

West Boylston Solid Waste Advisory Team
Minutes
April 22, 2011
Town Hall Offices, 127 Hartwell Street

Members Present: Chair Julianne DeRivera, Mary Ambrose, Judy Doherty, Elise Wellington

Members Not Present: Craig Gonyea

Others Present: Diana Engelbart, Nancy Lucier

Chair Julianne DeRivera opened the Solid Waste Advisory Team (SWAT) meeting at 11 a.m. She welcomed new member Mary Ambrose, who said she had just been sworn in by the Town Clerk.

Earth Day Clean-up: DeRivera reported that she had been working with Rebecca Baronoski at the DCR on organizing an Earth Day Clean-up for West Boylston. It will be held Saturday, April 23rd, with volunteers meeting at the DCR at 10 AM to pick up collection bags, gloves, etc. Regular litter will be put in different bags from recyclables. The DCR will keep track of the areas being covered and the litter pick-up will end at noon, when volunteers can either return their bags to the DCR or leave them on the street that they cleaned up. She passed out relevant flyers, which had gone out to the elementary school and to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. She had not received any calls from people wanting to volunteer, but all SWAT members present offered to help. She was thanked for the many hours she had spent on this.

Elise Wellington had earlier suggested that volunteers keep a survey of the trash they pick up, noting who the major litter culprits are and whether the drink containers in litter are covered by the bottle bill, so that we can come up with some solutions to the litter problem. Nancy Lucier felt that having no lid on our recycling containers is causing recyclables to blow out and become litter. She urged that the town offer recycling containers with lids. Wellington mentioned that the big bins with lids that Holden uses are very expensive and in some towns the elderly complain that they are too big and heavy for them to use. It was decided that SWAT should discuss lidded containers with the new DPW Director once he/she is hired. (West Boylston DPW Director John Westerling has resigned and taken a new job as DPW Director in Hopkinton.) Lucier also suggested that the town get rid of the trash containers at the Rail Trail since the DPW has not been picking up this trash and trash is littered around the container. Also, the recycling container there has disappeared. She said that many state parks now have a "carry-in, carry-out" policy for visitors and offer NO trash receptacles, which amazingly seems to work. She felt the town should adopt this policy at the Rail Trail to reduce litter. Since there is no signage re trash at the Rail Trail, Mary Ambrose offered to look into having a sign contest in the schools to come up with a good "Carry-in, Carry-out" sign. It was suggested that she call third grade teacher Paula Menendez re this. Judy Doherty will research the cost of making a permanent sign. Lucier also suggested that the town have large fines for littering and that they be enforced!

Recycling Education: Ambrose agreed to look into doing more in this area with the elementary school. Diana Engelbart asked if we tie recycling education in with education about the water cycle and water quality. Doherty replied that the DCR has staff that can do programs on water quality in the schools and they are looking for teachers who want their programs. She also mentioned the DEP's "Green Team" as a resource.

Composting: Engelbart asked if the town does kitchen waste composting and was told that only the schools do this. Doherty said it would be great if Engelbart would do a Ch. 11 program on kitchen waste composting, showing how it will benefit your garden. Engelbart agreed to think about this. She is turning her 1/3 acre lot into a backyard farm with chickens.

January 7, 2011 SWAT Meeting: Since only DeRivera and Doherty showed up for this meeting, there was not a quorum and minutes were therefore not taken. DeRivera reported that they discussed the need for an additional SWAT member and also decided to attend the 2/2/11 Selectmen's meeting at which Finance Director Mike Daley would be reporting on the town's first year of Pay-As-You-Throw. At this meeting, PAYT got glowing reports. In fact, it has been so successful that the town won two awards recently from the state DEP: one for achieving an over 30% recycling rate and a second for the huge reduction in trash tonnage that has occurred. On January 7th, SWAT also decided to put out six Community TV bulletins to encourage residents to recycle and to compost, which Doherty and DeRivera wrote. These bulletins appeared twice a month for three months.

Town of West Boylston 2011 Handbook for Elected and Appointed Officials: DeRivera attended the Town Administrator's workshop at which this new handbook, which covers the open meeting law, the public records law, etc. was discussed. She distributed copies of this 69-page document to SWAT members present. They signed the acknowledgement papers that came with it.

Report to May Town Meeting: Wellington suggested that SWAT give a report to the May 16th Town Meeting as it has done in the past. Mike Daley's recent report to the Selectmen could be used for this, but we also need to include the amount of bag fee revenue that the town has received to show the net fiscal impact PAYT has had on the town. It was mentioned that right now this revenue is being kept in a solid waste revolving fund, but the possibility of taking it out of that fund and putting it into the town's General Fund may come up.

Next Meeting: May 6, 2011, 9 - 10 AM at Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.

Submitted by,
Elise Wellington
Solid Waste Advisory Team Member