Bethlehem Transfer Station Committee

Bethlehem, NH

Minutes of the Meeting

July 21, 2020

Note: Virtual Meeting via “Zoom”.

Committee members participating: Nancy Strand (host), Barry Zitser, Chris Jensen, Julie Seely, and Katherine Darges; Guests, also on Zoom, were Michelle Moren-Gray from the North Country Council, and Coryanne Mansell, from the Center for Eco Technology, Northampton, MA.

The meeting opened with a very informative, detailed presentation from Coryanne Mansell from the Center for Echo Technology (CET). The CET’s main thrusts are teaching organizations how to save energy and reduce waste. They provide guides and program ideas that can help businesses and communities learn how to achieve those goals. In the future, CET may be able to help Bethlehem with such things as compost site assistance, businesses engagement, etc. With this in mind, they do charge a fee-for-service, but they have also worked together with municipalities and others to find funding.  Two links that provide more information on CET’s capabilities are [centerforecotechnology.org](http://centerforecotechnology.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) and [wastedfood.cetonline.org](https://wastedfood.cetonline.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

Ms Mansell gave an overview composting: developing a plan for making it efficient, workshops for getting “buy in” from individuals and businesses, cost impact of necessary equipment and personnel, some ideas for starting a “pilot program” and developing it so that it could become permanent.

Barry Zitser asked if CET would be able to review a plan for a composting program if the Transfer Station Committee (TSC) were to develop it. Ms Mansell said that it was possible if the TSC would find funding for it.

Barry asked if there were communities that provide some kind of incentives to schools and businesses to join a composting program. Ms Mansell said that “yes, they do”. They may offer bins or tax credits.

Nancy Strand asked if it was valuable to provide compost to residents. Ms Mansell said that it is valuable, not only to residents but also to the Department of Public Works (DPW) to us at schools, public gardens, etc.

Nancy then inquired about adding meat and dairy for composting. Ms Mansell explained that it is possible if it is done correctly. Animal products decompose differently and contain more moisture.

Michelle Morin-Gray asked if individual states have their own regulations about composting. Ms Mansell answered “yes”.

The TSC thanked Ms Mansell for her excellent and useful presentation. She then left the meeting.

Julie Seely provided an update on the North Country Environmental Services (NCES) permit for Stage 6 landfill application with the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES). The DES considers the application to be complete, which starts the “clock” for review, a public hearing, and ruling on the application. They have not made a schedule yet. The DES has 120 days to schedule and 30 days after that to announce their ruling, meaning that the ruling could be announced on November 3, 2020.

Nancy reminded the Committee about the October 31 deadline for ordering free signage for the future Bethlehem Transfer Station, available from New Hampshire the Beautiful. We have 60 “points” to spend. Some of the signs are generic and we could easily store them for future use.

Barry suggested that we each come up with five signs in order of preference, along with their point costs, that we can discuss at the next meeting.

North Country Council received kudos from our contingency.

Chris Jensen asked the other Committee members about whether they felt that it was time to start a permitting process for a temporary transfer station a little earlier than we originally planned. The group opinion was that 120 days still would be appropriate, so long as the Select Board does not feel a need to begin the process sooner.

The TSC Minutes of the May, 2020 meeting were approved. This had been delayed because Katherine Darges, who took the minutes, was not at the June meeting to answer any questions or make changes.

The TSC Minutes of the June, 2020 meeting were approved.

Barry will try to make connections with trash hauling companies just in case we need them in the coming months.

Committee members discussed the possibility of having a hybrid meeting on August 18 – both in person and on Zoom. It was approved unanimously.

If Nancy’s Zoom account is not working, we will use the Town Account.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.