



Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting

March 16, 2021 7 PM

Virtual Zoom Meeting ID: 923-766-4832 Password: 136658

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9237664832> or Telephone: 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), Chuck Cox, Jennifer Messeder, Dean Rubine.

[Roll call attendance, no one else in anyone's room.]

Members absent:

Public Present: N/A

II. Preliminary Actions

A. Introductions: N/A

B. Approval of Agenda

No changes

C. Minutes: Approve Minutes from 2/9/21

Google Doc changes reviewed, accepted.

Jen moved, Chuck 2nd, roll call vote 4-0, approved as amended.

D. Correspondence/Events: Maggie Morrison, Julie Glover

Lots of correspondence related to Right to Know; committee has been copied. Webinar about offshore wind, date passed.

E. Other N/A

III. Discussion Items/Updates

A. Select Board Discussion Debrief: Right to Know (RTK) and Transparency wrt RCWG (Regional Compost Working Group)

Dean: I thought we had good support from the Select Board, with the caveat that their position is we shouldn't participate if RTK concerns persist. We also should consider Plan B -- Lee goes it alone.

Paul: The Select Board made clear they didn't want us participating if issues of transparency and RTK remain. Lee Town Administrator Julie Glover talked to Town Administrator Todd Selig of Durham and Superintendent Jim Morse at ORCSD and worked out the current procedures.

Paul: All along I've followed the guidelines the town has set even if I didn't understand what I was being asked to do or how it changed. I had the feeling that this committee (LSC) was being asked to do a few more things than other committees. We need to post our agenda in a timely manner. My impression is other committees and commissions don't always do that; they can post just a meeting notice. I'm glad the administrators got it sorted out. I'm a little confused about RTK; I'm not sure the RCWG (Regional Compost Working Group) is operating in a way that I would do it. We should explore Plan B.

B. Dean/Chuck: Municipal Composting Update

Chuck made the meeting, Dean didn't make the meeting.

Chuck: Attending: Jen Andrews (UNH Sustainability Institute), Nell Neal and Mary Caufield (Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee, IWMAC), Maggie Morrison (ORCSD Sustainability Committee). We're hoping to have the local ag commissions involved. Chuck represents Lee Ag; Durham IWMAC will contact Durham Ag. Great Bay Rotary Club interested in helping; their president is interested in composting; Mary Caufield coordinating. Maggie Morrison is trying to get a student from ORCSD Sustainability Club to participate. The Strafford Regional Planning Commission is in touch / they have interest but no time, so will be kept updated. Lee pulled out of Strafford Regional Planning recently.

Paul: I had forgotten about it -- not a very smart thing.

Chuck: I hope our new selectperson will work to reinstate that.

Chuck: We (RCWG) have no formal statement of purpose yet. There are two competing aspects: Educating people in communities about composting and reducing food waste versus getting a municipal composting system set up, lots of homework to do there. The next meeting of the RCWG is April 1, 4pm.

Paul: Jen Andrews sent an email about picking up an intern.

Chuck: She mentioned that she is trying to get a summer intern who could do some research on the work and sources.

Jen: Has the working group abandoned the idea of a regional composting site?

Dean: No, but there's some attraction to the education component because two of the RCWG's groups are schools, and the town groups have educational missions.

Chuck: The RCWG hasn't gotten a rep from Madbury yet; I talked with Town Administrator Eric Feigenbaum, and will follow up.

Paul: Who took minutes?

Dean: I don't know but Maggie said she'd send them to me. I will forward them to the Lee Town Secretary and LSC according to procedure.

Paul: I have a lingering concern that everyone's interest is economic in part. Education and economics. Reduce the waste stream and save money. The UNH proposal, if it involves biodigestion, Jen Andrews says they want to get a lot of waste to make methane to burn. The greater volume the better for them.

Chuck: Biodigestion is one of the options for composting. An anaerobic process. The more waste the better. We are using the Small Scale Community Composting Book; libraries have it now too.

Paul: Maybe I'm wrong but the notion of one method of succeeding by increasing volume seems opposed to the idea of reducing consumption.

Dean: It doesn't make sense to buy things to throw away, even if you get some methane at the end. Systemwide, it's always going to be less economical to generate methane from garbage than to not generate garbage at all.

Jen: Are we already contributing our waste to their digester?

Chuck. No; they should be using the dairies. It's not just food waste for digesters.

Dean: As far as I understand, UNH sends to Kingman Farm only their pre-consumer kitchen waste. Other UNH compostable waste goes to Agricycle Energy Maine, which is a vendor like Mr. Fox but I think does biodigestion. The towns are not involved; Durham and Lee have programs with Mr. Fox.

Jen: We can reduce our waste and increase UNH's digester feed at the same time. It's not necessarily true that we're going to be encouraging people to throw away more food.

Chuck: There are some residuals that can be spread after the methane is extracted.

Jen: If it goes that way it doesn't necessarily mean we are in conflict if we try to reduce first.

