

Building and Facilities Committee

Minutes of 5-20-21; Zoom

Members Present: Bowers, Cross, Sherman, Cardillo, Hoglund; Absent: Beasley, Bianchi, Cannon

Guests: Bob Harrington, Director, DPW: John Manaras, Chair, and, Liz Meller, Joe Kubit, Gerry Gold, Members, Solid Waste Management Committee; Cathy Robjent

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The roll was called, and each member present stated that no one else was in the room with that member.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of May 13, 2021, were reviewed by the Committee and were then approved unanimously.

2. Old Business

Transfer Station

The Chair welcomed the members of the Solid Waste Management Committee and Bob Harrington to the meeting and introduced for discussion the topic of the transfer station. He asked Mr. Manaras to discuss some of the background of the origins of the Sanborn Head report, and the current discussions of the Solid Waste Management Committee (SWMC) related to the transfer station needs. John stated that the origin of the report was an attempt by the Selectmen in 2017 to get a perspective on the long-term needs for recycling in New London as may be needed 5-10 years in the future. Sanborn Head proposed four options, without a recommendation, which were intended to address the issue of movement of recyclables from one place to another as well as some safety issues. The SWMC began the process of looking at the possibility of additional land, either from the State at the exit from I-89 or land abutting the site to the east which is a larger parcel that is subject to a conservation easement.

It was noted that in meetings with the State and Karen Ebel (NH House Representative) that there is a requirement that the transfer station have a buffer between its operations and the off ramp from I-89 and Highway 11.

The SWMC concluded that the residents of the Town were happy with the transfer station at that location and that a new site for those recycling functions should not be pursued. Bob Harrington noted that there were issues at the site, but that it would be important to proceed cautiously in addressing those needs rather than acting quickly and perhaps having other problems arise, such as the location of specific functions, requiring subsequent relocation. He and some Building Committee members visited the site in Walpole, NH, which is of similar size. There were some good things

observed there that he felt worth considering, but that it would be important to visit some other sites for additional information and ideas. He felt only one option proposed by Sanborn Head had possibilities, and even that would require substantial modifications.

Bob also discussed the lack of construction and debris disposal in New London, and that this is something that should be addressed. It is not clear whether the present site would support this kind of operation, and it would require a drive-on drive-off scale in order to establish a fair charge to users, based on the cost of getting rid of those materials in the commercial market. The site also needs improved/expanded storage capacity for plastics, metal, and, to some degree, aluminum. The aluminum is less of a problem as it can be taken to Claremont as the need arises. Excess plastic and tin cans are removed to, and stored at, the DPW site. This uses space at the DPW which could be used for other purposes and involves time and labor to move the materials to the DPW, and then move them again when they are disposed of from there. It would be better, more efficient, and less costly to bale (as is currently done at the transfer station site) and store these recyclables at the transfer station site, and this would free up the storage space currently utilized at the DPW site for better use for DPW equipment and DPW purposes. Improving the access for a loading dock and having another trailer available there, so there would be one to load and one to unload, would be an important improvement to address an important piece of this issue. Bob also noted that one of the Sanborn Head proposals removed the compactor from the design, and that this would not work. A compactor on site is essential to the operations. It would also be more efficient and cost effective if it were possible to move the metals recycling from the stump dump to the transfer station site.

The swap shop is an important part of the recycling effort, as every item taken is removed from the disposal stream, reducing the cost of items disposed of at the solid waste site.

“Traffic” is a problem in two ways. First, it is difficult for tractor trailers to enter and leave the site; and second, residents at times do not utilize the facility in a safe and orderly manner. Without regard to measured increases in product, there has been a notable increase in usage with increased traffic and back-up of vehicles at times. The size of the recycling building isn’t sufficient but could be solved by adding to the building rather than constructing a new building. “Gaylord boxes” are used for recycling bins, and have been found to be the best choice for durability. These require significant space to store in order to have an adequate supply available. There are also questions

that would require professional review, such as location of wetlands and use of the site taking that into account and use of or relocation of the current septic and well used with the “cottage,” if that is removed and appropriate facilities put in place for employee use.

