The meeting began at 6:04 PM. Present were Nancy Strand, Paul Karpawich, Chris Jensen, and Barry Zitser, and within minutes, joined by Julie Seely and Andrea Bryant.

There was no public input.

**Update on Grants**. Nancy reported that the Town passed the first cut for a Congressional discretionary spending grant for $750,000. Mary Moritz, the Town Administrator, has some optimism about getting the grant, but emphasized there is no guarantee. The grant would be for spending for 2025. Thus, we might hear about a final decision in a few months.

Barry noted that the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) has offered to submit letters of support for grants applied for by members. He submitted the following resolution, which was seconded by Chris, and unanimously adopted.

Resolved that the Transfer Station Committee recommends that the Select Board authorize the Town Administrator, Mary Moritz, to request letters of support for all Town grant applications for a future transfer station from the Northeast Resource Recovery Association.

Barry also noted that he attended a webinar on the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Healthy Communities Grant Program. EPA anticipates the awarding of 15 grants in the New England area, with a maximum of $40,000. The deadline application date for this year is November 1st. Barry’s review of past recipients, the extensive application documents, the clear bias for existing programs, the requirement for letters of commitments from all participants, budget details, and quantifiable targets, left him with the clear impression that this is not a viable application for the current year. But the grant program looked ideal for Paul’s school/food-waste program, and Barry previously forwarded some material to him.

Nancy noted that we have not yet heard from the Mascoma Bank Foundation about our pending grant. However, she stated that the maximum grant that the Foundation would grant for applications would be $25,000.

Barry finally noted that The Recycling Partnership grant application is still alive.

**Update on Visits to Other Transfer Stations**. Barry noted that he previously sent out an email review of his visit to the Stratford Transfer Station (TS). It appears to run just fine on single-phase electric power. It also reinforces the desire to have a solar array at some point at our future transfer station. The major surprise is that there was not a pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) program. This has probably led to a higher per-person solid waste disposal, and higher per-person contribution from general revenues.

While Barry visited the Thornton/Campton/Ellsworth TS, the population served (over 6,000), budget ($716,000), equipment (3 balers and three-phase power) did not make it a good comparison for Bethlehem’s future TS. He didn’t take pictures, but the layout appeared to be very similar to the Littleton TS. Like Littleton, the Thornton TS has running water and a sewage system. The surprise is that they don’t have PAYT. They mix plastics 1-7, but only get a very small price as a result. They take municipal solid waste (MSW) to the NCES landfill twice per week, with a transportation charge of $592 per trip. They take some waste oil because they use it for their heating system like Littleton also does. They will take commercial C&D but require some proof that it was generated within the towns served. The major value of the visit was to find out that the Waterville TS had its own compactor truck.

Chris went to the Carroll TS, and says that the Bretton Woods complex also has its own transfer station. Normandeau picks up MSW from the Carroll TS once per week. The Carroll TS has two part-time employees. They take C&D. Stockley Trucking in Lisbon takes a lot of its appliances for recycling. The Carroll TS has a composting program with food.

Paul went to the Hopkinton/Webster TS, which serves a population of 6,000. They do have a PAYT program for the Hopkinton residents, but apparently do not like it. Webster residents, who make up about 25% of the population served, do not have PAYT. The annual budget is about $808,000. There were about 421 tons of recyclables, which raised $24,652 in revenue. Plus, recycling saved $37,000 by not having to use MSW disposal services. This equates to about $90 of savings per ton.

Julie went to the Tri-town TS. Tim Blake is the Manager of the TS. They have three-phase power. They recently purchased a brand new baler, a Marathon 6. The TS is open four days per week, with 8-hour days. They are getting more picky about plastic recycling. The towns have PAYT, recently raised to $5 per large bag and $3 per small bag. The towns raised more than $100,000 from the sale of bags. The combined population of the towns is about 2,000, with a lot of seasonal homes. Roughly $250,000 is raised from general revenues to fund the TS. She was given advice not to skimp on a register.

Nancy visited the Lancaster TS. It’s Manager, Rusty Scott could provide additional information, if he addresses the TS as a future guest speaker. Lancaster’s population is about 3,500. Household median income is only about $5,000 more per year than Bethlehem’s. They had some difficulty finding a TS Manager and went without one for 9 months. Rusty is a full-time employee. They have another full time, and two part time employees. The TS is open 3 days a week, and also has a day for baling, etc. Rusty criticized NRRA because it does not disclose the amount of the cut that it takes for connecting members to recycling services. He noted that when he went outside of the NRRA system he got some better prices for some recyclables. There are only two tire collectors in the area, but will not do business outside of NRRA. So he still does tires and mixed paper through NRRA. Lancaster doesn’t have a weight scale, and he wishes they had one. But they do take both residential and commercial C&D. He raised the fee for commercial C&D. He says there is no longer any market for mixed paper. All of the TS buildings are very old, and the place looks a bit dumpy. It didn’t have a swap shop. They apparently have a good crew. He is working a 40-hour week – ten hours per day.

Paul suggests that we record some of the salient points that we have learned from our visits.

**Discussion on Phase 1 Reduction Cost**. Chris notes that we should not count on getting enough grant money to fund the full Phase I costs of almost $900,000. Barry noted that in addition to the cost burden of building a new transfer station, there will be some loss of revenue from the closing of the landfill, as well as some operation costs that will require contribution from general funds. The general feeling, however, was that we should not have a scaled down Phase I cost at this time, since all of our grant requests are based on the full plans.

Chris suggested that we invite Rusty Scott and Tim Blake as guest speakers at a future meeting. Chris and Barry volunteered to give a $100 gift certificate to Rek lis for a guest speaker. Chris also volunteered to informally check with Normandeau Trucking to see what their current fees are in the event that the future transfer station would utilize a third-party contractor for some services.

The July 9, 2024 minutes, as drafted by Chris, were unanimously approved.

The next meeting date was set for September 24th at 6 PM at the Library.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40.