



CITY OF DOVER

SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: 271 Mast Road, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Thursday, August 11, 2022**
Meeting Time: **6:00 pm**

Members Present: Chairman Gary Gilmore, Vice Chairman Dave Dinzeo, Kate Surman, Lynn Peterson

Unexcused Members Absent: Councilor Muffett Lipinski

Alternate Members Present: Timothy Casey

Unexcused Alternate Members Absent: Chris Sleys, Doug Kemp

Staff Present: John Storer, Community Services Director

Chairman Gilmore handed out an agenda that he created.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Gilmore called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

2. Introductions

Members went around the table to introduce themselves. Members of the public did as well. Deb Clough was noted as an incoming member, but remained sitting away from the table as she had not yet taken her oath of office. Other public present were Carter Judkins, Bill Stafford, and Elise Tierney.

3. Public Comment

Tierney asked how it was possible for the committee to go by the agenda that Gilmore handed out as opposed to the agenda that was posted.

Gilmore stated that it was an agenda that he created. He stated that as the Chairman, he's supposed to set the agenda.

Tierney asked Gilmore if he needs to post the agenda.

Gilmore stated that he had intended to but he didn't get it to Director Storer in time.

Tierney asked how they would expect the public to attend if the he creates the agenda at the last minute. She asked if someone had an issue that they wanted to discuss that was listed on the posted agenda.

Gilmore stated that he didn't see the posted agenda. He again stated that the Chairman sets the agenda. Storer tried to explain that posting the time and place of meeting is most critical, and that the Commission could vote to amend or modify the Agenda.

Stafford stated that the reason he attends the SWAC meetings is he believes the city has an issue with the processing of recycled materials. He stated that he sees that it is more concentrated within the central parts of the city. He doesn't see it as much in the rural parts of Dover. He wants to watch the committee identify recycling as a problem to correct it. He's attended five meetings but the problem has not really been tagged. He stated that the recycling is blowing everywhere. There are no rules or regulations that are followed as far as a particular container or whether it's how they package their recycling. There are people using Trader Joe's paper bags, Tupperware containers with a mountain of plastic bottles. All you need is for a car to zoom by and the bottles fall all over the road. It becomes refuse within the town.

He provided a handout of pictures with examples of incorrect recycling containers, overflowing recycling containers and cleanups completed by the "Don't Trash Dover" committee.



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Stafford stated that the pictures of the cleanup are 75% of stuff that started out from someone's recycling bin. Clough concentrates her pickup from the downtown area. It's all stuff that has blown down Washington Street or Silver Street.

Clough shared that she believed the City recycling bins are too small, and that she has seen cars dodging milk cartons that have blown out of City recycling bins. Clough noted she has been coordinating "Don't Trash Dover" clean-ups for 4 years and that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result.

Judkins stated that she's lived in Dover for four years. She's so saddened at the recycling situation. She stated that so much gets blown around. It concerns her and she believes steps need to be taken.

Tierney stated that the recycling is out on Tuesday afternoon until Wednesday morning. She stated that for basically 24 hours you're staring at open trash (recycling bins).

Discussion ensued regarding appropriate recycling containers.

Gilmore stated that this is something the commission will have to think about their concerns and discuss how they will proceed.

4. Approval of Minutes of July 21, 2022

There was discussion regarding the Minutes of July 21, 2022 meeting, with clarification that members Muffett-Lipinski and Kemp were not in attendance, but also noted that City Manager Joyal had attended.

Motion: On motion of Dinzeo, with second by Casey, Minutes were approved with changes discussed.

Vote: U/a

5. Operating Rules

Gilmore shared a history and evolution of how SWAC was developed and evolved over the years. He stated that back in 1989, he and a couple of others, met at Dinzeo's home because they were interested in doing recycling in Dover. In 1989, there was zero recycling. They met 3-4 times and gave a list of names to City Council. City Council appointed them as an Ad-Hoc Committee. They came back to City Council with ideas and created a recycling center. The first summer, as a volunteer, he ran the recycling center. City Council appointed a Solid Waste Coordinator, which led to curb side recycling and the Bag and Tag program. The Solid Waste Advisory Commission was formed and created because City Council wanted someone looking after the finances, the fund balance and as well as providing input on the recycling. With the addition of pay-as-you-throw trash bags, the amount of solid waste dropped dramatically. They were recognized nationally as one of the very best in the country.

It was noted that both Gilmore and Dinzeo had 33 years of service to the City regarding solid waste and recycling.

There was review of the SWAC Operating Rules that were dated May 17, 2012.



