

Salem Recycling Committee Meeting Minutes, March 6, 2023

Attending

Joel Dashnaw Chair, Carol Hautau Vice Chair, Jen Birenbach Secretary, Janelle Rolke, City Liaison, Bruce Cohen, Demi Fox, Cameron Fullerton, Geri Yuhas

Open seats: 3

Absent: Nancy Gilberg

Guest: Andy Varela, Ward 7 Counselor

Recycling Committee Mission Statement

The mission of SalemRecycles, a committee appointed by the Mayor, is to reduce trash tonnage in the City of Salem by increasing recycling, diverting reusable items, and motivating city stakeholders through education and information.

February 2023 Minutes

Motion to approve: Carol Hautau, Jen Birenbach seconded

Approved

Old / Ongoing Business

February Repair Cafe & TerraCycle Event Recap, Janelle & Committee

Janelle estimated a historical amount of attendees requesting services, she opened a couple of new fixer stations due to demand and still had a waitlist. There were some no-shows and cancellations, which is to be expected, and also some people came without an appointment. Out of these walk-ins, some were able to be helped due to no-shows. Repair fixers were kept busy as it's still a popular event, even after the covid break.

Janelle has already begun working on the next one, scheduled for May 20th with the third scheduled for November 4th, both at the Community Life Center. Habanero bikes reached out and wants to join again. WBUR had a feature on repair cafes taking place in Massachusetts. Fox25 did a nice segment on recycling and it was posted on the Recycling Committee's Facebook page. It focused on the dos and don'ts of recycling. Janelle thinks it would be great to have them come to our May Repair Cafe. Of special note, many fixers are from other towns around us- Ipswich, Marblehead, etc. They'd like to have them in their town and are keen on learning about Salem's Repair Cafe works. Janelle was asked about how it's been happening so they can spread it in their towns.

Is there an interest in jewelry repair? The Repair Cafe has had a jewelry fixer in the past and there is one on the list. Janelle sent an email to Tobie's Jewelry for a watch battery service if attendees bring their own batteries, but has not heard back yet.

There is a pile of response/experience sheets that attendees fill out evaluating their experience at the office, perhaps 30-40 sheets. These need to be compiled into data. Jen volunteered to do this over the spring.

Upcoming Events

March 17-18, BookSwap & TerraCycle Event- Janelle

Volunteers: plenty have signed up, need a couple members to sign up: Jen signed up for 11:15-1:30 Saturday, Geri can volunteer Friday & Saturday for the entire time

Snacks, signs, volunteers who seem enthusiastic - seems like an energized community for a feel good event last time, looking forward to this one.

Moving forward, we're discouraging: Textbooks, Magazines, VHS, outdated encyclopedias.

It went so smoothly last time, Saturday morning there wasn't a lot to do. Hoping this happens again.
The Patch echoes press releases, so it's going out online.
Social media: People are sharing our posts on this with their friend and neighborhood groups

Signs: We're using a sign that's been used for a while, Janelle met someone who has offered to redesign the signage for us, she's looking into that volunteer offer.
Nancy posted on FB about TerraCycle, anticipating more attention to this over time. We're trying to elevate that program.

March 25 E-Waste
May 19-20 Repair Cafe
June Swap and Drop

New Business

Recruitment: 3 Committee Positions Open

Three open seats on the committee with Bonnie Bain stepping down
We can use similar methods used for posting events and mention the specific activities the committee does and what we're looking for them to do, perhaps also time commitments if available
Mari heard about it our committee through the newsletter and what the committee's needs were, like Spanish translation and responded through there.

Andy Varela suggested having a student on the committee to gain their perspective and connect with their generation(s) - high school and college students could bring their own focus and energy - we could reach out to SSU's environmental department and/or others. Committees can be a good networking opportunity, recruiting youth is a great way to network, professional development, and learn about an industry.
Andy can reach out to the school program and professors at SSU if it would be helpful. The committee will get to Andy when we have the information ready.

