

Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Wednesday December 14, 2022
In-Person Meeting 124 Orchard St., Watertown

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 5:38

Present: (In Person): Alexandra Somers Lahr, Anya Pforzheimer, Russ Arico, Leslie, Eileen Ryan, Eileen Zubrowski, Judy Fallows, (via zoom): Leslie Evans

Previous Minutes: Russ Arico motioned to accept the minutes as written; Eileen seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

Actions - Review of Republic Contract document

- Our last 5 year contract ended in June 2022, and a one year extension was agreed upon which ends in June 2023. We're probably not going to put the new contract out to bid, we're assuming we'll stay with Republic especially since they have been amenable to the one year extension changes we've made and should be able to continue with a new 3 year contract
- Recycle picked up by Republic was taken to facilities and they were paying the bill for tipping the recycling but the fees were fluctuating wildly and sometimes that cost Republic so now we pay the tipping fees as they change
- Bulk goods change from previous free pickup to having to schedule and pay for each item has reduced the amount that we have to pay overall. Also, the payment for bulk items paid by individuals now is subsidized by Watertown, the actual price for disposal is even more.
- Yard Waste - Republic takes it to a transfer station which sends it to various places. They can't tell us exactly where it goes each time, but it can't be incinerated (that's against the law) nor can it go to landfill.
- Republic is a hauler, they bring the stuff to the various places. Disposal is handled by various organizations
- Wheelabrator is one such organization,. They are a waste to energy plant for trash.

Recycle - we are now paying for all tipping fees

Greenworks could be an independent contractor for tipping fees vs the hauling

DPW still services the WHA buildings but not any apartment buildings or any building with more than 4 units, this is part of the ordinance.

Apartment building - if the landlord throws the recycling into the trash, their waste is usually handled by a private contractor. Businesses are also, and churches. Greg says - tossing cardboard in the trash is now illegal.

Other municipalities handle public housing units differently than Watertown. Usually separate contracts by the authority.

We might be able to do some education about the recycle center for those who don't have DPW pickup for recycling, they can bring it to the recycle center.

Discussion - New ideas for additions to the FY24 contract negotiations

Time to write down ideas for collection

Maybe add into the contract, if we have a "zero waste" event, then we'd ask them to supervise and haul away?

Plan for future meetings around negotiations

Collection of ideas for initiatives or actions

- Drop off e-waste at places like Best Buy, Staples
- What will they take? How much, how often?
- MAC does once a year e-waste event
- Recycling center also takes e-waste
- Watertown's IT department gets old computers picked up
- Fix-it clinics for people to bring their things to fix, find out how others do this
- