



Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting
APPROVED Minutes
December 8, 2020 at 7:00PM
via Zoom
Meeting ID: 923-766-4832
Password: 136658
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9237664832>
Or Via Telephone
Call: 1-646-558-8656

I. Call to Order 7:04 pm

The chair read the COVID-19/Zoom Meeting statement pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order 12.

Members present: Paul Gasowski (chair), Jennifer Messeder, Erika Hunter, Chuck Cox, Dean Rubine

Members absent: N/A

Public Present:

Maggie Morrison, Sustainability Coordinator, Oyster River School District
Julie Kelly, Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee
Mary Caulfield, Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee
Jennifer Andrews, Project Director, UNH Sustainability Institute
Mike Nord, Permitting and Review, NHDES

II. Preliminary Actions

A. Introductions

We'll delay introductions until our guest from NHDES joins us. See **III A.**

B. Approval of Agenda

Dean: let's add minutes for approval 9/15/2020, 10/15/20

Chair: While we're waiting for our guests let's skip ahead. [Did III E, see below]

C. Approval of Minutes 9/15/2020, 10/15/2020, 11/10/2020

[Done toward the end of the meeting]

9/15/2020 Committee reviewed draft minutes, accepted proposed changes, fixed Agricycle spelling, made a few more edits.

Jen moved, Dean 2nd, roll call vote, 3-0-1, 9/15 minutes approved as amended. Erika abstains, Chuck temporarily not present.

10/15, 11/10 approvals tabled to next meeting.

III. Discussion Items/Updates

A. Dean: Municipal Composting Q&A with Michael Nork, NHDES

Mr. Nork provided documents we placed in <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1bcZyFNZ8WNzMrTLrv9DTwZJNg5XRbk7B>.

Chair: Thanks Mike Nork for NHDES for joining us tonight and thanks Dean and Maggie Morrison for making this happen. Mike, thanks also for the really interesting documents you sent over. I'll turn it over to Dean.

Dean: I thought everybody should introduce themselves before introducing Mike.

I'm **Dean Rubine** from the Lee Sustainability Committee and I've been wondering about municipal composting for quite a while now.

Maggie Morrison, I'm the sustainability coordinator for the Oyster River School District. We are weighing and measuring compost on the district level and we are interested in doing composting initiatives at the high school this year.

I'm **Jennifer Andrews**, Project Director, UNH Sustainability Institute, a lot of work I do involves zero waste. We do composting at UNH and we're looking to expand. I'm excited about this conversation.

I'm **Jen Messeder**, a member of the LSC. I've been doing articles about recycling and the transfer station. Part of that is getting the food waste out of the landfill stream. I was excited we got the Mr. Fox pilot going and I'm excited to see where we can go from here.

Erika Hunter, new committee member, just listening and happy to be here.

Chuck Cox, from Tuckaway Farm, an organic farm in Lee. We do composting, everything gets recycled through the livestock: chicken, cattle, sheep... We compost animals that have to be put down, sheep and horses. It can be done and is recommended by Cornell and a fellow in Maine ...

(Mike Nork: That's Mark Ting). I've been wondering why you can't compost meat according to state regulations, it doesn't make sense.

Julie Kelly, part of the Integrated Waste Management Committee in Durham and I work with Maggie on district sustainability. Composting has become one of our top goals in Durham. We're very excited for this conversation too.

Mary Caulfield. I am on the IWMC committee with Julie and also have worked with Maggie on sustainability. We'd love to bring compost to Durham so what Lee is doing would be very informative. Thanks Paul for the backup information about Kingman Farm.

I'm **Paul Gasowski**, chair of the Lee Sustainability Committee. I have roots at Oyster River High School where I taught for many years. I was a founding member of the Oyster River Sustainability Committee. I'm also a member of the Lee Ag Commission.

Dean: Our featured guest tonight is **Michael Nork**, who's responsible for permitting and design review at NHDES Solid Waste Management Bureau. Were a municipality or group of municipalities to apply to compost at the transfer station, it would be Mr. Nork reviewing the application.

Everybody here knows Kingman Farm, where UNH's composting operation has been going since the 1990s. They actually had a business where they would sell the compost. That was all shut down by DES in 2011 because they were running afoul of the meat and dairy disposal rules. In 2015 our Senator Fuller-Clarke sponsored a law that was enacted that encouraged NHDES to rewrite these rules. In fact our former LSC member Matt Smith was on the committee that was redrafting. Those rules were never rewritten and we thought that was where it stood. It would be difficult for local municipalities to comply with the meat and dairy disposal rules so that effectively stopped municipal composting. Someone told me to contact Mr. Nork, which I did. He informed me the NHDES was inclined to grant a waiver allowing meat and dairy composting. This got me very excited because it seems to unblock the obstacle that was preventing municipal scale composting.

