

Henniker Solid Waste Disposal Committee
Meeting September 11, 2008 at 7 PM at the Community Center
Minutes – Corrected and Approved 9/25/2008

- Chairman John Kjellman called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM, after a few minutes of chit-chat with Mr. Ari, the guest speaker.
- Copies of the agenda, draft minutes of the 8/21/08 meeting, and a registration form for NRRA's Fall Bus Tour were distributed to each member.
- The meeting was recorded on two recorders (see more about this issue later in the minutes).
- John made mention of the NRRA's Fall Bus Tour, which will occur on 10/8/08, to include tours of Casella's single stream recycling facility, the Derry transfer station, and RMG's electronics recycling facility. He further noted that he attended NRRA's monthly marketing meeting for the first time, the day before.
- Bill Christiano, Michael French, Lia Houk, John Kjellman, Ron Lavallee, Stephany Lavallee, Donna MacMillan, Linda Patterson, and Rod Pimentel were in attendance. Amanda Gilman was absent. Don Blanchard attended as a non-member.
- The minutes of the 8/21/08 meeting were reviewed, a few corrections noted, then approved as corrected.
- Mr. Fuat Ari, Executive Director, Northeast Resource Recovery Association was introduced and began his presentation.
 - Mr. Ari pointed out his background is in finance, that he is new to recycling, but that he is happy to be working for something that is for the public good.
 - NRRA was formed about 28 years ago to provide towns and municipalities with marketing, technical, and regulatory information about waste reduction and recycling.
 - NRRA currently has about 415 members, most of which are towns and municipalities, with members in several states including Connecticut, Maine, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.
 - NRRA is a non-profit organization supported by its members through membership fees, fund raising, notably its annual conference, which includes a silent auction, fees collected for arranging for the processing of recycled materials, and the sale of such items as composting bins. Four hundred fifteen people attended the 2007 conference.
 - NRRA's job to find the best price available for a load of recycled materials when a member calls and says it has a load ready for pickup or delivery. A typical fee for arranging for the processing a load of corrugated cardboard, for instance, would be \$2 to \$3/per ton, which is used to fund NRRA operations.
 - NRRA's board provides direction, but is not involved in fund raising.
 - NRRA does apply for, and sometimes obtains, Federal grants for specific purposes. Last year it lost a grant because some of its member towns are too wealthy.
 - NRRA doesn't get much help from the state. DES has only two people involved in recycling.
 - One of NRRA's purposes is education, and it has a program about recycling that it takes to 750 schools, reaching some 85,000 children.
 - NRRA has an annual operating budget of \$846,000 and a staff of eleven.
 - NRRA has started a new program focusing on small business recycling, saying many firms now want to "go green," for economic reasons or because it is the right thing to do, or both. The focus of this program will be on firms with 100 to 500 employees. Large businesses take care of their own recyclables, "to a degree."
 - NRRA also visits transfer stations, and offers advice and information that can help them be more efficient, by dealing with labor and space vis-à-vis revenue issues. It also provides assistance in purchasing common materials that are used by all transfer stations, such as baling wire, where it is able to obtain quantity discounts of 20 to 30%.
 - NRRA attempts to have a staff member visit every member's facilities at least once a year, but due to the small size of the staff this doesn't always happen.