Paul: There's a tension there; everybody's after volume.

Dean: The RCWG is still deciding what it is.

Paul: Where does Lee's MSW go? Turnkey?

Dean: I'll ask Steve Bullek.

Paul: The RCWG's minutes get posted on Lee Website under our committee page. Their meeting notices get posted on our committee with an agenda. They don't show up on the town calendar.

C. Jen: Update 'One Bin' Book Proof for Web Page

Committee reviewed and approved unchanged; Jen will send to Steve for review before submitting to E-Crier by 3/25.

Jen: We'll give Steve a week to comment before submitting to E-Crier.

Dean: Is the book done?

Jen: The book has an article for office paper and separate article for magazines. They need to be revisited to make more book-friendly versions of those to look at. I'll reach out to Steve with questions.

D. Paul/Chuck: Lee Arts, Crafts and Cottage Industry Directory

Paul: I sent it to Julie only recently and didn't get feedback by today. She has what's on the Google Drive: cover letter, application, E-Crier article draft. I'm hopeful this flies.

Chuck: People I've mentioned this to have all been very positive.

Paul: One more thing, looking down the road a bit, the Parish House, part of the town center property, is likely to become very topical discussion wise pretty quickly. Maybe this committee can think about, if we develop a network for artisans and cottage industry, how the Parish House could be committee space, office space, and space for artisans, persons in residence, exhibits, classes.

Dean: Exeter has a museum/gallery above the town theater.

Paul: The old Town Hall will be renovated and become a meeting space for medium-sized groups, including a performance space, classes, mixed uses.

Chuck: Hopefully dances too.

Paul: The Town Center needs to evolve; there's a lot of discussion about what to do with the Parish House. It wouldn't take a lot of money to renovate.

Dean: New Selectperson Katrin Kasper ran on the issue of what to do with the town buildings.

Paul: When Julie responds to what we've shared with her we'll decide on the next move.

E. Other N/A

IV. New Business

A. Upcoming E-Crier Articles

Paul: Cottage Industry and Artisan Directory

Jen: Office Paper and Magazine Review

Dean: Winter heat waves.

Chuck: Something on the RCWG eventually.

Jen: One Bin Book announcement

B. Educational Outreach:

NHDES: Drought Report

Paul: Same water situation as last year; I'm worried about similar drought.

Chuck: Ponds are back up; not sure how much is absorbed. Last year the first cut went well but we didn't get enough rain for subsequent hay, crops.

Paul: We'll keep this on the agenda. I'll coordinate with Denise on who will do what re E-Crier.

Reducing the Waste Stream

Paul: We covered this already when we talked about educational outreach. We should do both. We'll continue to do both. Let RCWG know.

Paul: They did a project through Durham Rec where they had bins available for people to use and made a contest out of it. Maybe we want to try something like that.

Lee's Trees and Emerald Ash Borer

Paul: The Ash Borer got me thinking about Lee's Trees. Do we want to go down that path again?

Jen: I'm a little mixed; it's worth repeating, perhaps not every year.

Paul: We did it two years ago. One window into it might be the Emerald Ash Borer. Invasives. Stink bugs are all over the place.

Paul: Woodpeckers are destroying telephone poles.

Chuck: 60 cycle AC sets up a vibration similar to insect prey. It's the reason they're replacing wood with steel.

Chuck: If we set it up as a series we can have people look at their trees and take pictures over time.

Paul: Really good idea.

Chuck: There are pictures of Cartland road from way back. They put on insulated wire on rt 155, had to cut back trees. It would be interesting for people to share old pictures of their yard and new pictures of the same trees; see how things have changed.

Paul: I like that idea. Do you have photos of your property?

Chuck: Probably. Some pictures of historical houses. We could coordinate with the historical society.

Jen: In conjunction with Arbor Day, we could provide information about planting trees. Get folks to plant a tree native to our area, take a picture of it, share pictures of trees planted.

Dean: Let's remember to make something that gets the kids involved.

Paul: We'll come back to it for next time.

C. LSC Membership and Leadership

Paul: We need more members; maybe each of us can invite a person to sit in on the next meeting.

Dean: I'll try.

Paul: It's been a tough stretch; I'm wondering if I'm the person who should be running the group.

Dean: I'd choose Paul again.

Jen: Paul's doing a fine job.

Paul: I want to abide by RTK; I'm trying to do what I'm being asked to do by the town. It's been difficult over the last month. It's been frustrating.

Dean: I hope we've worked out most of the kinks.

Chuck: In the town report the Sustainability Committee was not listed there.

Paul: Yes; our report is there but we're not in the front. Same thing happened last year. I'll talk to Denise.

D. Other N/A

V. Public Comments N/A

VI. Closing Actions

A. Future Meeting Dates:

Tuesday 4/13/21 7pm Zoom

B. Agenda Planning for Next Meeting

See above.

VII. Adjournment

Dean moves to adjourn. Jen 2nd. Roll Call vote 4-0. Adjourned 8:21 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Dean Rubine