

**Regional Composting Working Group Minutes
Durham Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room
Monday October 25, 2021 4:15 pm**

Members present:

Maggie Morrison (ORCSD)
Dean Rubine (Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee)
Nell Neal (Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee)
Mary Caulfield (Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee)
Jenn Andrews (UNH Sustainability Institute)

Members absent:

Chuck Cox (Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee)
Chloe Gross (UNH Sustainability Institute)
Evy Ashburner (ORCSD)

Public Present: N/A

Call to order: 4:20pm

I. Approval of minutes from September 27, 2021

Nell moved to approve Sept 27 minutes, Dean 2nd. 5-0 approved unamended.

II. Public comment N/A

III. Updates

Jen: I want to share Abi Walton of Antioch's sustainability work on behavioral change. I'll email.

A recording of a webinar offered by Dr. Abi Abrash Walton, Co-Director, Conservation Psychology Institute Antioch University New England: "Facilitating Pro-Environmental Behavior: How to Put the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change into Action"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7xtmuWcQOA>

And a journal article related to behavior change as well:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237013263_Encouraging_pro-environmental_behaviour_the_role_of_sustainability-focused_events

Dean: I have two pieces of correspondence related to the new municipal compost rules. One from Mike Nork of NHDES informing me that I will receive updates on the drafts when available, and another from

Senator Kwoka saying October 21 might be the date the rules become public. I've shared them with everyone and I'll include them in the minutes.

Subject: NH Composting Facility Regulations – Upcoming Rulemaking

From: Nork, Michael <Michael.A.Nork@des.nh.gov>

Date: Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 1:57 PM

Hello Everyone,

You're receiving this message because of your prior involvement with NHDES' Composting Stakeholder Workgroup, or because you had otherwise expressed interest in composting in NH.

I'm writing to announce that NHDES is currently preparing to publish proposed revisions to the requirements for solid waste composting facilities. There will be opportunity for public comment (via public hearing and/or written comments), and we would welcome your feedback.

Once the official rulemaking notice has been published and a public hearing has been scheduled, I intend notify you all. For now, I just wanted to give you a heads-up, and potentially cull old/invalid emails from my list. Feel free to forward this message to others that may be interested in this rulemaking.

If you would like to be removed from this contact list, please just let me know.

Thank you for your interest in advancing NH's capacity for organics diversion! This has been a much longer process than I think any of us would have preferred, but I am excited that we are making forward progress. Please stay tuned for more...

Best regards,

Mike

Michael Nork

Supervisor - Materials Management, Education & Planning Section

Solid Waste Management Bureau

NH Department of Environmental Services

(603) 271-2906

michael.nork@des.nh.gov

Letter from Sen. Kwoka, received 10/23/2021.



The Senate of the State of New Hampshire

107 North Main Street, Concord, N.H. 03301-4951

Dean Rubine
116 High Road,
Lee, NH 03861

Dean,

Thank you for bringing the delay of NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) issuing rules regarding the composting of meat and dairy to my attention. My office has reached out to DES once again for an update on these rules.

Sarah Yuhas Kirn, an administrator in the Waste Management Division at DES, informed my office that the process is moving forward. They are planning to present the draft initial proposal to the Waste Management Council at their October 21 meeting. Once they have presented the rules to the Council, they will be able to request a fiscal impact statement (FIS) from the Legislative Budget Assistant. After that, they will proceed with publishing a rulemaking notice, scheduling a public hearing, and following the prescribed rulemaking sequence, culminating with review by the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, which they believe will occur in early 2022.

Again, thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. I hope that this information is helpful to you. My office will reach out to DES once again in the beginning of 2022 for a further update on these rules. Please do not hesitate to reach out in the future on this issue or any other if I or my office can be of any assistance, or if there is anything further that my office can do in the meantime.

Rebecca Perkins Kwoka

Senate District 21

IV. Discussion on Recommendations

Maggie: Can we use Dean's discussion as a template to talk about?

Jenn: One thing that makes sense is the idea of a focus on preventing waste before it's discarded.

Jenn: The 1 pound per person food waste per day number includes waste not discarded from home. It includes pre consumer waste.

Dean: My calculation showed that it was a pretty large overestimate, though not totally out of the ballpark.