I am happy to present Mike Nork from NHDES. I don't know if he wants to talk first or open it up to questions. Mike.

Mike Nork: I would like to give some context. I sent over documents. I don't know if you had a chance to read the overview of composting in New Hampshire and how it's regulated.

Paul: We did. Those were circulated to the whole group.

Mike Nork: Thanks. Then you know that meat and dairy composting is **not prohibited** in the state. That's something we've been battling in the agency -- we're probably not very good at messaging some of these issues. There's been a lot of change of staff. I've only been there about three years. I'm doing what I can to increase awareness of where we stand as a department. We don't want to be an impediment to composting. It's a preferred waste management method.

The 2015 bill from Senator Fuller-Clarke was perhaps initially introduced without a full understanding of the regulations. The fact of the matter is that meat and dairy composting

is prohibited only under a certain type of permit: Permit by Notification. That happens to be the type of permit everyone is interested in, I think, because it's free. Also, it's a more streamlined process versus the standard permit. The standard permit is more involved and requires more review by the department, so more information supplied to us.

19:30

With a Permit by Notification the whole premise is the applicant signs a certification and checks off all the boxes saying yes I will do this activity in compliance with all the rules. But they don't make a demonstration, they don't have to submit long written descriptions to us, or an operating plan that we review and approve. It's really up to the applicant to do things in compliance with whatever the requirements are. So that's why it's much more streamlined. There's no intensive review by the department. As long as it's submitted and complete, there's no need for public hearing and you don't have to notify your abutters.

Because of the way that permit is structured, when it was initially introduced for composting facilities the rationale was: if folks aren't going to be notifying their neighbors and we don't have to have a public hearing, then there needs to be some fairly concrete limitations on what kind of activities are eligible. At the time composting was fairly new. Composting food waste at a municipal or industrial scale was not well understood, at least at the department as far as I know. So they figured it would be safer to limit that permit to only vegetative waste, things that don't pose greater risk for attracting vectors, creating odors that could cause nuisances for the neighbors.

21:30

That's kind of just my take on why the department structures that permit in the way that it did. As Chuck said, that's not to say it can't be done -- it certainly can, it's been proven time and time again that you can compost meat and dairy. You just have to manage the process in a certain way. It's really more about management, it's not really about whether it's feasible.

That's kind of a long-winded preamble. As was alluded to, that bill in 2015, which became law, directed DHS to update our rules to create BMPS (?) for composting of meat and dairy products. The challenge for the department has been that the Solid Waste Management Bureau doesn't have any staff. We used to have a large section devoted to recycling, education, community outreach, technical assistance and planning -- all sorts of great things. But funding for those positions was cut gradually over time so about 15 years ago we lost most of those positions. We've been struggling to get back to some of those things like creating a Solid Waste Management Plan for the state, updating the rules that need updating.

The legislature is not always sensitive to the limitations that we have. We also are subject to changes in law. That 2015 law came into effect but there have been other changes in laws over time, especially in the last couple years. They decided to cut our permitting review time in half. Priorities change based on what's happening, what requirements were subject to. I liken it to a big game of whack-a-mole, where we have to tackle one thing today but tomorrow we might have to tackle something else because priorities shift.

Since I started in 2018, I've been working on rewriting the composting rules. It's just a long process to actually do it. What I'm hoping to do in 2021 will be to introduce a Band-

Aid fix. We had a stakeholder's workshop a couple of years ago and got a lot of great feedback, so I'm hoping that we can at least tackle some of the major issues. It won't be a comprehensive rewrite, we don't have resources to do that right now. But that is something I'm hopeful will be forthcoming in 2021 so stay tuned on that.

24:50

In the meantime, as Dean mentioned, we don't want to be an impediment. We want to engage with folks who are serious about advancing sustainability goals and diverting waste and recycling and reducing waste. Composting definitely fits into that. Because of our limitations, we've said we can't realistically get the rules rewritten in a reasonable time frame, so why don't we offer a waiver to some of those requirements that are impediments.

That's where that guidance document comes into play. It's a draft I wrote a while back but it's something at least folks can sink their teeth into a little bit. I understand that it's a regulatory world that I work in and it can be a little bit difficult to navigate. I'm happy to answer any questions.

From what I understand, you're discussing using an existing transfer station as a site for a regional hub, a composting facility for a couple of towns, not just Lee.

Dean: That's an incredibly accurate summary of my vague idea. This is the first time this group has ever met. Lee is already composting farm waste, and collecting food waste for Mr. Fox. The idea we're exploring is composting it ourselves and not driving food waste to Maine, which seems insane.