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6. Trash Complaints

Peterson stated that the Commission doesn't discuss why the trash is a problem. It is an ugly eyesore. What is much more important is that it's clogging up the drains in the streets and trash is polluting the waterways. It's really more of a safety concern. When you think about what the trash is doing to our environment, that is something that should be of paramount importance to the SWAC. It should really be a driving motivator in cleaning up the trash. We already know the level of microplastics that are in the environment is staggering the information coming from UNH right now. It's not just in the waterways. There was a new study that recently came out stating that honeybees' legs are clogged with microplastics. Even though companies state that plastic is being recycled, very little of it actually is. It may go away and go somewhere but if you look at the amount of energy and water it takes to actually recycle that to create a lesser quality plastic, she believes that they need to think a little more long-term and globally about some of their solutions. They need to look at reducing the amount of trash. If there wasn't so much going into the recycling bins, there wouldn't be as much of it flying around. She does think there is a will on this committee to address both of the problems. Addressing one will help the other. This is what she would like the commission to work on.

Peterson stated that a suggestion she had would be for the commission to make a recommendation to City Council consider installing several water stations. They would have to figure out the best locations but if there were a few installed in the Downtown area. There were quite a few people at Henry Law Park for the Summer Concert Series and multiple disposable plastic water bottles floating around. If there was a place where you could fill your reusable water bottle that most people now own, they could've filled their own water bottle instead of purchasing the plastic water bottles. She believes there are some things they could learn from other towns to reduce some of their overall recycling and there are things they can do to keep what recycling they have from creating another environmental and safety hazard.

Casey stated that he would like to recommend that they send notices to local businesses asking them to be proactive and request that they only use recyclable materials. He stated that Wing-Itz already uses recyclable containers and recyclable bags only. He stated that all of the grocery stores and retail locations are giving you single use bags.

Discussion ensued regarding trash complaints.

Peterson requested that plastics reduction be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Gilmore asked Storer if he was aware of any New Hampshire communities that had banned single use plastics. Storer was aware of some Maine communities that had, but was unsure about any New Hampshire communities.

A request was made to have Solid Waste Coordinator Mike Moore compile a list of complaints received regarding solid waste and recycling, and to have that information available for the next SWAC meeting.

Peterson had concerns about Waste Management operators flinging and damaging recycling bins. Storer noted the City will replace City-supplied bins with no questions asked, but residents do have to return the damaged bins when picking up a new one.

Stafford felt like the ongoing discussion was something of a tennis match, with back and forth discussion, but questioned when something was really going to be done.



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Dinzeo asked about enforcement of violations. Storer explained that staff do look into violations, and try to follow up on each complaint, but City staff do not have ability to issue on-the-spot citations. The enforcement process involves civil litigation where we have to provide notice of a violation, allow time for the violation to be addressed, and ability to assess civil penalties if violations continue or linger. Storer cited an unnamed First Street multifamily property that had been assessed violation notices.

Discussion continued about alerting the general public about rules either via social media, when registering a vehicle at City Hall, or via City water and sewer bills.

7. Consultant

Gilmore stated that at the last meeting, the City Manager mentioned looking for a recommendation regarding a consultant

Storer stated that when Moore returns, they will work together to draft a Request for Proposal or Request for Qualification. There is a way they can engage a consultant and task them with completing an analysis for what the city could be considering for the next trash/recycling contract. The City Manager would like to see the economics of the Community Services keeping the pickup in house with our own staff. Storer and Moore both agree that no one would do it better than city staff but they don't know what it would cost. It's not unheard of for municipalities to be picking up trash/recycling curbside. Portsmouth is already doing it as well as Durham and Hampton. Somersworth and Rochester contract, it out. He will try to present a draft RFP or RFQ to the commission in September.

Dinzeo asked if the study would include merging with another community and if they were going to pick up both trash and recycling.

Storer stated that if they were to collect it, they would be collecting both items.

8. Fund Balance

Storer reviewed the Solid Waste Revenue and Expense report with the Commission.

9. Old Business

Peterson requested an update regarding the toter grant.

Storer stated that he will find out from Mike Moore and email the commission regarding the status.

10. New Business

Peterson requested that they set topics for next Agenda, or at least have a process for getting topics submitted. Storer suggested getting them to Community Services staff, either himself, Jen Bretz or Mike Moore, and they can be passed on to the Chairman.

Dinzeo wanted to make sure a Consultant RFP would be available for review at next meeting, and he was also requesting an update on the lids that would be provided for the City-issued recycling bins.

Peterson suggested that the Commission review the Chapter 145 City Ordinances at the next meeting. Storer made a note to make sure printed copies of the Ordinance will be available.



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11. Next Meeting Date

September 15, 2022

12. Adjournment

Motion: Casey made the motion to adjourn at 7:28 pm, Dinzeo seconded.

Vote: U/a