Transfer Station Committee Minutes January 9, 2024

Bethlehem Public Library

Nancy Strand, Barry Zitser (on telephone), Andrea Bryant, Paul Karpawich, Chris Jensen

Minutes by Chris Jensen

The meeting began at 6 p.m.

1. Nancy Strand noted that a lot has happened since the last meeting and she provided updates:
* The town has been in touch with an aide in Rep. Ann McLane Kuster’s office who can guide us with Congressionally Directed Spending.
* The town re-submitted the U.S.D.A grant on Dec. 13th.
* The town submitted the Mascoma Bank Foundation grant, seeking $40,000.
* Mary Moritz, Nancy Strand and Chris Jensen met at town hall with Tim Wennrich to discuss composting and collecting food waste and how Meadowstone operates. Tim also explained they use a composter that cost about $40,000, including overhead coverage.
* Mt. Carberry has confirmed it will accept the town’s municipal waste.
* The TSC’s annual report was submitted for the 2023 annual report.
* The select board approved the appointment of TSC member Andrea Bryant to the Ammonoosuc River Local Advisory Committee.
1. There was a discussion about grant money and how to make Bethlehem’s application stand out. Ms. Strand noted one possibility that arose from the conversation with Mr. Wennrich: Bethlehem operating a regional food-waste facility. This could be a pilot project in which Bethlehem collects food waste from neighboring towns, Bethlehem businesses and possibly schools.

 That food waste could either be composed at Bethlehem’s transfer station or sent to Meadowstone Farm. Bethlehem would be the first town in the North Country to pursue a program designed to promote a comprehensive regional landfill diversion program for food waste.

Committee members agreed the program would be good for the environment and might increase the chances of getting a grant or Congressionally Directed Spending. It was also agreed that a large grant would reduce the burden on taxpayers and a pilot program would be worth the extra effort and expense. However, Mr. Karpawich cautioned that his experience shows such on-site composting is not as simple as it seems and must be done carefully.

The commission also reviewed and made some changes to a draft letter seeking Congressionally Directed Spending for $1 million, which would cover the entire cost of the transfer station.

1. There was a brief discussion about items for the next issue of “Just Be Greener.”
2. It was agreed that the next meeting would be Feb. 6th at 6 p.m. at the library.

At 6:50 p.m. Ms. Strand made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Mr. Karpawich and unanimously approved.