

Salem Recycling Committee

DRAFT Meeting Minutes, April 4, 2023

Attending

Bruce Cohen, Joel Dashnaw Chair, Cameron Fullerton, Janelle Rolke, City Liaison, Geri Yuhas

Absent: Jen Birenbach Secretary, Demi Fox, Carol Hautau Vice Chair

Guests: Kyle Davis, Lucie Patrowicz, Brian Romer, Catherine Deyo, Sandy O'Donnell, Mari Alix, Paul Tocci (Re-Supply), and Jess Sisti (Re-Supply)

Attendees were both in-person and virtual via Zoom.

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.

With recent additions to the Committee, members introduced themselves.

March 2023 Minutes

No changes requested.

Motion to approve Minutes: Geri Yuhas

Second: Nancy Gilberg

March Minutes Approved

Core Facility Tour, March 27th

WM CORE: Centralized Organics Recovery site, Charlestown, MA

Attendees: Joel, Jen, Carol, and Janelle

One of 4 WM sites in the country, this is one of WM's first steps in their process of turning food waste into electricity- a renewable energy source that also puts the packaging material into a trash compactor. The CORE site accepts food both still packaged or not, liquid or solid, except for glass containers. It only accepts food waste, they do not accept human waste. The examples provided were as small as single bite chocolates, as large as a tanker full of beef grease or cases of expired beer cans. Their equipment removes the packaging and creates a slurry with the organic material. It temporarily holds the slurry in 2 large tanks, typically less than 48 hours. The site opens at 7am and is washed down daily starting about 3pm. Customers sending their organic materials are mostly commercial, such as universities, grocery stores, and others.

The organic slurry is pumped into tanker trucks daily which then bring it to their Greater Lawrence, MA WM site where their digesters convert the slurry into methane which is used by the City of Lawrence as electricity. The remainder product is dried and packaged as a fertilizer with a 4-0-0 composition, which is used by regional farmers. The guides were not sure if it was publicly available for sale.

The guides explained that over the last 5 years, it has grown exponentially. One of the hindrances was their need for land and access to organics customers. They are not a smell-free set up and siting new plants has many challenges. Attendees were excited about the process and potential of this fuel source as it grows. For more information: <https://www.wm.com/us/en/inside-wm/sustainable-technology/organics-recycling>

ReSupply, Guest Presentation

Paul Tocci, CEO & Founder & Jessica Sisti, Director of People & Partnerships

Presented a slide presentation, <https://resupplyme.com/utility/intro> to the committee.

Paul learned while in the military that household goods were being thrown out when military families were moving from base to base - some of them were brand new. He was inspired to direct these goods to charities instead. Based in Boston today, ReSupply operates nationally in 44 states, supporting over 2000 charities. The service is based on donation pick-ups, using their web-based technology. ReSupply staff have the tools to break items down, can go to garages, basements or attics to collect the items.

Donors can call or go online www.resupplyapp.com to schedule a pick-up and they receive a tax receipt for their items. They are proud of their fast pick-up schedule, at times the next day.

Charities use ReSupply software to tell ReSupply what they do and do not need in real time. The truck drivers have an App that routes them to the drop-off charity locations. Items not needed by the charities are then routed to shelters or other 501C3 who take what they need. Re-Store then keeps the data and calculates what volume of items have been donated, given to charities and reused rather than thrown out. They would like to work with SalemRecycles in our mission to reduce waste. They have liability insurance, do background checks, and use licensed and insured movers. They are proud of their reviews and hire veterans who move through a six-month transition program. Other municipalities, such as Milton, are using their program and list it online in the town's "how to dispose of..." page like our A-Z list. It's seamlessly integrated into to the municipal program.

Q&A:

- If it's just one event, like a swap & drop day, would Re-Supply work with that? Would there be a cost? They have done one-day events with colleges already, they'd be able to come at the end and collect it all and drop them off at various places. Tax credit would need to be figured out. There is a fee, but they could look into a charity potentially covering some or all of the fee. It's based on the volume of goods, but they are 60% less expensive than the 'got junk' folks.
- Clothing too? Yes
- What if it cannot be donated? This is rare, but when it happens, they work to get it to a recycling center and the last option is the trash.
- Is any furniture turned down? Like china cabinets, which are no longer desired? Re-Supply accepts all items no matter the condition to keep it simple for the donors. So they would pick up items including the china cabinets. They keep trying other non-profits before giving up on the item. They will go to preferred locations if desired.
- What is the cost? Depends on the volume and trucks needed. The committee remembers one 16-foot truck has been needed in the past and tries to educate people about the quality of items. \$300-\$500 per 16-foot truck. This seemed comparable to what has been charged in the past.
- Are residents charged a pick up fee? Yes, it's coming down as non-profits look to organizations like Re-Supply to pick up for them. The long term goal is to greatly reduce or remove the fee.

- What might the fee be for a couch? Some where around \$80-\$90, which would include tools, equipment and 2 people.
- Who are your competitors? Re-Supply is a for-profit organization, partnering with charity organizations. They compete with organizations like 1-800-Got Junk?who brings items to the dump and Re-Supply costs less and makes a better environmental impact.
- Would Re-Supply allow for another recycling outlet pick up textiles at the event? Re-Supply brings textiles that cannot be donated to a donation center.

