

New London Waste Reduction Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 16, 2023

Call to order: Chairman Liz Meller called the meeting to order at 10:01 am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Liz Meller, Maureen Prohl, Joy Kubit, Gerry Gold

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jerry Coogan,

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Helm, Selectman; Bonnie Christie, Hopkinton Waste Reduction Committee.

MEETING MINUTES: Minutes for meeting of March 2, 2023, were unanimously approved.

PROJECTS:

Food Waste Composting Project: Regarding the Transfer Station food waste composting project with Renewal Composting Inc contractor, discussion of how to expand the project to 160 families was postponed to next meeting 3/30/23. Liz noted that Maureen's presentation at Town Meeting was very well received, with the Warrant approved with no objections. Bonnie Christie said she prefers the New London method of paid, commercial compost collection by Renewal Composting to the funded project CSA method in Hopkinton now used by Work Song Farm. SEE:

www.worksongfarm.com/ That project is sponsored by the Composting Association of Vermont: www.compostingvermont.org/community-composting; Spring Ledge Farm in New London decided to not participate in that CSA project.

Earth Day event: Discussion focused on plans for Earth Day (4/22/23) activities at Tracy Library: agenda, raffle, and presenters. Liz suggested asking Bob Harrington to contribute a DPW plastic home compost container for the raffle prize. Joy mentioned wooden (not plastic) disposable food implements. Liz and Maureen will develop the day's agenda. The event will begin with an outside, half-hour, composting demonstration, followed by indoor discussion topics. Rain date is 4/29/23.

Styrofoam Collection: Joy reminded that Saturday, April 1st, 9-11:00 AM is the Styrofoam collection planned by Sustainable Lebanon at 227 Mechanic St, Lebanon, behind Jake's Coffee. SEE: <https://lebanonnh.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2437>; Notice is posted on webpage of New London WRC. Joy wants to start planning for a Styrofoam collection day in New London for towns in our area. The Committee decided that the event would be like a well-publicized UVLSRPC hazardous waste collection event. Collection would be at DPW on South Pleasant Street. Planning to be coordinated with DPW/Bob Harrington and UVLSRPC through Jerry Coogan, the New London representative on UVLSRPC.

Public Education for Waste Reduction: Joy said May is National Compost Month. Maureen reported that Nancy Barthol at DPW suggested a waste Q&A article for Municipal Matters. She is also planning to install a Suggestions Box at the Transfer Station. Maureen is preparing a 1-page notice with a QR code. The notice could be posted on public bulletin boards in Town, including the Chamber of Commerce's Main Street building. Public awareness of food waste recycling could also involve restaurants who use Renewal Compost or other composting services if those restaurants would inform their customers via notice on tables or walls.

Gerry suggested interviewing officers of New London's residential communities as another approach to food waste reduction and composting education. Hilltop, Fenwood, and Highland Ridge are examples of such communities. He said he plans to meet with Nancy Marashio of the Fenwood Homeowners Association. Joy also reported that May 7-13 is International Compost Awareness Week, sponsored by the Compost Research and Education Foundation: SEE www.compostfoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home This is the largest and most comprehensive education initiative of the compost industry.

Paper Recycling: Regarding paper used by the Kearsarge Shopper, Howard Hoke, the publisher, has sought to use paper with 30% recycled content. But his supplier cannot get that product at present.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mission Statement for WRC: Bill said that Selectmen at an April meeting will review the Mission Statement taking Committee comments for consideration. Liz noted that reducing waste from food, paper, and plastics are the priorities. Joy asked if the Town could create a policy of not using single-use plastics for Town activities, such as the Recreation Department picnics and other events. And could the Town urge non-Town organizations, e.g., the hospital, to stop using plastics where possible.

Meeting Frequency? Liz asked if the Committee should meet bi-weekly or monthly in the future. Bonnie Christie said that in Hopkinton she prefers bi-weekly meetings to current monthly meetings.

OTHER: Happenings in the food waste composting space:

2023 USDA food waste grant agreements due 6/15/23: for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans. SEE www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/03/16/usda-announces-cooperative-agreements-compost-and-food-waste & www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/02/02/usda-invests-94-million-compost-and-food-waste-reduction-projects

NEXT MEETING DATE: Next Waste Reduction Committee meeting is scheduled for March 30th, 2023 at 10:00AM at Town Offices Syd Crook meeting room.

Motion to adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.

Respectfully submitted by Gerard Gold
Town of New London