



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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New London Waste Reduction Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, August 11, 2022 10:00 AM

Call to order – Called meeting to order at 10:00am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Meller, Maureen Prohl, Gerry Gold, Jerry Coogan, Joy Kubit.

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Helm, Selectman; Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator

NEW BUSINESS/OTHER

- **Household Hazardous Waste Collection:** Kim reported that 204 cars brought Hazmat to New London's August 6th during a 3-hour collection at DPW's South Pleasant St location. Lesson: Residents care about Hazmat disposal and are paying attention to Hazmat announcements.
- **Swap Shop status:** Preceding that discussion was an update of pros and cons regarding re-establishing a "Swap Shop" at the Transfer Station. As with food waste processing at DPW, Kim stated that DPW staff time and space availability, and associated costs, are the key concerns.
- **Composting food waste:** Town of New London strategies for composting of **residential food waste** is the focus for this meeting. There are two primary goals of composting: reducing costs and negative effects on the climate. Food scraps compose 20 to 25% of the weight of our trash going to Berlin, New Hampshire. By reducing the weight of the trash, we save money in transportation and tipping fees in Berlin. Equally important is the savings in fossil fuels involved in transportation, the reduction of methane gas coming from food scraps in landfills, and the reuse of composted products in gardening and farming.
 - **Start Small:** New London, or any town, has two options for food waste composting: 1) build and manage a Town-scale project, or 2) pay a contractor to manage part or all the project. Either way, the goal is to save some costs over current trash hauling and landfill disposal. Timing: the group agreed that any trial of a Town food waste collection project would have to be at least 3-months duration, perhaps longer. Maureen has interviewed transfer station staff in Lebanon and Hollis, NH. Both say "start small" when developing a food waste composting project. Small demonstration projects build understanding of best practices and costs while educating residents (waste "donors") and transfer station staff how best to perform new responsibilities handling new tasks and equipment.
 - **Example: Hollis** started with 10 households bringing trash cans with food waste (no meat or dairy) brought weekly to the Hollis transfer station. The project has grown to 50 households. Key to success has been on-going education of participants for proper waste handling.
 - **Example: Lebanon** receives food waste on a large scale from Dartmouth Hospital and College and has its own large, municipal composting windrows.

Two years ago, Lebanon Solid Waste conducted a composting pilot project involving a limited number of households bringing bio-degradable plastic bags to the central landfill. It was very successful, and now composting is offered to all residents of Lebanon.

- **Town Sites for Compost Collection and Handling:** It was stated that 93% of New London households bring waste to the Transfer Station. Further discussion of composting dealt with how New London DPW sites could be designed for compost collection. As the "Stump Dump" already receives garden/yard waste and tree trimmings, that location is also likely to be the place of food waste collection. As an alternative, as we believe 93% of New London households bring their waste to the transfer station, perhaps that location could serve as a convenient drop-off point for food scrap collection.”
- Kim agreed to talk with Bob Harrington about the committee's discussion.
- Maureen presented a chart of methods and costs used by three commercial food waste composting companies in our area that offer weekly "Tote" collection. These companies also offer residential collection but ultimately that trash or food waste would come to the Town for bulk management.
 - Casella Waste: <https://m.casella.com/index.php/customers/compost-facilities>
 - Nordic Waste: <https://wecyclefood.com/>
 - Renewal Compost: <https://renewalcompost.com/>
- **Composting Site Alternatives:**
 - Town DPW food waste collection was discussed as one part of an overall strategy for Town-wide food composting. Such a strategy would include:
 - Town DPW food waste collection and composting, possibly using commercial services. Commercial "tote" barrels could be at DPW South Pleasant Street, or at Stump Dump off NH 114/Little Lake Sunapee Road. Members agreed that as the stump dump already receives garden/yard waste and tree trimmings, that location is a likely site for food waste composting, if the town eventually wants to go in the direction of municipal composting.
 - Residential composting using containers, including worm compost bins;
 - Residential composting using garden pits and leaf mulch.
 - Group composting at Hilltop, Fernwood, Parkside, Lake Sunapee CC. Maureen, Joy, and Gerry already compost their non-meat food waste at home in containers or dug into ground. Jerry Coogan suggested that Maureen make a YouTube of her composting as part of a Town compost education project.
 - Commercial (e.g., restaurant) food waste handling.
- **Next Steps:**
 - Kim agreed to talk with Bob Harrington about the committee's discussion.
 - Joy will make a site visit to Gilford, NH, to report on their recycling of polystyrene foam/Styrofoam.
 - Jerry Coogan volunteered himself and Gerry Gold to brainstorm ways to educate Town residents about food waste composting choices.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Next Waste Reduction Committee scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 2022 at 10:00am in Syd Crook Conference Room

Motion to adjourn: Motioned to adjourn at 11:00am.

Respectfully submitted,
Gerry Gold
Town of New London