

West Boylston Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT)
First Meeting - Minutes
October 19, 2007
Town Hall

PRESENT: Leon Gaumond – Town Administrator, John Westerling – DPW Director, Dana Karlsson, Judy Doherty, Julianne DeRivera, Elise Wellington.

At 10:05 a.m. Town Administrator Gaumond opened the first meeting of the town's new Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT). One additional member, Craig Gonyea, will be joining the committee, but he has not yet been sworn in. Mr. Gaumond explained that in his former job as Town Administrator of East Longmeadow, he was also the town's Recycling Coordinator. In that capacity, he created a SWAT that was very effective in upping the town's recycling rate when the town switched from a tax base supported trash system to a user supported system. West Boylston needs to spend more time on solid waste issues and this committee was created for that purpose. In particular, the goal for the committee is to increase the town's recycling rate and to save the town money. Mr. Gaumond said that our committee has carte blanche and he will act as our facilitator, as will Mr. Westerling.

Mr. Westerling noted that the town's yearly recycling rate is usually 18 – 20 % and that there is room for improvement here. He explained that the more the town recycles, the less money it needs to spend on "tipping fees." Tipping fees are what the town pays for each ton of trash that it dumps into the Waste Management Landfill in Fitchburg or Wheelabrator incinerator. The town's tipping fee is now \$77/ton (a significant increase from 2005, when its tipping fee was \$60.47/ton). The Town Administrator has given Mr. Westerling a goal this year of upping the town's recycling rate 3% so that the town's recycling rate would be at least 21% – 23%. Several mechanisms for achieving this increase were mentioned, such as adoption of a mandatory recycling bylaw, a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) system like Worcester's, and Holden's new system where all recyclables are mixed together in a large 95 gallon container, while non-recyclable trash goes into a smaller 65 gallon container that residents must pay \$25 per month for.

Mr. Gaumond noted that the town is in the second year of a 10-year solid waste contract. Each additional ton of trash that is recycled saves the town \$77 in tipping fees.

The need for additional recycling bins was mentioned and Mr. Westerling said that residents can obtain recycling stickers from his office that can be affixed to other kinds of containers, such as plastic laundry baskets, that can be used for recyclables. Only 200 stickers are left, though. Ms. Doherty asked about recycling grants and educational efforts. Mr. Westerling said that the town has two DEP videos on recycling and composting that could be shown more on the local T.V. channel and publicized. Mr. Gaumond suggested a program on recycling for the "Fireside Chat" program on the local TV station. Ms. DeRivera mentioned that she has already been involved with the town's schools. At both the High School and the Elementary School, will be placing the town's

trash collector (Allied Waste) to place recycling bins for cans and bottles. She has also had them placed at the Goodale Park athletic fields.

Mr. Gaumont gave members copies the state DEP “Municipal Reduction Outreach Toolkit,” and Ms. Wellington shared copies of the research she did in 2005 on how PAYT would affect the town. Copies of the October 2006 National Geographic article “The Pollution Within” were distributed by Ms. DeRivera, who said that her interest in recycling stems from her concern about the many potentially hazardous chemicals humans are now being exposed to, which might be minimized if we recycled more. Members agreed to read these materials before their **next meeting, which will take place on Friday, October 26th, at 9 a.m. at Town Hall**. It was agreed that the committee will decide upon its goals at its next meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Ms. Wellington nominated Ms. Doherty as Chairman, Ms. DeRivera seconded the motion, and she was unanimously elected. Ms. DeRivera nominated Ms. Karlsson as Clerk, Ms. Wellington seconded the motion, and she was unanimously elected.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Submitted by,

Elise Wellington
Clerk Pro Tem