Students can be assigned a buddy/mentor who can guide them, Demi is happy to help with this if we go this route
Janelle will get back to us if there is an age rule or not.
Perhaps we can connect with other related organizations, like SSCW
Janelle- has a list of 350 volunteers on a list, she can mention the 3 positions being open to her list

Open Committee Positions: Newsletter and Social Media

2 Roles are in need of support. These could be 2 or more people working together

Newsletter

Recycling Committee Newsletter belongs to the committee, not the liaison and should be sent out via the committee members.

Spearheading the monthly newsletter means pulling information together and sharing it via Constant Contact. Janelle spends 1-3 hours on the Newsletter per month. This could be a multi-person role or one person who accepts material from others. Janelle uses the committee suggestions, things shared online and shares information about upcoming events. There are not many topics in each newsletter, keeping it to less than 6 is fine. Committee members can also do write-ups and have them in the Newsletter. The parameters are our own. Janelle can help and support it until the person(s) is/are independent, but the role is for the committee person to compile it and send it out via Constant Contact.

Until we identify who is going to do this, committee members can send summaries to Janelle and she can add it to the Newsletter
Goal- have a person who is really interested in Recycling Journalism
Bruce wrote an article on textile recycling last year. He enjoyed it.

Social Media lead(s) - tbd

Brainstorming / Planning Session for upcoming committee year/meetings

Ideas: Field Trips, Guest Speakers, Topics to Discuss and Explore

Joel is interested in hearing from committee members about what the Committee would like to do moving forward, we can reach out to other communities, spend some time discussing things

Ideas: Reach out to businesses in the community, gain their perspective. Andy feels it's possible to find a business or restaurant that would be interested in talking with us. Andy can connect us if/when desired.

The committee's mission has historically been focused on residents, WM contract is recycling for residential and residential housing under 6 units. It hasn't excluded businesses, but not sure if that's within the Committee's parameters. Janelle is not aware of any official boundaries preventing the committee from involving the business community. Janelle will look into it to be sure. Joel suggested if we find out we have restrictions, we could consider writing a recommendation to the City of Salem to see how to bring in the business community. Andy thinks there are gray areas, for example the Settler restaurant follows the City's recycling recommendations. Conversing with businesses, especially small businesses would be helpful. The WM contract comes under the General Fund, which is taxpayer funded. This needs to be considered so it doesn't cost the taxpayers more to bring them in. We could encourage businesses to use the City's WM recycling program for a fee, so they're contributing. Janelle will speak to the billing person Raylene (SP) about the finances part of this.

In-Meeting activities, long-term planning, ideas suggested:

- Guest speakers who can share how they're meeting their goals, such as other towns or MAPC if their activities are related.
- Create time for in-meeting discussions on new topics
- Time could be an issue given the needs of all the events the committee manages.
- Some details can be an addendum to the minutes if there is no new information- such as user stats, and then detailed questions can be answered at the next meeting.
- Extended producer responsibilities, and organics for topics

Email Joel directly with any more ideas

Announcements/Next Up

Tours

March 27 tour of recycling facility - meet at 1 Sewall St, YMCA parking lot at 9:15

April or May- Joel is working on tour of the mattress processing facility

Correspondence

Electronic Newsletter: March Topics/Content

Newsletter ideas: send any ideas to Janelle

Other Business

Get Together Potluck at Joel's house- Pickman Rd, 6pm 3/9

Action Items

Committee:

- Address how we want to organize the committee, sub-committees, or otherwise
- Job descriptions for different roles
- Consider signing up for the newsletter or social media teams
- Student members & get back to Andy if needed
- If business connections are desired/needed, Andy V. Can help connect the committee
- Email Joel if there are more ideas for the committee moving forward.
- Jen working on Repair Cafe response forms, collecting the data, follow up in 1-2 months

- Book Swap 3/18: Jen signed up for 11:15-1:30 Saturday, Geri can volunteer Friday & Saturday for the entire time
- Janelle to research if there is an age rule.
- Andy can connect us if/when desired.
- Janelle to post open positions to her volunteer list.
- Janelle checking on the parameters for the committee- are there hard boundaries and speak to billing person about this issue
- Janelle working on the Mattress tour
- Joel will reach out to Andy Varela for connections at SSU and in-town businesses
- Andy is working on a recycling ordinance and will forward it to Janelle and Joel so he can hear from the Committee on why or why not the City should adopt a composting program.