- NRRA provides a one-stop resource for its members, the phones never stop ringing. Each member has a specific staff representative, who is intimately familiar with the operations of that member town or municipality. Each type of recycled material, and there are many, requires special attention.
- NRRA members produce a premium recyclable product, because it is not single-stream, and members do a good job of separating recycled materials by material type. Single-stream does have the advantage of convenience, and with it recycling rates tend to increase by 10 to 35%. That is an advantage of single-stream. NRRA does not have a position on single-stream as being good or bad. Towns that already have rates of 50% or more tend to feel single-stream would not help them.
- The national average for recycling is 26% (2002 data), which is absolutely terrible. In Europe, it is in the 80-90% range. N.H.'s rate is about 27%. [The number from DES is 20%]. The goal for N.H. is 40%.
- Americans consume 25% of the world's goods, we generate 1.4 tons of trash per person per year.
- Maine's recycling rate is over 50%, Vermont's is 47-48%. Massachusetts has a better rate than N.H.
- NRRA gets a better rate for recyclable material than other states, despite lower volumes, because N.H. produces a higher quality product because transfer stations do a good job of preventing contamination..
- NRRA members are not required to sell through NRRA, they can deal with recyclers directly. But, to get the best price, they should check with NRRA to see if they are getting the best price by going directly. Some members put every load out to bid.
- NRRA never works with a single vendor, so that it can be assured that it is always getting a competitive price.
- NRRA doesn't send recycling materials to recycling processors unless it knows that the materials will be handled properly. In particular, it is known that some electronic materials processors may just dump the material they handle, without processing it properly. NRRA wouldn't use that vendor, even if it offered a better price.
- Over 50% of cardboard and paper goes directly to China. In the future, that will probably change as China will presumably learn to recycle its own materials.
- NRRA doesn't get involved in issues such as curbside pickup.
- The NRRA doesn't have any data on the amount of material handled and reused in member swap shops. Swap shops are not something that NRRA normally gets involved with. John asked if NRRA would at least try to be aware of member swap shop activities, and capture any swap shop data that it comes across. The best form of recycling is reuse, and many towns have swap shops.
- It was mentioned that in Henniker the swap shop is cleaned out once a week, meaning some items don't stay in the shop long enough to be picked up by someone.
- One observation is that so-called professionals sometimes dominate swap shops, and some communities have rules limiting the time a person can remain in the shop at one time.
- NRRA doesn't have any data about how the cost of operating transfer stations increases as population increases.
- There was a question about businesses that choose to collect recyclables in single stream mode, where was the savings or cost avoidance? It doesn't reduce transportation costs, but tipping fees are reduced because less material goes to the incinerator or landfill.
- A question was asked about Pay-As-You-Throw. NRRA feels this is community issue and takes no stand on it. NRRA agrees that towns that have gone to PAYT generally are happy with the results.
- The reason why #1 plastics must be in the form of bottles in order to be recycled, is that other types of #1 plastic have a different melting temperature.
- It would be most helpful if the Feds and states developed mandates for recycling #2 thru #7 plastics, just as was done years ago for #1 and #2. California, years ago, told manufacturers they had to reuse a certain percentage of their #1 and #2 plastics. Look what happened, a big market developed. Recyclers can't get enough #1 and #2 now.
- Currently there is some market for #2 thru #7 mixed, but only in large volumes. Most of it goes to an incinerator or a landfill.
- NFI was a company that was planning to process plastics #2 thru #7, but it has apparently folded.

- It was asked if plastic grocery bags were recyclable. The answer is yes, but it takes so many bags to make a ton, that collection and storage is a problem that mitigates against recycling them. A lot of states are trying to ban them. Hannaford takes its bags back. Paper bags are more expensive. Consumer-supplied cloth bags are the best answer.
- A company called Teracycle is recycling plastic wrapping.
- Some companies are working on recycling Styrofoam, to turn into building bricks, but it is not something we can do yet.
- Flat sheet rigid insulation is not recyclable now.
- Not many towns recycle roofing materials, as they don't collect enough to make it viable, but in large volume they are recyclable. There are about 46 million tons of roofing shingles being replaced each year. Ashland collects used shingles and ships them to Maine, according to Ron, where it is used as road fill. In general, contractors don't take used shingles to local transfer stations, they take them directly to landfills, which limits the opportunity to recycle them.
- Most C&D material, such as shingles, goes to Errco, which separates and recycles.
- It was observed that we're not allowed to burn wood with latex paint on it, but it's OK to toss a can of dried latex paint into the hopper, which goes to the incinerator. John pointed out that it seems like we're wasting a lot of energy by burying painted wood rather than sending it to the incinerator.
- Bottle caps should go into the bin for tin cans.
- Cat food cans have Teflon linings, which is why they are not as valuable as aluminum beverage cans. Food contamination is a problem with aluminum food containers.
- There was a question about the NRRA Fall Bus tour. After some discussion it was determined that all members of the committee qualify for the member rate, as Henniker is a member of NRRA.
- John thanked Mr. Ari for his excellent and informative presentation, and for being willing to give up an evening of soccer to come to talk with us.
- John asked how many members thought they might go on NRRA's Fall Bus Tour. The answer was two or three. A motion was made and seconded for John to ask the Town to reimburse members for the \$30 bus tour fee. The motion was voted on and approved. John also said he would inquire about the need for hard hats and reflective vests, and would explore options for providing them to members who go on the tour who don't have their own.
- John discussed plans for the 9/25 and 10/9 meetings. The meeting on 9/25 will be a planning meeting, in which each member will be asked discuss that information he/she has learned over the past few weeks, as it relates to their assigned tasks in particular. Further, we will discuss what we need to do next as a committee, and develop a list of possible options for the town to consider. Don Blanchard asked about a historical perspective. John said that Michael was working on that, and that we would like to have a historical recap in our report. John will invite Jim Presher from the Concord COOP to talk to us about single stream (combined) recycling, and perhaps a little about incineration, at our 10/9 meeting.
- John proposed future meeting dates of 10/23, 11/6, and 11/20, to which there was no objection. All the dates are Thursdays. John also mentioned that by scheduling our meetings several weeks in advance, Amanda believes she can get those days off so that she can attend future meetings. He pointed out that she has been listening to recordings of the meetings.
- Ron stated that he strongly objects to the recording of meetings, and pointed out that Mr. Ari had several times during his presentation stated that selected remarks were "off the record," but the recording continued. Stephany added that she thought the recording of meetings was a one-time thing, and was uncomfortable with having meetings recorded.
- Ron also expressed his opinion that, according to town rules, members who miss three meetings should be off the committee, and suggested the rule should be applied in Amanda's case. He also said that committee members are interactive, members who aren't at the meetings can't interact with other members, even if do listen to a recording of the meeting.

