

1 Solid Waste Committee Meeting – Final Minutes

2 Monday January 8, 2024,

3 Library Meeting House

4 Members Present

5 Rich Marcou (Chair), Steve Rasche, Kent Ruesswick (BOS rep) LeeAnn Mackey, Emily Burr; Greg
6 Heath (later)

7 Others Present

8 Roy Plisko (observing) and David Bowles (Manager Transfer Station)

9 Agenda

10 **1. Call to order**

11 Rich Marcou called the meeting to order at 3.32 pm.

12 **2. Previous Minutes from December 11, 2023**

13 Kent Ruesswick moved the Minutes and Lee Ann Mackey seconded. There being no discussion,
14 all members present voted in favor (except Greg Heath who was not yet present).

15 **3. David Bowles – Manager of Transfer Station**

16 Rich introduced David Bowles, known to members for long time service at the Transfer Station.
17 Rich explained that the committee had some input with the town administration over the
18 running of the Transfer Station and they had decided to talk to all the staff as they sought ideas
19 and opinions about future developments. The next day the Secretary will be interviewing the 2
20 other staff.

21 LeeAnn mentioned that she has had positive feedback from town residents about the posts that
22 Dave has put on the Town's Facebook Page, with updates to 'Lords and Ladies' from 'The Realm'
23 and progress of the 'Dumplings'.

24 Dave noted that the Tuesday hours are not listed on the town website on the Transfer Station
25 page. **Secretary to ask the town administrative assistant to add that to the web listings.**
26 Tuesday opening hours are listed correctly in the church/town newsletter.

27 Rich went through the list of questions that the Committee had worked on. The same list was
28 shared with the other two employees the next day. For their responses see attached addendum.
29 Members discussed all the questions with Dave, and he responded:

- 30 • 1. Complaints received? Yes – about quality of green bags rather than price, which has
31 not changed since 2002 – the bags are obtained from a firm in Shirely, MA, and they
32 must produce them using the materials they have on hand – generally the staff are
33 receiving more compliments than complaints – compliments about the cleanliness and
34 smoothness of the operations – he wondered about periodic reminders in the Town