Nell: I agree that reducing waste is good. It's a whole other topic. Is it too wide? What if we cite the problem, give stats, and that's why it's even more important ... once you have educated there will.

Mary: The Compost Challenge was helpful because they're weighing everything

Nell: Numbers are dwindling, 4 new households, down from 16 then 6 previously.

Mary: Promote it through the fifth grade science class.

Nell: Some families joined because of the kids.

Maggie: Did we want to use Dean's report as a template?

Mary: Education, Initial Food Waste Reduction, Cost-Benefit Comparison, Awareness of Waste,

Add Plan: Garbage to Garden or Mr. Fox curbside pickup

Mary: Dean had the idea of neighborhood compost bins. Would they get contaminated?

Dean: The idea would be to assign responsibility to someone in the neighborhood.

Mary: Metal trash can, secure lid.

Dean: There were two ideas, one with the composting directly in neighborhood bins, one with municipal pickup.

Maggie: We have a hard time getting volunteers for anything these days unless it's mandated. I don't see it being sustainable as a neighborhood volunteer effort.

Mary: If we had one in our neighborhood I would aerate / turn the pile for faster composting.

Maggie: It's complicated to manage a pile.

Dean: The hope was residential-sized piles around town would avoid the complications of centralized operation or collection.

Jenn: Kingman Farm doesn't have the staff it needs to turn the pile.

Jenn: There's a problem with nitrogen pollution when the food waste doesn't break down properly.

Nell: I love the concept but it requires a neighborhood of people like us. I tried to collect cans for a year. After dropping off once or twice, neighbors stopped.

Mary: People have issues driving to the transfer station to compost. I like the idea of a collection can that a volunteer takes to the transfer station.

Nell: At the last IWMAC, DPW Director Rich looked at the possibility of a couple of collection places, by Sammy's for example, and have Mr. Fox pick up there.

Nell: Sam Hewitt said there's a place on Main St with green chairs (Juicery?) with food waste collection bins in the back.

Jenn: There's a national shortage of compostable containers.

Jenn: Multiple levels of aggregation seems more complicated than a discount rate for curbside pickup.

Mary: You get a less expensive rate and still a personal decision not as visible in the neighborhood. Let's get on the bandwagon. Many current Mr. Fox users are insensitive to price. Future ones won't be.

Nell: The town could pay for each resident.

Jenn: That's how the rest of the waste disposal works; the town pays for landfill, etc.

Mary: That should be a recommendation. Having an announcement. If you don't have a home base to do it, this is there.

Jenn: This feels like a dilution. Are we recommending one or four things? Are we recommending all of them?

Nell: Medford GtoG is the best way to go. "But why should I pay extra when I can just throw it in the trash?" likely.

Maggie: Doesn't the town pay in Medford?

Jenn: The first year the pilot is paid for. In subsequent years to reduce the cost it's subsidized. Consumer still has to pay something, make a personal choice about what's in it for me as the composter.

Nell: Say Durham had a contract with GtoG. It would be a particular day and people don't want to think about trash other than on their trash day.

Dean: So everybody has a different trash day in Durham? Nell: Yes

Nell: In 2024 there's a new truck in the budget. It will pick up a 95 gallon toter with no extra charge [to the resident]. If you have more trash than that you need another container. It forces people to limit how much trash per person. Unfortunately it won't happen until 2024. What happens to all the current containers then?

Mary: Just volume in toter, weight limit.

Maggie: How many rabbit holes must we go down? How do we make recommendations when we come up with reasons none of them work.

Nell: Our recommendations should be what we think is ideal. There's always a 1000 reasons why it won't work.

Nell: Curbside pickup for compost, GtoG. This is the best way forward for Durham.

Jenn: If that happens as a municipal service, where the town pays.

Nell: People put pizza boxes in the compost. We can't assume no contamination.

Maggie: I agree we should go with the ideal. It's not a solution for Lee. Are we doing these by group or for our specific entities?

Mary: Has to be by specific entities

Jenn: Education can be done jointly. Still a long-term facility down the road, still discussing curbside piece entity by entity.

Maggie: Our joint group should make a joint recommendation. Only one is education. Everything else is entity specific. Me: it is education. Consistent. Remember this is all of us.