- Bill asked if the reason John was recording the meetings was for Amanda's benefit. John said that two issues had been raised. One was the issue of recording meetings, and the other was Amanda's repeated absences from meetings, and that he wanted to separate the two.
- On the issue of recording of meetings, John stated that he did start recording meeting and field trips for Amanda's benefit, but then came to think it was a useful tool for developing the minutes and should be continued. Rod pointed out that at one time the selectmen used to record meetings, but that the recordings were erased after the minutes were completed, so there was no permanent recording of meetings. Stephany said she was unaware she was being recorded at the transfer station. She is uncomfortable with the recordings. Ron stated that one cannot, by law, record anybody without their permission. John pointed out that at Wheelabrator and at the transfer station, he made a point to tell the person leading the tour that he was recording, but he did not make a point of telling everybody in the group. Linda made the point that she has used recording of other meetings to help flesh out the minutes. Bill asked if there was a problem if we erased the recordings after the minutes were completed, and Stephany said yes, it was a problem. She said she would not give her consent to being recorded. Ron said he objected to being recorded. Michael asked what the laws were concerning the recording of public meetings. There was no answer. John suggested that we could among ourselves come to an agreement. Rod suggested we should check out the law. John said that even if the law said it was OK, that doesn't resolve the issue if two people on the committee are strongly against it. Linda mentioned that so far she hasn't seen the detail in the meeting minutes that she expected. She assumed the recordings would be helpful in providing more detailed minutes.
- Rod started to make a motion, which lead to question if there was already a motion made by Ron on the table. It was decided that Ron had made a motion not to record meetings, and that it had been seconded by Stephany. After a brief discussion the motion was defeated, 4 to 3, with two abstentions.
- There was more discussion. Rod then stated that it is not a big deal whether or not we record meetings, and that in deference to those with a strong objection to recordings, we shouldn't record. John stated with that thinking, we should have had more no votes for the motion we just defeated. He suggested another motion, not to record, that recording meetings is it not critical to the committee. Linda said that if we don't record, we should have several people recording when there is a lot of data being presented.
- Linda, in the spirit of reconciliation, moved that we ban the recording of meetings. Michael seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- John then turned to the issue of Amanda's attendance, and said that he expected her to start attending meetings in the future, that she could get the necessary days off work when she had the dates of meetings well in advance. He also said that Amanda had been listening to the meeting recordings, and was very interested in participating on the committee. He stated that he believed this problem would resolve itself satisfactorily. Ron added that he felt it is important that the committee abide by the Town's attendance rules, and that any exceptions should be approved by the selectmen.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Submitted, September 19, 2008

John V. Kjellman
Chairman