Maggie Morrison: Oyster River uses Mr. Fox and it seems insane to drive it to Maine. I know Jen Andrews has more of a vision for UNH.

Jen Andrews: I have a vision but the pathway is unclear. So I'll just say from UNH's perspective we have the Kingman Farm facility but it is limited even without the meat and dairy issues. It's a research farm, staffed by a college that runs that research farm, so there's limited resources for that.

Because it's a research farm, we need to be really careful about contamination, even more careful than the commercial folks. But we've been for a while looking at and wanting to expand our food waste collection beyond what we have, which is from the dining hall. Also, we have some agricultural waste issues that if we had better solutions would be meaningful from a wastewater and nitrogen perspective. We would be very interested in exploring potential regional solutions, whether at one of the town's transfer stations or a new location.

29:10

There's another thing to think about. We have been thinking about bio-digestion. We have that plant that runs on landfill gas. We're going to need a continuing source of renewable natural gas, if we're going to keep that system. That's something we've been talking and thinking about, unsure about the potential. Our understanding is it would really have to be scaled up significantly. UNH's waste alone isn't enough. Perhaps with a regional solution there might be enough gas to do something with.

Dean: That's exciting Jen.

29:36

Mike Nork: Just a side note about the whole thing with UNH and DES years ago. I'm not really sure what happened or why they forced UNH to stop composting meat and dairy. I think there were probably some folks at the DES that didn't really know what the situation was or how to regulate it properly. It sounds like there was some miscommunication, so I'm sorry for that. Not that I represent the department.

Jen Andrews: It was before I went back to work at UNH. By my understanding, there was both external and internal UNH miscommunication as well. So plenty of miscommunication to go around. It's OK. Moving on...

Dean: I want to open it up to questions for Mike. I'll start. We're still in the exploratory stage. We have some numbers that we work with. Our current municipal solid waste disposal cost, tipping plus hauling, is about \$82 a ton. Mr. Fox works out to somewhere from \$95 to \$100 a ton. We would certainly like a municipal composting solution that came in under, hopefully a lot under, our MSW cost. That would make the money people happy and the sustainability folks happy. My general question is what advice would you give to us to explore this?

31:45

Mike Nork: I think if you're looking at it strictly from a cost perspective you may not end up saving money if you try to process food waste yourself because it's also a question of scale, like Jen was talking about with anaerobic digestion. Your cost per ton to process is going to go down as you increase the amount of material that you process but it just depends on how you start. I'm guessing the sole reason isn't economics.

Dean: No, but it will be or might be for the selectmen.

Mike Nork: I just want to caution you, it may not be a cost savings to run your own composting facility. I don't necessarily have a good sense of how much it might cost in terms of staffing and capital. I don't really have a lot of detail on that.

Julie Kelley: I wonder if this is where the collaboration of the towns and perhaps UNH as well could make a difference.

Mike Nork: Possibly.

Julie Kelley: Do you have any examples of other municipalities that are working together in New Hampshire to make it effective and useful?

33:30

Mike Nork: For composting specifically, no. I'm not aware of any towns that are doing something that's like what you guys are proposing. I'm sure they exist. The other thing that's interesting about New Hampshire is that it doesn't really have a strong solid waste district structure. It really is a lot of individual towns that seem to be going it alone. There are few districts, particularly the BCEP Solid Waste District just up the road in Pittsfield. It

serves Barnstead, Epsom, Chichester and Pittsfield. They have weathered several storms somewhat better than other surrounding towns because they have pooled resources.

34:30

I think the whole model of pooling resources has merit. In terms of specific examples of a compost like a regional composting facility I'm aware of a county facility in New York that's kind of a model but it covers Syracuse, a much larger waste shed.

Dean: Mike, you mentioned the cost of the regular permits versus the free permit. Is it really that costly and onerous that it's scaring municipalities away?

Mike Nork. I guess I can understand because in order to submit an application you have to dig into the rules and the rules are not necessarily reader-friendly. So, there's definitely room for confusion there. A lot of folks do hire consultants if they're going to submit a standard permit application, so that in itself is a cost. As for the question about how much it would cost, it really depends on a combination of the life span of the facility and how much the facility would be proposing to receive on a daily basis. For a composting facility a minimum of \$2,000 to \$5000 -- I'm not really sure. That's a one time fee, permits by law in New Hampshire exist forever.

Question: In order to get a waiver, we would have to have the more intensive permit?

Mike Nork: No. The standard permit, which is the more intensive process, would not require any waiver because there are basically no restrictions. You tell us what you want to do. You submit a proposal to the DES and they approve or deny it. That's a standard permit.

With the Permit by Notification that's where you need a waiver. It has the boxes on it you need to check. If you can't check one, you need to apply for a waiver.

Dean: I think I saw here a 30-ton a day limit -- that would seem totally out of our universe.

Mike Nork: That comes out of the statute as well. When they wrote that I think they were thinking about landfills. If a landfill received that it would be a very small landfill.

Dean: But a very big compost pile.

38:30

Paul: Mike, realizing that you don't have a lot of staff to work with and also you're trying to cultivate a model for improving this, do you see a way that a collaboration like ours might interface with your desire to test-drive your end?

Mike Nork: Yes I think there's definitely some room there for moving the needle forward together. That's why I included the sample language in the waiver guidance. If you submit a waiver you can suggest that by piloting this project you would help inform DES in rewriting rules.

Dean: I want to say that this waiver document answers questions I have been asking a lot of people for the last four or five years, so I really think it's awesome.

Mike Nork: Great, I'm glad somebody's excited about it.

Paul: I'm curious about the Durham Waste Advisory Committee. What are you up to?

40:30

Julie Kelley: Probably similar to you. We did just finish a compost pilot. We had 20 families from Durham be part of a pilot and over a six week period we had those 20 families weigh the amount of compost and solid waste that they brought to the transfer station. After 5 weeks we had almost 1100 pounds of compost from just 20 families brought to the transfer station. So it's very exciting for this, we have very similar goals to Lee, and we're excited to try and find ways that we can work together and maybe even have UNH involved as well.

Chuck: Is Nell Neal on your committee?

Julie Kelley: Yes, she's the head.

Chuck: I loaned her a book on municipal composting a year or so ago. [Community-Scale Composting Systems: A Comprehensive Practical Guide for Closing the Food System Loop and Solving Our Waste Crisis -- James McSweeney]. There are a lot of things there I think we ought to look at. I think the other thing is that food waste should not be going into the solid waste. It should be composted, but not that it necessarily has to come to the transfer station. It can be on site or your neighbor's composting or fed to chickens. The closer the better.

Erika: I live in condos and we have a dumpster -- people just put their stuff there. Are there ways of composting when you have apartments like in Durham and Lee? Are there bigger buckets that the whole neighborhood could use.

Dean: Yes, you can compost on a bigger scale for an apartment building. The committee has attempted public educating and getting people to compost at home. I think we should focus on municipal scale while we have Mike. I was going to ask Julie if she had developed an estimate about how much food waste Durham as a whole would actually bring the transfer station.

44:15

Julie: I don't know, we could work on that. Our goal is to roll out composting to the entire town. That's what we want to do as a committee; it's just getting there.

Mary Caulfield: It was determined that on average households generate 10 pounds of food waste per week. We're just trying to offer options so we can get it out of the trash. In Durham you can bring it to the transfer station and Mr. Fox does come and pick it up. Julie's pilot program is trying to encourage people to do it at home. My understanding is the Durham issue is we don't have space to do something like that, which is why joining up with someone would be great.

Julie Kelley: I agree.

Dean: That sounds great to us too. Maybe we can pool our compost. We're not getting close to 30 tons a day.

Mary Caulfield: If we had the facilities, we could do something with those numbers.

Jen Andrews: If you add in UNH, we get some volume. I know the sustainability coordinator in Portsmouth is also looking for an organic waste solution, too; I don't know if they're too far away geographically. Dean or Lee, do you all have a sense of what your numbers could be? A great next step for any of this is to try to figure out how much we are talking about. I think we're going to need that information no matter what we do.

Dean: We have an ongoing compost program in Lee and I think the number is about two of those 60 gallon bins per week for Mr. Fox, which works out to I think around 700 pounds a week.

47:30

Maggie Morrison: I could get those numbers for Oyster River. In 2020/2021 we're trying to educate students because we're throwing a lot of food waste from the classroom going into the waste cycle. We're trying to figure out how to stop that from happening.

Paul: I agree with Jen Andrews that I think the next step is to try to get a handle on the volume. In Lee we've been tracking volume across the board at the transfer station including MSW, so we have a pretty good handle on that over time. We've been trying to see if it's been impacted by composting and the pandemic. Durham and the school district are probably tracking also.

Dean: Right now we still have Mike on the line so let's continue hypothetically discussing composting at the Lee transfer station. It sounds like the application process isn't too onerous and you guys are inclined to grant the waiver. So it's really in our court to develop a plan.

Mike Nork: Were it to be at the Lee Transfer Station, the Lee transfer station already has a permit to run a transfer station. This is not something that's reflected in that guidance document that I wrote. I think, for the sake of clarity and regulatory certainty, it would probably be best if the composting facility were to operate under a separate permit. A separate Permit by Notification along with the waiver -- that would be the application.

Dean: You can operate on the premises -- on the land of the transfer station, but it would be technically a separate facility.

Mike Nork: The Lee Transfer Station I believe is a limited facility, only has a limited service area so can only accept waste from the town of Lee. If you were to make a regional composting facility it would probably behoove you to have a separate permit for that facility because that would be a regional food waste / organic waste facility.

Julie Kelley: How long does it take to get a permit, what is the average time?

Mike Nork: With a Permit by Notification it's 60 days maximum. Like I said before, if it's submitted complete, then it should be automatically approved because there's no review. As long as all the pieces are there and you checked off all the boxes and signed and

certified, then it's automatically approved.

When you're talking about a waiver, however, there is a little bit more of an application review because waivers can vary so much. The waiver would extend the time period. It's also important in the waiver application that you establish what the alternative procedure is that would be in keeping with the rule that is being requested to be waived. You have to make some sort of demonstration and we have to, by law, make a more intensive review of that. You say: Basically we don't want this rule but here's what we're going to do instead, that is in keeping with the intention of what that rule was trying to do.

53:00

Where it gets a little complicated is that it would require some basic knowledge of the composting process. You want to make a demonstration that if you're going to do this you know how to do it. That's been a stumbling block for folks because honestly in our area; there's a lack of technical assistance and resources out there to learn about the composting process. So I find a lot of interest from folks in doing something and composting but, in terms of actually submitting an application, no one's really done that. We have a few facilities in the state that have been permitted but no one has pursued the waiver yet. I have heard rumors that Lebanon is working on a waiver but I'll believe it when I see it.

Erika: If an applicant has to come back because they haven't fulfilled expectations, do they have a certain period of time to satisfy the request? Can they keep coming back until you're satisfied?

Mike Nork: Yes, it is definitely not a one-and-done process like if you've got one shot. It can be an iterative process -- if we deem the application incomplete (which oftentimes happens) we have to reach back out to the applicant and say these things were not supplied in your application. Then we might have a meeting with them and ask for their questions, so this opens up a dialogue. There's definitely an opportunity to submit something that you think would help us.

Julie Kelly: If there were questions or obstacles would you give guidance for that?

54:10

Mike Nork: I don't know that guidance is the right word. The application process is structured in a certain way. A lot of times we're dealing with multiple applications so we don't have a lot of time to provide guidance. But we can at least tell you what the requirements are and answer specific questions. But it's not like we can be your consultant. I don't think that's quite what you're asking.

Julie Kelley: It just seems like it's a very amorphous process in some ways. You try to do the demonstration correctly but if there are any places in the state that do that then you're put back on your own heels to try to figure out what's missing. I just was hoping that there would be some resources available to allow people like us to go ask those experts and figure it out.

55:30

Mike Nork: I think that's part of the reason why I wrote the guidance document. There was

no documentation or anything on how to approach the process. So, it at least gets folks started.

I think where folks tend to run into some trouble is describing the process. Chuck obviously has experience with composting. But I think a lot of folks run into roadblocks when they have to describe exactly what their process is going to be. That's where it gets a little bit nettlesome for them because it requires a basic level of technical knowledge.

56:50

It's not that composting is an exact science. It's kind of an art and a science together. But there are some basic principles. C-N ratio with moisture content, bulk density, the ability for material to have some porosity to allow air and moisture to permeate. You're creating a system that's like an all you can eat buffet for microbes.

Julie Kelley: Would you recommend that we reach out to Pittsfield or Barnstead as an example to get some of those answers?

57:30

Mike Nork: They don't have a composting operation as BCEP transfer station. I was highlighting it as an example of a regional system.

Jen Andrews: UNH can be a bit of a resource in terms of the science or the process.

Mike Nork: I don't know if Matt Smith is still there.

Jen Andrews: He's in Oregon, we miss him. Some of the people he worked with are. There are other folks who can be resources.

Mike Nork: There's Bob Kelly, Seacoast Farms. He worked with the Maine compost school years back.

Dean: George Estes told me about composting school at the University of Maine, Highmore Farm.

58:50

Jen Andrews: If we were to explore the possibility of anaerobic digestion would that require permitting through your office?

Mike Nork: If you're going to feed the digester with "solid waste" that is something we would permit. If it was co-digestion, say a municipal water system you add food waste to, it may fall under two DES programs: Solid Waste and Wastewater Engineering Bureau as well. It depends on the function of the facility. It sounded what you were talking about was management of food and agricultural waste.

Chuck: The composting that Lee is doing is yard waste, leaves, some people bring in horse bedding. We also have wood ash that they have a bin for. Composting food waste alone doesn't work because it's usually too high and too moist. You have to mix it with that.

