Transfer Station Committee

Minutes of March 7, 2023 – Reported by Chris Jensen

Present: Nancy Strand, Margaret Gale, Katherine Darges, Barry Zitser and Chris Jensen.

There was a brief discussion and approval of the March issue of “Just Be Greener.”

Ms. Strand made the approval motion, which was seconded by Mr. Jensen and unanimously approved.

There was a general discussion of the desirability of a “repair café” in which people with the ability to fix various items would help residents save money and minimize equipment and other items going into the landfill.

Nancy Strand said she contacted Meadowstone Farm to see whether it would be interested in picking up food waste at the new transfer station. She reported that Tim Wennrich said they are already picking up at the Littleton and Franconia transfer stations and promised to do the same in Bethlehem. Ms. Strand said she would ask for a formal letter-of-support to include with the USDA grant application.

There was a discussion about the progress of the USDA grant and some editorial tweaking of the supplemental, environmental report. Mr. Zitser made a motion to approve the report as amended. It was seconded by Mr. Jensen. The motion was unanimously approved. The committee agreed to send copies to various town committees or officials.

The committee also reviewed the information and site design sent by Aries, which was seeking input from the town. Mr. Jensen made a motion to share some of the committee’s thoughts with Aries, Ms. Strand seconded and the vote was unanimously in favor. The committee decided to let Aries know:

* The committee is pleased with Aries’ work and appreciates its efforts.
* The committee sees no need for a septic system. A portable toilet should suffice.
* The committee feels there should be minimal paving.
* The committee questions the need for running water, but would like information about the cost of a well. As a related matter, the committee also agreed to ask Fire Chief Jack Anderson whether there is a need for enough water at the site for firefighting.
* The committee wanted to make sure that Aries know the town is interested in the cost of a compactor truck.
* The committee questions the proposed traffic route since there are different lanes for dropping off garbage bags and recyclables.
* The committee asked for an explanation of the “processed glass” designation.

Katherine Darges said she previously lived in a town with 100,000 people that had a simple transfer station that was basic, efficient and cost-effective. She noted that Bethlehem might need to start with something along those lines and then add features in subsequent years.

It was noted that the USDA grant – if approved – would only pay for 35 percent of the total.

Mr. Jensen noted that having a plan for a basic, but functional transfer station would be a good idea should voters not approve additional funding.

Mr. Zitser said it would be a good idea to check with USDA on which financial documents are acceptable and the committee agreed.

There was also a discussion of the proposed budget, which is required as part of the USDA application. It was noted that a budget would require approval by the select board and this is a theoretical estimate required for a USDA application. Nancy Strand made a motion to adopt the budget so it could be forwarded to Aries and be included in the application. Mr. Jensen seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jensen reported that he contacted the head of DOT’s Region One about a driveway permit for the site on Route 116 and was told that should not be a serious problem.

Mr. Jensen said he also asked about the required “intergovernmental review.” He said it requires sending several documents to the state, but that can be done after the USDA application is filed.

The minutes were approved.

Mr. Zitser volunteered to take minutes at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.