35 Email about their opening hours. Rich complimented “A job well done! The Transfer
36 Station is the cleanest it’s been in a long time.”
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- 38 • 2. Avoiding Cash Transactions – Dave thought that the poor internet at the Transfer
39 Station might make credit/debit cards hard to use, and he wondered about the viability
40 of punch cards, given they would have to be sold in other locations and which would
41 have to be accountable, he thought it would increase their workload rather than
42 decrease it, and it would be harder for his co-workers. Currently they keep a notepad in
43 the office and if any of them sell bags it is recorded in that notebook and then recorded
44 in the official receipt book. Members explained they were only suggesting the idea, the
45 finer details were not worked out, but the cards would represent denominations of
46 payment that made sense in terms of services at the Transfer Station. Dave thought it
47 would still increase his work in terms of the accountability of what fees are paid for what
48 services (ex. For green bags versus disposal of a fridge) and he thought that it was
49 common in small towns to have to use cash payments.
- 50 • 3. What would you like to change? With things running pretty smoothly at present, Dave
51 pointed to the need for improved lighting because the LED lighting is not deep, so lights
52 on the wall pointing to the floor space would be helpful – and also the emergency back
53 up lighting is inadequate with nothing for the office and baling room at present – maybe
54 a back up solar system could help as well in power outages – and outside lighting for
55 when they work in the dark (quite a lot of the year) is urgently needed as what they
56 have just does not work. It is not clear who the electrician would be to repair or replace
57 that at the Transfer Station. **The Committee understood they should work on lighting**
58 **issues.**
- 59 • 4. What not to change? Dave argued that the current traffic flow should not be changed
60 because he and the staff can monitor better at this present pace. He would not want
61 vehicles coming through any faster and 2 lanes at once would be dangerous for
62 pedestrians. Dave was not enthusiastic about the idea of redesigning the site, since he
63 needs to protect spaces for roll out boxes of metals and crushed glass. He did not think
64 the opening hours needed to be increased further now that Tuesday was established
65 and increased mid-week drop offs. He agreed that there can be backups if people come
66 with a large truck load of unsorted stuff.
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- 68 • 5. Machines or equipment to make work easier? Dave said a replacement Glass Crusher
69 would be good and another Baler for plastics. Dave raised the point about electricity
70 capacity at the Transfer Station as something to be resolved before an electrical
71 compactor should be purchased. They ship out the waste twice a week because there
72 are DES deadlines about household waste staying on site and that is working now. It was
73 also stated that there is no plan to work on a new Transfer Station or a new site as it has
74 to be as central as possible to be fair to all town residents.
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- 6. The new Baler? Dave said it is not working well as the heater does not work – they have to put a space heater by the pump because the in-tank-heater is not working, and that heater has to be monitored for safety’s sake. **Kent – to look into issue of baler heater not working properly – warranty claim or electrical issue?** They have used it to make 7 bales of plastic and 21 bales of mixed paper and a dozen or so cardboard bales. Maybe in the future a 3-pole building with a cover could be helpful for storage purposes.
 - 7. Condensed location and layout? Dave did not think there was much that could be done with the layout as the footprint is limited, and they share the area with the Highway Dept, and already have piles of different things round the site. Small changes would include improved lighting. They do not want people driving any faster in the Transfer Station and they prefer to leave the ground as bumpy as it is to slow people down.
 - 8. Fees – are the fees easy to understand? A) Dave was shown the draft that LeeAnn had made versus the typed list of fees on the website now and he agreed it would be clearer, with the caveat that if you increase signage people will sometimes read even less. B) Construction Waste – weight or cubic feet? Dave thought cubic footage works well and if they had to weigh things it would take time, to weigh once with the waste and then again without. Dave also thought a weigh scale would need to be placed somewhere, and it would involve expenses for maintenance and certification annually. He uses a tape measure now and does not argue about ‘air bubbles’. Andres is also able to make estimates based on cubic footage. It would take them more time to use the scale. They do ask people where the construction waste has come from, to avoid other towns coming to dump waste.
 - 9. Diesel Fueled Compactor – Dave reiterated that electric compacting would be beneficial if the electricity supply was improved, and they could manage dumping the waste within the DES time limits for holding household waste. Maybe it would be good for a new Transfer Station some time in the future.
 - Green Bags – Dave thought that system is working – and is enforced for the most part – he is mandated by the state to open a bag to see what is in it – Emily described seeing someone throw black bags in – Dave said people will come and pay for throwing other bags – they pay \$2 for white kitchen bags and \$4 for black bags and \$5 for a larger composting bag.
 - 11. Finding new staff? Dave says no one wants to work nowadays. He pointed out that certification is just a one-day training, and the town pays for it. He was doubtful about volunteers being involved due to liability issues, and the fact they would not be certified. He conceded that volunteers could be useful for monitoring what people throw into the trailers and that is important otherwise they have to sort it all afterwards.

- 120 • 12. Hours of opening? Dave thought they were working well.
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122 • 13. Composting on a town-wide basis? Dave thought it would need drop boxes, require
123 monitoring to see what is being thrown in; people might not separate food from
124 packaging if their frozen food is bad, there could be wild animal issues, and of course it
125 would need more staff and also widespread public education.

126 Dave had brought information with him to share with the Committee, about costs and revenues
127 this past year.

128 **Items to be disposed that cost the Town**

- 129 • Household Waste, 398.5 ton shipped to the Incinerator
130 • Antifreeze, has to be shipped separately and is expensive to do, 100 gallons, cost
131 \$265.00
132 • Freon Units (ex fridges, ac units) – 122 units – cost \$976.00
133 • Used Motor Oil – 1 shipment sent to Clean Harbors, in Bow – 400 gallons – that is a cost.
134 But the 2nd shipment went to JD Auto Repair in Loudon for shop heat at no cost to town,
135 they have an EPA number on the furnace to document where it has gone
136 • Electronics – (small items like TVs) - 5275 pounds cost \$1275.00
137 • Fluorescent Light Fixtures – 946 units - \$2907.23 cost
138 • Glass, crushed – 2 loads – total of 70 ton -a cost
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140 **Items that revenue can be earned by being sold on by the Town**

