



City of Watertown

Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee

Date: May 21, 2025

Location: 124 Orchard Street or virtual

Subject: Solid Waste Recycling Advisory Committee (SWARC) Meeting May 21, 2025

In Attendance:

Alex Somers Lahr

Matt Bacon

Andrew Thompson

Eileen Ryan

Lise Paul

Russ Arico

Meeting commenced at 4:35 pm

- I. Minutes approved without amendment
- II. DPW updates
 - Swap Shop update
 - a 20 foot container has been delivered to the Recycling Center
 - Swap Shop start date will be Saturday, June 7th.
 - Matt Bacon will be present for opening date.
 - Lise will be available for future dates. Russ and Andrew also will volunteer. Matt will coordinate volunteer sign-ups
 - Volunteers are responsible for agreeing to accept items. Due to limited space, volunteers should reject multiples of a similar item.
 - Matt will provide a handout for volunteers with alternate places to donate items if we have to refuse an item
 - Russ suggested providing a couple chairs and Matt agreed
 - Swap Shop information posted on the City's website <https://watertown-ma.gov/1492/Swap-Shop>
 - Matt will announce the opening on Facebook and Instagram

- Recycling Ordinance status. Staff tasks have been completed. Costs are now understood. Dumpsters are vastly more expensive for the City than totes. The ordinance is a low priority for the City right now. The budget takes precedence.
- III. Committee member updates
- Andrew Thompson will be the new committee chairperson effective today.
 - Lise will take meeting minutes
- IV. Farmer's Market
- All guests have one date. The SWARC tabling is September 17th
- V. Compost Program
- Matt intends to print and mail a flier to all City residents.
 - A-frames advertising free composting are at the recycling center, city hall, near Village Condos and possibly Victory Field
 - What's Up Watertown – Matt hopes to be interviewed
 - Eileen suggested approaching Watertown Cable Access for an interview
- VI. Massachusetts Plastics Bill: Discussion led by committee member and Beyond Plastics leader Eileen Ryan
- Members of the committee should support the bill which includes a state-wide ban on single use plastic bags and polystyrene packaging
 - Members should follow the upcoming Environmental Bond Bill. Push to include single use plastic bags, polystyrene ban as well as expansion of the bottle bill
 - Members of the committee are invited to attend the June 4th book discussion of The Serviceberry by Robin Wall Kimmerer at First Parish Church Watertown and June 5th virtual event on Polluted Pregnancies by Jane Van Dis.
- VII. Next meeting: July 16, 2025 at 4pm.
- VIII. Meeting adjourned at 5:25pm

Minutes submitted by Lise Paul