Bob summed up by saying the main concerns, which should be addressed first, are: (1) freeing up the space at the DPW now used for recyclables storage; (2) additional storage trailers at the transfer station; and, (3) establish a process and location for accepting construction waste and debris (C&D). The brush, garden and leaves operation could remain at the stump dump, but, if possible, it would be a benefit to move the metals recycling from the stump dump to the transfer station site.

There was then general discussion that the day would come when use of the transfer station would exceed its capacity, and that it would be wise to begin a search now for a site which would accommodate all the uses contemplated to be needed. This may not be needed for 5-10 years, but it would be best to start looking now in an attempt to find a site that would fulfill the requirements, which requirements should be specifically defined and assessed. Gerry Gold stated that the SWMC should be fully involved, and that any review or search for new land should take into account that it should be located next to a State highway, as the wear and tear on the road accessing the facility would be substantial and would be a large expense to the Town. Better that the site be on a State highway, with that expense undertaken by the State. Liz Meller agreed that the SWMC should begin to address these issues right away and would like to attend other town recycling site visits. John Maranas noted that SWMC member Bob Brown, who is Chair of the Conservation Commission, should also be involved in this effort.

The Committee asked Peter Hogle to continue his efforts working with the DPW on these issues as liaison for the Committee, and that he lead a coordination of effort on these issues with Bob Harrington, John Manaras, and Bob Brown, in conjunction with the SWMC. Bob Harrington again noted that it is important to move deliberately and methodically, and that visits to other towns’ waste recycling efforts would be an important first step for new ideas on how to proceed, before taking any specific action.

The Chair thanked John and the SWMC members for their participation in this discussion, and Bob Harrington for all his efforts and analysis he has put into these issues, while simultaneously dealing with the myriad issues being faced by the DPW.

3. Reports

Mr. Sherman reported that Dennis Mires is pulling together information to include in a report to the Committee.

Mr. Bowers reported that John Cannon informed him that John had raised the issue of the records retention policy at the Selectmen's meeting on Monday, May 17, 2021.

Mr. Cardillo reported that the Committee should inform Michael Todd, Town Moderator, of the names of those who will be speaking on behalf of the Committee at the Town Meeting (on Wednesday, June 9, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the New London Historical Society grounds). He also discussed the "10%" rule which applies to amendments related to fund-raising and separate bond articles which are not approved by Selectmen or the Budget Committee. Under that rule to the extent such proposals exceed 10% of the Town Budget proposal presented, that Budget proposal must be reduced in the amount of that excess. The budget proposal this year is \$9,148,000 (rounded), and the petitioned bond article is \$1,100,000. If approved in that amount, and with 10% of the budget amount being \$914,800, the budgeted amount would be reduced by that excess (\$184,200), either at the Town meeting by amendment to the budget, or by the State of New Hampshire Dept. of Revenue Administration as it sees fit. In addition, he noted that state statute has been amended so that its passage of a bond issue requires only a 60% favorable vote, rather than 66 2/3%, as has been true in past years.

4. Other items to come before the Committee

The Chair informed the Committee that he would be stepping down as Chair effective the meeting after Town Meeting, on Jun 10, 2021. The Committee will need to elect a new Chair at that meeting.

The next meeting, on May 27, 2021, will be a discussion of priorities related to the transfer station to include in the priorities report the Committee is developing. The Chair invited the Solid Waste Management Committee and Bob Harrington to attend that meeting, if they wished to do so.

Action Items

(from 4-1-21)

- A. Peter Hoglund to discuss with Bob Harrington his thoughts on needs and solutions related to the DPW/transfer station, and to gather the relevant information and facts for future discussions with Mr. Harrington and the Committee. **In process.**

(4-15-21)

B. Peter Hoglund to confer with Bob Harrington, Mike Williams, and Phil Sherman to establish meetings and discussions to analyze facilities software issues. **In process.**

(5-6-21)

C. Colin Beasley to add the conclusions of the Committee regarding the Academy Building/EMC space to the draft priorities report. **In process.**

(5-13-21)

D. Chair to contact Bob Harrington to assure that he can attend the next meeting of the Committee on May 20, 2021. **Done.**

(present)

E. Peter Hoglund to meet with Bob Harrington, John Manaras, and Bob Brown to review possible changes at the transfer station to accommodate current needs.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 27, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Bowers, Chair