systems and adopt unit-based pricing (UPB) for solid waste."

Adjournment

A motion was made by Louis Russo, seconded by Thomas Gotowka, to adjourn at 6:20pm.

Cathy Frank
5/16/14