They also have some of the tree people deliver wood chips that people can take. With the yard waste stuff, it's not a high heat process that works there, because again they don't manage it, but it does break down over time. There are other different systems, agricultural systems that are seeing the difference between the bacterial breakdown and the fungal breakdown, the first being a very high, rapid thing where you get the temperature built up so that you destroy certain pathogens and weed seeds and whatnot. The other is a slower process with lower temperatures that provides things for the soil. You get some complicated different ways of managing and I think most of the municipal things being talked about are high temperature, dealing with potential pathogens.

[1:01:40]

Another thing I recall from the book I lent Nell was a lot of those were citizen directed and volunteers and I know with our dealing with the town that working with volunteers the liability thing always keeps coming up and limits the good work that can be done.

Paul: Are there any examples of public-private partnerships where the private end does the composting but the actual facilities are on public land?

Mike Nork: I'm sure that there are and it's something I thought about that's a possible successful model. Off the top of my head, maybe Green Mountain Compost in Vermont. I think that's owned by a solid waste district but I'm not sure if it's privately operated.

Paul: The science and the expertise is a tricky one on this. Of course, Jen Andrews, we have the University and maybe there's some expertise there. The other thing is the transportation is a major issue. Lee and the other towns used to do hauling with the Lamprey Regional Cooperative, which you're probably familiar with. That's sunsetted because it became cheaper for Lee to contract privately.

Mike Nork: Dean, I'm wondering if the cost with Mr. Fox right now seems exorbitantly high because of the small volume that was being collected, it sounded like you said it was 700 pounds per week.

Dean: No, Mr. Fox's cost to us is \$14 per sixty gallon bin. If we actually could load those bins with 350 to 400 pounds, we would save money compared to municipal solid waste. It generally works out to \$96 per ton through Mr. Fox, compared to \$82 per ton tippage and hauling MSW.

Julie Kelly: Is there a fee associated with the application at front end?

Mike Nork: If the group were to pursue a Permit by Notification, there is no cost for Permit by Notification. There is also no cost for a waiver application.

Dean: My question, following up on Chuck's, is would you envision combining the yard waste or the keeping them separate?

Chuck: I'd say combining them because you need to add something to do with food waste, wood chips or something to get the proper ratio.

Mike: I agree. Food waste ratios are probably 15 to 1; you want 25 or 30 to one, so another carbon source is required. It doesn't have to be yard waste. A lot of folks have success

with horse manure though you do have to be careful about what kind of grazing those horses do. I think at this point we've probably phased out most of those persistent herbicides.

Dean: It seems like Kingman Farm ran into trouble when they actually tried to sell or give away their compost, so the question is, would our application have to include what we would do with the compost? What could we do with the compost?

Mike Nork: We regulate solid waste facilities. We don't regulate the markets of selling compost. At some point we may adopt standards for what defines finished compost quality, or perhaps quality standards. But we wouldn't regulate actual marketing and product. Once it's essentially finished compost it's no longer solid waste so we shouldn't have to regulate it at that point.

Dean: So it would be OK to give it away to residents?

Mike Nork: That's your choice. I know some folks in the industry that say you shouldn't make compost and then give it away because it hurts the market.

Dean: They say the same thing to bands playing for free.

Mike Nork: I just wanted to clarify that leaf and yard waste are by statutory definition not included in the definition of solid waste, so, therefore, not something that we regulate. That's why we don't permit yard waste. We only regulate facilities that manage solid waste; food waste qualifies, not yard waste.

Paul: If there's anything else Mike maybe we can get you back down the road. Thank you very much for joining us tonight. Thanks to all our guest panelists as well. We'll share our minutes if you want and we are recording this.

Mike Nork: Yes, you're welcome to email me on this topic. Thank you guys for listening. Thanks for your time and thanks for interest. I'm sorry I probably didn't answer all your questions but let's keep the conversation going.

Jen Messeder: We might be able to come up with a cooperative playbook and help other communities in the future.

[Mike Nork signs off]
1:12:14

Maggie Morrison: I met with Jen Andrews and Nell Neal on the phone, talking about trying to have an exploratory conversation and create a vision. I had some language that we were all going to try to go up the food chain so that we can start to keep this conversation going. Everybody is an advisory capacity. I just wanted to make sure that we can all move together. We're all governments, so we'd have to go up to selectmen, Town councils, school board. I just want to make sure we're all using the same language so that we're all coming to the table with the same playing cards.

1:13:30

Paul: I think this is a really great start. Thanks to Dean and Maggie for putting it together and for all of you for coming. I agree communication is the key -- if we keep each other in the email loop, sharing minutes and meeting as we try to move it forward.

Jen Messeder: I had a quick question for Maggie. What you're talking about with standard language I was thinking mission statement, or objectives or goals.

