

Town of Henniker
Solid Waste Disposal Committee
Thirty-Third Meeting: Thursday, February 4, 2010, 7:00 PM
At The Grange

Approved Minutes

Present: Michael C. French, Lia Houk, John V. Kjellman, Donna MacMillan, and Linda Patterson.

Absent: Don G. Blanchard, Bill Christiano, Amanda Gilman, and Rod Pimentel.

Chairman John Kjellman called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

- 1) Handouts: Draft minutes of January 21st meeting, Final Draft of Report to Town (version 13), Updated Executive Summary, Draft letter to BOS for report delivery, Article from Eagle Tribune of 1/7/10 of changes at Pelham Transfer Station.
- 2) Chairman John Kjellman began with his introduction:
 - a. He said thanks to Linda Patterson for pointing out that the Parks and Rec budget is being combined with the Solid Waste Disposal budget this year. It makes this year's proposed increase less significant than what he indicated at the last meeting. Last year was \$609,012 plus \$71,060 for Parks & Rec for a total of \$693,395. This year Bob proposed \$707,355, up two percent, not the 14% he indicated. The BOS has reduced it to \$688,355, which is actually a reduction of about one percent. He said he hadn't heard any public complaints from Bob about the reduction.
 - b. John explained he followed up on a comment made by Lia, and reviewed the issue of reconciling the T/S recycling rate published in last year's Town Report. He said when he deducted materials that the EPA does not consider when calculating recycling rates, namely used clothing and brush and leaves, that he come very close to the 31.8% reported by Bob. The only difference seemed to be that Bob probably included used oil, and the EPA definition does not include that. There were only 9 tons of oil, so it didn't affect the calculation by much.
 - c. John said Peter Flynn e-mailed him the info about changes at the Pelham T/S. He used to be TA in Pelham. The changes seem in keeping with the trends we see at the bigger and better transfer stations. John's e-mail with the agenda had a link to a nifty video about the remodeled T/S at Pelham.
 - d. John said the copy of the Executive Summary handed out at last meeting wasn't Don's latest effort. It is part of the handouts tonight.
- 3) The minutes of the January 21, 2010 meeting were reviewed. **Lia Houk made a motion to accept the minutes with one correction. The motion was seconded by Linda Patterson and passed unanimously.**
- 4) Michael French briefed the Committee on his continuing study of recycling rates in Henniker and other New Hampshire communities. He said he had focused on two

basic rates, the rates reported by transfer stations, where there is generally good data on what gets recycled and what is disposed of as trash, and town-wide recycling rates as reported by NH DES (Don Maurer).

Michael said he identified 11 communities with transfer station recycling rates at least as good as the 39% (which is actually 31%) reported in Henniker, and found the average was about 50%. That includes communities that report as high as 70%, due in part because, in the case of Plymouth, they accept recycling but no trash from businesses. Michael concluded from this that 50% is a reasonable goal for Henniker's transfer station.

John said he agreed, and based in part of Michael's earlier discussion, he had raised the goal for mandatory recycling to 45% in the report. He said that he thought that 50% is achievable. The Committee agreed that there is no way the Town as a whole could achieve a 50% recycling rate without a big increase in recycling by the customers of the commercial haulers.

John pointed out that looking at national numbers he was amazed to see that composting accounts for a significant percentage of recyclable material nationwide, and that a composting program could boost the Town's recycling rate, even though many people are already home composting. Lia Houk said that with sufficient space, composting can occur year-round, but that there is some resistance to public composting because people think it would attract animals and be smelly, but that isn't necessarily so.

Linda said Stone Falls accepts leaves and yard trimmings, but no household garbage.

Michael said he identified seven communities with town-wide recycling rates of 19% or better (approximately Henniker's reported rate). He said the average of these communities was a 29% recycling rate.

The Committee discussed the significance of that rate. On one hand it seems reasonable, but only if some sort of program was established to collect recyclable materials from the customers of the commercial haulers. It was pointed out that NEC is a major customer of Naughton (perhaps half of the trash Naughton picks up in Henniker is from NEC), and that NEC is putting more life into its recycling efforts. It now has one dumpster dedicated to commingled recyclable materials.

Michael pointed out that if a program could be put in effect to collect all the recyclable materials generated by the College, it would have a big effect on the Town's overall recycling rate. Lia said there are almost 1,000 students at NEC.

John said it would be interesting to know if there are any national statistics regarding recycling on college campuses.

Michael said we should not only set a recycling goal for the T/S, but also one for the Town as a whole, perhaps 29%, perhaps some other number.

Michael said he has updated his spreadsheet, and he thought it would be good to include it as an appendix in the report, as it could help to explain some of the numbers and assumptions used in the report. There was a general agreement that this makes sense.

- 5) Review and discussion of version 13c of the draft report to the selectman and plans for report finalization.
 - a. John said that he still had not finished the report, but had pretty much incorporated all of the editorial comments he had received from Committee members, except for a few from Lia which he just received this past weekend. He said the comments and suggestions have been very good, and he has incorporated most into the report. He said the latest copy shows all changes since version 12d, and has many new footnotes, many of which contain the calculations used for numbers in the report.
 - b. John said he would try to get an updated version of the report to Committee members before next weekend, so committee members would have time to review it before our next meeting. The goal is to have a report that could be approved at the next meeting, but the commitment we've made publicly is to have it handed in to the BOS before Town Meeting.
 - c. John said it is possible we could make a presentation to the BOS before Town Meeting, but he wasn't at all sure about that. He said he hoped there would be some sort of public informational meeting to discuss the report.
 - d. Linda asked what the procedure would be for presenting the report to the BOS. John said the Committee would deliver the report to the BOS, and that it was up to the BOS to decide what to do next. He said by not asking the Committee for recommendations, the BOS has made the next step more difficult in some ways, as it now has to review the information and decide what to do next. We have presented the BOS with some philosophical issues they need to grapple with before deciding on any changes. Lia pointed out that she expected that the BOS would come back to the Committee and ask for more information on specific options.
- 6) There was a discussion of Don Blanchard's Executive Summary. Michael asked if it had been reviewed previously, and he was told that Don had been continually updating and revising it, in response to comments made by Committee members when it was reviewed at meetings, and in response to changes in the report as it evolved. It was agreed that it should be reviewed again, and that it should be presented to the BOS along with the full report. Linda said she had a question about the last sentence in Don's report, she thinks that scales for weighing materials not only make things more equitable, they make them more accurate.
- 7) John said he has drafted a report delivery letter to the BOS, which Committee members should review before the next meeting. He said that he needs to add a reference to the Executive Summary in the letter.
- 8) Next meeting: Thursday February 18, 2010 at 7pm.
- 9) **Motion to adjourn was made by Michael French at 8:19 PM, seconded by Donna MacMillan and carried unanimously.**

Submitted 2/9/10

By John V. Kjellman

Corrected and Approved 2/18/10