- 141 • OCC – Old Corrugated Cardboard – 15 tons at \$82.5 per ton made \$247.10 per load -
142 \$862.34 income (a penalty had to be paid because they did not meet the ‘load weight’
143 of 45,000)
144 • Mixed Paper – 17.68 ton, at \$15 per ton – transport cost \$600 and revenue = \$334.80
145 (still cheaper than sending to Incinerator)
146 • Car batteries – 4593 pounds at 12c per pound - \$551.61 earned
147 • Aluminum Beverage Cans baled – 12,180 pounds at 40c per pound - revenue \$4872.00
148 • Nonferrous metals (ex. Copper, wire, brass etc – the nonmagnetic metals) 5540 pounds
149 at 30c per pound - \$1662.00 revenue (higher revenue due to not paying trucking nor roll
150 off box)
151 • Steel – scrap metal – 71,320 pounds at 30 c per pound – revenue \$3454.30
152 • Regular Tin Cans – 2.8125 tons at 88 c per ton – paid a surcharge for fuel (\$19.69) and
153 also trucking fee (\$202.42) so revenue was only \$25.59 – plans to change the trucking
154 arrangement in future to save money
155 • Plastics – 53 pallets - \$145.00 for small bales (a second baler to make larger bales could
156 earn more, as bigger bales are worth more)

157 Members thanked David Bowles for his time coming in to attend and discuss these issues with
158 him.

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160 **4. Draft report from Committee for Town Report and Town Meeting**

161 Members were asked to send thoughts to Rich so he could edit the draft he had shared from the
162 previous year.

163 **5. Adjournment**

164 Kent motioned to adjourn, and Lee Ann seconded. It was around 4.45 pm.

165 **Next meeting will be on Monday January 22, 3.30 pm, at the Library Meeting Room.**

166 **Action items:**

- 167 • **Secretary to interview TS employees**
- 168 • **Chair – Rich – to complete editing report for Annual Town Report – secretary to send**
- 169 **to Admin Asst in town office**
- 170 • **Kent to investigate the baler heater issue – warranty claim or electrical problem?**
- 171 • **Treasure House admin now with Steve Rasche**
- 172 • **Committee to think about Transfer Station lighting needs**

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174 **Addendum – Notes from Interviews with Transfer Station employees**

175 There was general consensus between the two employees, Andres and Caleb. Caleb said he
176 does not interact a lot with residents at this point. He is often in the baling room.

- 177 1. Complaints? No, not really – people can get impatient with waiting. They felt that they
178 heard people expressing appreciation more than complaining.
- 179 2. Cash? Dave deals with that.
- 180 3. Changes? Time-consuming work like sorting could be helped by a second baler that
181 works. Both men emphasized having a second baler. Caleb also thought punch cards
182 instead of cash transactions could save them time. Andres mentioned time they give to
183 elderly residents especially those who don't come regularly and bring a lot of stuff when
184 they do.
- 185 4. Not to change? Tuesdays! That has been a good improvement and people do come.
- 186 5. Machinery to improve things? Yes --- Second baler; new Glass Crushing Machine;
187 Replace lights outside so they can see in the dark and also emergency lights.
- 188 6. New baler? Works well when it works BUT not going as fast as it should, heater is not
189 working, they have to help it manually every few minutes.
- 190 7. Condensed site, change? No, they like the current site, and it works if things are working.
191 D) traffic flow? Worse after holidays – they work as a team to get people through.
- 192 8. A. Fees (and info generally) – use social media to get info out – and when people do try
193 to get away with not paying, they speak to them and remind them this is not covered by

194 their taxes – it would help to put it out in black and white so people cannot say they
195 don't know this is not covered by town taxes.

196 B. Construction waste, by weight or cubic foot? Keep it as it is, weighing on scale would
197 take time, they can eyeball the loads and really there are only a few people in town
198 who regularly come with construction or demo waste and they know them, but they
199 take longer when they do come compared to others.

200 9. Diesel Fueled Compactor? – would prefer a new version of the diesel rather than electric
201 compactor – what if power goes out? Not bothered by fumes at all, they don't notice them
202 and don't go inside it for very long anyway.

203 10. Green Bags? Is working pretty well – they know who the non-compliers are – they watch
204 what people do – they point out to people if they need reminding. Credit cards or other
205 systems would take more time to administer.

206 11. Staffing and Volunteers? No comment on why it is hard to recruit. Re Volunteers, it
207 wouldn't hurt to have maybe one or two – maybe one person for a couple hours in the
208 morning on Saturdays and one in the afternoon – the office is small though – and it depends
209 on who the volunteer is and how they would work with them – Saturdays are the busiest
210 day.

211 12. Hours at TS? Good – could use more on Wednesday, open an hour earlier at 3 pm;
212 maybe take one hour off Saturday, later in the day, in lieu of mid-week increase.

213 13. Composting? Not sure. Where would it all go – Andres saw it working elsewhere one
214 summer, it is much more work, but he saw people come to take fertilizer and use it.

215

216 Respectfully submitted,

217 Lois Scribner, secretary

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