



City of Watertown

Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee

Date: December 4, 2025

Location: 124 Orchard Street or virtual

Subject: Minutes: Solid Waste Recycling Advisory Committee (SWARC) Meeting December 3, 2025

In Attendance:

Matt Bacon
Andrew Thompson
Lise Paul
Russ Arico
Kathryn Loup (guest)

Meeting commenced at 4:30 pm

I. Minutes approved without amendment

III. DPW updates

➤ Republic Strike

The City is close to completing negotiation with Republic to ensure that the taxpayers do not pay for extra costs incurred during the strike.

Republic contract is through July 2028

➤ Other DPW Updates

- i. Recycling calendar mailing next week
- ii. Compost post cards should be received this week

IV. Review of audit of recycling efforts

- Republic did a formal audit two years ago.
- City's level of contamination in recycling is low (presence of plastic bags or disallowed items). Watertown has not had extra charges due to contamination

- Matt Bacon goes out ahead of the recycling truck and performs an informal audit of recycling barrels to check for contamination. When he finds any, he places an orange sticker, and the barrel is not picked up by Republic. For second offenders, they will not send a truck to pick it up.
- Re-education : The sticker placed on the barrel indicates what needs to be corrected.
- Over 500 households are on recycling repeat offenders list out of 10,000 household in the City's trash program. The City does have legal ability to cease picking up recycling following the third incidence of non-compliance.
- Plastics – Once Republic's Saugus recycling facility opens next year and Republic determines their list of recyclable items, Watertown may revise its messaging on what plastics can be recycled.

V. Solid Waste Metrics included in the 2022 Climate and Energy Plan

- Lise suggested that the City pick 2 or 3 of the metrics and set annual targets to report each year on progress
- Committee thought that some of the 2050 goals were not realistic. Revision of goals will require City Council vote.
- Matt to review the attached document that includes 3 metrics with proposed annual targets that will measure progress year by year until the 2030 target is achieved.

VI. Upcoming meetings:

- No meeting in January
- Keep to first Wednesday each month format
- February 2, 2026 is the next meeting. That meeting will be hybrid
- At the February meeting we will discuss the format for future meetings.

VII. The meeting adjourned at 5:28pm

Minutes submitted by Lise Paul
