

Lee Solid Waste Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2019 6:30pm
Lee Public Safety Complex

Members present: Amy Schmidt (chair), Dean Rubine (came late, left early), Randy Stevens, Toby Van Aken, Transfer Station Manager

Members absent: Arthur Bradbury

Public present: Big crowd today, maybe eight folks. Names of the public speakers noted below.
Special Guest John Watts from Mr. Fox Composting in South Berwick, ME

I Call to order

6:36 pm

II Guest Presentation, John Watts, Mr. Fox Composting

John bought Mr. Fox two years ago. Located in Maine as NH DES doesn't allow food waste to be processed in state.

Picks up compost for Oyster River, including Mast Way school.

Supplies countertop compost bins, \$2 per.

Private residential service costs \$16 for once per month pickup, \$30/month for biweekly pickup.

Municipal customers like us would pay per \$14 per bin, which holds 200 to 400 pounds of food waste, \$70-\$140 per ton. Eliot ME sends six to eight bins (per week?), Portsmouth two to three bins

Why? Concerns about environmental impact of landfills. Landfills produce methane. This way the compost is sold wholesale and returned to the soil. Also cost savings.

Mr. Fox: vertically integrated, collection and processing of food waste, compost sales all in one business

Pilot program in Lee? Would have to buy some bins, buy bags for residents, Mr. Fox supplies. Bags certified biodegradable. Best: Distribute home compost bins with bags. \$2/bin purchased.

Meat and bones acceptable.

Discussion: Dean: we currently pay \$80/ton tipping + hauling on municipal solid waste. If we actually managed to fill the bins to capacity the best we could hope for is \$80/ton from Mr. Fox. We'd pay twice that if we hit the 200 pounds per bin figure. There's no way this could be a cost saver in Lee.

III Public Comments

Re Composting:

Jim Stevens: suggests weighing what's getting composted to keep track of savings/costs.

Charlie McClain: Methane reduced 20x through composting.

Re Pay to Throw

Charlie McClain: Can we use any bag? (Probably not) Most towns don't love their Pay Per Bag program.
Ryan Couture: Is this more about environmentalism or cost reduction?
Hugh: A fee per bag penalizes those who already are very mindful of their trash
Cynthia McClain: Asks how much of the reduction in MSW is due to people deciding to use private haulers.
Ryan Couture: Pay per bag is an unfair burden people with children in diapers
Cynthia McClain: Part of being a community is paying for someone else that needs to be a heavy user.
(Observation: Public participants are there to speak against pay per bag. No one speaks in favor of the idea.)

Re Swap Shop

Lynn Kuegel (swap shop representative): It will take about a year to get have the bugs out and have the new swap shop up and figure out what the new swap shop is. It's a different place with a different system. Open for part of the day most Saturdays. The lack of volunteers is still a problem.

Several people speak in favor the swap shop.

Hugh (last name?): From his observations about \$120K a year in the amount of goods change hands. He suggests a subcommittee for the swap shop be formed.

Randy suggests a shipping container for large furniture. That idea is well received.

Ryan Couture: Make short videos on NeighborLee or link to town webpage to demonstrate and publicize swap shop policies and recycling rules.

IV Other Business

Committee lacked a quorum after Dean had to leave, tabled other business, adjourned.

V Next Meeting date and topics for Agenda.

To be determined.

Respectfully submitted, Dean Rubine