Maggie Morrison: I sent Paul a statement Jen (Andrews), Nell and I put together so that we can get approval by our various approval bodies to keep on visioning this. If the school board doesn't want me to vision on this I can't.

Jen Andrews: The language was about not only visioning for individual solutions but for a regional approach or regional collaboration. The Sustainability Institute is happy to continue regardless of what the rest of the University says. Right now I'd run up the chain [garbled] support for our conversation. I think there will be interest. Even if there wasn't at the highest level the UNH Sustainability Institute would be happy to facilitate or support a conversation among the towns.

I think maybe your question was: Can we get the approval of our towns to have a six month visioning process to get to that Mission / Vision -- to see how far down the road yeah we can get?

Paul: We shared with our transfer station director and town administrator that this was happening tonight. They are quite aware that we've been dealing with transfer station issues and composting. At this point we need to invite them into the conversation on our end. I'm not sure where others are on this but we haven't done that. We will do that after this now.

Paul: Jen Andrews, in the university are there people who understand the science of composting on the ag side of things. Are there courses?

Jen Andrews: Yes and yes, there's definitely expertise and there's definitely coursework. One of the things I'm trying to tease out a little and run up the flagpole is are we talking about this as an operational solution for the university in terms of a waste disposal thing? Are we talking about a collaboration that could net research dollars or research projects or community engagement? The work will be to figure out what do the faculty get out of it, what the students get out of it, how it adds to their education. If I can articulate that or if they can articulate that I think we will have a lot of support.

1:17:49

Dean: Jen (Andrews), while we have you here can you clarify the university's involvement with Agricycle Energy in Maine?

Jen Andrews: Agricycle is a biodigestion outfit up in central Maine. The only composting we're doing now is pre-consumer waste, kitchen waste before anyone gets it. Until COVID we had the dining hall operation, and there was a desire to expand compost to pick up from the football stadium and a couple of our retail locations like the Dairy Bar and a place in the student center. We contract with Agricycle because it didn't make sense to send post-consumer contaminated waste to the Kingman Farm research operation.

Agricycle has been a great partner. Full disclosure, one of their staff members actually went through the sustainability program so we have a good connection with him. He started a composting business in Portland before going to work with Agricycle. They've been great. If they weren't all the way up in Maine and a cost center, we'd work with them indefinitely.

Dean: Are you guys sharing the details of the financial arrangement with Agricycle?

Jen Andrews: It's a flat fee per location and then a part dependent on the number of toters. They picked up three times a week. They were competitive with Mr. Fox, our previous vendor.

Dean: I think Al Howland said Agricycle was paying for food waste, which I guess is false.

Jen Andrews: We were definitely paying them.

Paul: Hopefully, we're answering your question Jen. We still have to inform the select board we're having this conversation.

Maggie Morrison: I think we need to have a plan to take it up to our town council, select board, school board, whatever flagpole Jen needs. Maybe by March we can commit to inform our respective governing bodies that we are starting these conversations.

Paul: I think we should meet again and the hosting of the meeting should rotate. That would be a good step. The LSC would conduct its regular business and this would be a regular agenda item for us, but this group would be its own separate entity.

Maggie Morrison: That's certainly doable.

Paul: We'll share all the documents we have. I guess we all have to climb the ladder.

Maggie Morrison: I just don't want to have a logjam when we can avoid it?

Jen Messeder: You talked about having common language.

Maggie Morrison. I'll send that language we drafted to LSC and Julie and Mary.

Paul: Thanks everybody. [Thanks all around.]

1:23:40

[Public leaves, LSC remains]

Paul: let's pick up the meeting with discussion item III B.

III B. Update: Paul- Annual Town Report, FY22 LSC Budget, Meeting Date

Paul: Thanks for extensive edits; this was submitted to Julie.

No word back from the ABC about our budget; I'll keep pursuing that. Their minutes are behind.

We worked out our scheduling conflict with the Lee Dems. We will keep the second Tuesday of the month. Next month Jan 12, 2021.

C. Update: Jen- 'One Bin' Book Proof for Web Page, Crushed Glass as road fill
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1Q5Piz6kcsiScRkvhqBXD7KOHlh8o1iJg>

Jen: We're still working on individual articles. Newsprint has been updated to reflect the new paper and magazine collection. Paper trash doesn't have to be bagged. Corrugated cardboard has been updated similarly.

Chuck: Does anything have to be bagged at the transfer station?

Dean: We were just clarifying that paper that's not recyclable can be put in the MSW bin unbagged.

Jen: Re glass we confirmed that crushed glass is being used as road building material per the Steve Bullock video. We still have to clarify Pyrex, mirrors and headlights.