Mary: Recommend education plus specific recommendations for Lee and Durham.

Maggie: IWMAC has recommendations, as does OR & UNH. As a group we decide. We would all benefit from education.

Dean: Though it's premature to have one yet, we can recommend each entity focus on what's right for them locally but all work toward a regional solution.

Jenn: We recommend continuing to talk and inform among the entities, to expand on educational pieces, UNH, maybe OR, involving students in actual work and education. E.g. Durham has a sustainability fellow working on climate stuff, UNH has zero waste interns, Chloe. How about a program where we task students to do a consistent outreach, a formal process.

Maggie: A sustainability fellow at ORCSD could put together an educational video, share with towns. Students produce those.

Nell: That's what IWMAC will do. If there's money: A major blitz on recycling. Can't enforce ordinance. Can't get new fancy trucks sooner. Major education blitz on recycling then compost.

Nell: We're still at the beginning. We decided behavior change is the best path. I was interested in the part of the Chloe report about that. To do something else we're butting heads against the town administration. Makes sense to do education.

Nell: At the last IWMAC meeting we decided to develop strategies for six months at a time. Education. I Attended NRRA conference. Goffstown launched a huge campaign -- bumper stickers, banners. Applied for \$300 from NH the Beautiful.

Nell: It takes \$10K for better signage at the transfer station. Todd says we could probably find more money for practical education.

Mary: If there was a student that would take on compost. Is anything going to be continuous? At town meeting, what's happening with trash in town is a major issue.

Nell: Build it up as a big education initiative, at end possible way to work out the goals.

Mary: Hopefully it would get more people involved.

Mary: How will the recommendations be presented?

Maggie: Good question.

Dean: Report to present to our higher-ups.

Maggie: Another waste audit is planned at Oyster River. See if GtoG is a financially viable option for Oyster river instead of Mr. Fox.

Jenn: To the question about Maggie's position: will there be someone taking over?

Maggie: I don't know

Jenn: How does this figure into the sustainability committee?

Maggie: We presented to the School board on Wednesday. Two top things: Waste audit, aggregate electric power. District just finished its sustainability management plan. Many layers. No next step. My position is in question. I'm turning it over to a new shift. Recommendations to be more curriculum based. Still operational.

Jenn: Understanding systems, understanding solutions, doing outreach, all very educational activities. Still room for internship capstone projects in the field. Sustainability is a dual major, with a capstone experience. One of those groups can create outreach materials. There's a sustainability intern for next summer. Maybe Rotary Club or other sponsor money. Frame it as an educational experience / student project.

Mary: Is there a way to post these things? Chloe's report is excellent. Does it belong on the Durham website? It's helpful to read.

Maggie: It's a paper, not a report.

Jenn: However the committee thinks. There's no reason it couldn't be public. It's a student paper, not the committee finding. Do we want to take pieces and reshape it into a public release?

Maggie: Mary's summary was excellent. See email from Mary Sept 28 10:32. Share with LSC. We can endorse that executive summary; that's our report. It links to Chloe's paper.

Mary: Let's get Chloe's permission.

Jenn: I can ask at our meeting tomorrow.

Mary: We need to decide what our recommendations are and how they will be communicated.

Dean: Each of us communicates back to our jurisdictions.

Jenn: Once we're clear we put it on a couple of slides.

Mary: At a council meeting.

Maggie: Whatever chain you have; it feels like due diligence, which is what it is.

Jenn: Meeting with Chloe tomorrow. She's reached out to GtoG. Arucycle has a similar curbside service, what do financials look like? Explore options. Prioritize one the next few weeks. Look at Dean's recs as a starting point. Send ideas around in advance. Come to the next meeting with all the pieces.

Jenn: Recommendations: Global & entity specify that you would want to put forward.

Nell: Mary please send your summary again. Mary: OK.

Maggie: Put together joining recommendations, specific recs needed. Recommendations in the form of bullet points. Send to

Mary to wordsmith.

V. Next meeting date:

Monday, November 8, 4:15 pm, Durham Town Hall

VI. New Business

VII. Adjourn

Adjourned: 5:25 pm

Respectively submitted,

Dean Rubine