Janelle receives daily calls by people looking to donate items and she can add Re-Supply on her list of places to call. Re-Supply would be able to give the City of Salem a number of pounds picked up by Re-Supply

End Presentation

ReSupply committee discussion

Janelle & Joel met ReSupply at the MassRecycle's statewide conference and invited them to the meeting to investigate if they can help with Salem's non-textile items. Salem has good textile support. Lifebridge is clear that they don't do estate sales or yard sale leftovers because those are typically items they cannot sell. Lifebridge is working with ReSupply. Salem is left with limited options for the remaining and often voluminous other household goods & toys.

Swap N' Drop - scheduled on Salem Common, June 10th

Decision:

Do the event with ReSupply.

Do the event with only textiles, but people desire household goods.

Do the event with or without tents.

It's a popular event and location for it with the community and the committee. Walk through traffic is important. With a lot of publicity, an indoor location could be found, but only those able to go would be able to attend, so unhoused folks or those without car access would be less likely to attend. The committee would like to reach these populations.

Weather is an issue as well, as the goods are only on tarps. A second location last minute is almost not possible. Single tents over the tarps can help with the weather.

Tarps are in the basement, and measure about 8x8' or 10x10' - typically tents are 10x10'

People place their items on the tarps independently with committee member support.

There is interest in having textile drives and/or swap and drops more than once a year.

Vote:

In Favor of having the event this June: 6

Opposed to having the event this June? 0

Unanimous vote to hold the Swap and Drop, June 10th

Committee Size and Recruitment

Currently appointed members: 8

10 people have expressed interest in joining the committee.

6 are in attendance, 3 applications have been received

Limit on committee size? No official limit

- Does the committee want to set a limit on the number of members on the committee?
- Size isn't as important as the skills potential members can offer. IE: we have a lot of Free Book Swap volunteers, but we could use other skills, like publicity.
- Joel has experienced term limits and more decisive choices of who is on the committee because there was a limit to the committee size. There were also a number of allowable missed meetings. This helped create a sense of fairness and fitness.
- Joel can see the committee being up to 25 people. We have 10 meetings a year (not Dec or July) and many events requiring attendance.
- Geri - Depends on what applicants can offer the committee as we have many who attend the events already. She enjoys committee members at the events, life happens, and having members attend the meetings is important.
- Janelle- With a larger number of people joining, we can have task forces and/or subcommittees - allowing for people to focus on what areas they're passionate about.
- Bruce - 20 max would be feasible to keep it manageable, working groups/task forces is a great idea
- Cameron - What about students?
- Joel - College liaison could be good, perhaps not as a full member. High School may not be feasible being under age. We could look into that. The Mayor's office has the applications and approves them once a month. We don't have to turn anyone away at this time, but the committee should be thinking about an upper limit, if we desire that. With so much interest this is an important decision process.
- Discussion tabled until next month.
- Nancy - 20 feels like a lot, she's used to 12-15. She's open to a larger number to see how it feels.
- Geri - Feels it's important that potential members can meet in person moving forward. As of February 2023 in Salem Committees were encouraged to meet in person.
- Janelle - Has not been notified that meetings were no longer hybrid, but something to think about. Massachusetts will no longer offer hybrid meetings in May.
- Joel - We should discuss more if our meetings be hybrid for the public but in person for the committee as we discuss how we do our business.

- Public Question: Salem State Univ. and others who are not represented in our community and how to extend our connection with them.
- Janelle has been reaching out to other communities in Salem to help diversify our volunteers, attendees, and committee membership
- Joel - has the number of members changed over time?
- Nancy- it's held at about a dozen
- Joel - if lots of people want to join, then it's an idea to consider adopting term limits if this interest continues
- Geri- the current committee is younger, newer membership and feels it's a great committee with new ideas and questions and vibrancy
- Joel- Citizens have always been interested in attending meetings and we want to encourage that and their voices heard by the committee

Tabled: discussion about committee size and scheduled to continue at the next meeting

Newsletter

Janelle is still doing this. A subcommittee is desired. Sent out the 2nd week of the month

Potential topics:

Salem State Earth Day is next week, a week of lectures, etc - could be a great reason to discuss compost

Janelle - this newsletter is long so far.

What we're reading section has been added.

- International Compost Awareness Week in May
- Promote Repair Cafe, May 20th
- Polystyrene ban in Salem
- Book Swap results (really good)
- Rain Barrel Sales
- Bottle Drop off at Salem High School, including Prescription Bottles
- Promote Earth Day
- Local Events happening (Salem Sound CoastWatch, Keep Salem Beautiful)
- What we're reading

Anything that cannot fit in this newsletter can be posted online.

Salem Living Green Expo, May 13th 10-1pm, Old Town Hall (in and outdoors)

Salem Recycles can have a booth, have to apply.

We need 2-4 members to man the booth or pass on it.

Set up 9:30

Goal: Promote composting, Black Earth cannot be there, Promote recycling education

Nancy & Bruce can volunteer,

Janelle to send out an invite for this

June Styrofoam Event

Tough event to pin down. We need to give people time to collect their Styrofoam.

Beverly can commit to hosting in Salem, Janelle is talking with Marblehead and Swampscott. These 3 towns are all interested in collectively purchasing a machine to crush the material instead of hiring another company to do it.

E-Waste is in June - we can add a Styrofoam day but we may create too much traffic. Janelle wants to keep them as separate events.

We could use Salem High as our single event location.

Volunteers - 2 events in one month may strain the volunteer base...or not

Janelle will follow up with the committee on Styrofoam event logistics

Opened Meeting up for questions - no questions were put forth

Action Items

Committee will consider structure of the committee moving forward in preparation for discussion at the next meeting

Janelle will follow up with committee on Styrofoam event logistics