Paul: Let's defer on this one. Lee is not doing the glass aggregate thing yet -- find out if Steve has plans to do it. Can you check?

Jen: I'll follow up with Steve on the glass questions.

Erika: The posters at the transfer station for the paper are really helpful.

Jen: That's the transfer station staff's work.

Paul: Steve's glass video is really great.

D. Update: Erika- Lee Arts, Crafts and Cottage Industry Directory

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VNrXIEEh5DCM0z2JmxhSReDoy6Jpuos8/edit>

Paul: I made some comments on this

Erika: I tried to pull together the information you gave me.

Paul: It's really good how you brought form to the stuff we gave you.

Erika: This is the very beginning of the first phase, a request to put into the E-Crier and other places for craftspeople and artisans to contact me. The biggest thing is to decide if we want to do all three phases; the last is advertising and marketing, not sure if we can do that.

Paul: I'll send around the policy manual for the town, which is hard to find on the town website. Advertising is not allowed.

Long discussion about "confidential list" wording -- eventually the directory will be public.

Dean: I don't understand why we're soliciting artisans before there's an application.

Erika: This is to help me gather information; the applications will be distributed in phase 2. Right now I'm soliciting names of folks who would get applications.

Dean: I imagined the application net being cast widely -- E-Crier, Neighbor-LEE, etc., rather than by invitation.

Paul: Let's not solicit names just yet. I'll send along the policy.

Erika: I want to make sure we're reaching the widest audience. I know plenty of people who never look at the E-Crier.

Dean: What you're trying to solve is our recurring problem of how to reach people. Go for it.

Chuck: Bulk mail is the best way to reach people in Lee. We did the Ag newsletter that way. It takes some budget.

Jen: On the electronic side, if we put it in the E-Crier with Erika's explanation and application, we can encourage people to share this with others folks. Same for a paper mailing.

Paul: Erika, you're on the right track developing a list. Let's just not solicit it yet before the town knows.

Paul: We'll send Erika's work to Julie for approval. Erika, please take a look at the application as well. We need to keep the town informed.

E. Update: Chuck- Status of Backyard Farming initiative (BFI)

Chuck: There's not the interest or will to do a Zoom version so we will hold off until things open up.

F. Other N/A

IV. New Business

A. Next Steps: Drought/Groundwater Awareness, NHDES Lee Well Database

Dean: Lee is still at the edge of the extreme drought zone, though it looks like we have some wet

weather ahead.

Paul: The town itself has overlapped with us, updating this topic in the E-Crier. Dean, you had some issues.

Dean: My issue was Denise modifying an E-Crier article approved by the LSC and run under the LSC banner. In this case, among other things the committee discussed the two figures and I had modified them accordingly. Denise replaced one with something with tiny print that wasn't particularly understandable. My feeling is if Denise wants to contribute to the editing of our articles she should attend our meetings. She's free to publish whatever she wants in the E-Crier; there's no particular reason for her to modify content the committee has approved to run under our banner.

Paul: The NHDES updates the drought information on Thursday. Denise tried to make the article more current. I emailed her Dean's concerns and haven't heard back.

Dean: Denise's edits normally make things better. But I don't think they did this time. I'm concerned in general that there's a super-editor overruling committee decisions. I don't think there's a provision for that in NH law.

Paul: Rich Messeder has done his well water monitoring project. Is he interested in writing something for the E-Crier?

Jen: It's working. Because of the rain we now have 1 yard of water in our well up from 18 inches. He wrote a post for NeighborLee.

Well database

Paul: I updated my information at the NHDES database. I did find the Oyster River Condo's well, Erika, which isn't very deep or abundant. Perhaps there should be an E-Crier article alerting people to the database.

Dean: That reminds me. I thought we should write something on winter heat waves. They're nice, but an ominous sign of global warming.

Erika: I like the idea of letting people know about the well database. We can talk about the frozen ground not allowing wells to refill until spring.

Jen: Yes, we can tell how to interpret the data if your well is in the database, and how to add your well if it isn't.

Paul: I'll start a draft. Dean will work on climate change / winter heat waves.

B. Erika: Style Guide for LSC

Erika: Wherever I've worked we've created a style for local details about spelling, grammar, etc.

Jen: We tend to edit articles for individual consistency but there's no overall guide.

Erika: It helps with editing -- people don't keep changing things back and forth.

Jen: Let's argue about the serial comma (joking).

C. Other N/A

V. Public Comments N/A

VI. Closing Actions

A. Future Meeting Dates: 1/12/21

B. Agenda Planning for Next Meeting -- see above

VII. Adjournment

Jen moves, Erika 2nds, roll call vote 5-0, adjourned 9:25 pm

Draft respectfully submitted,

Dean Rubine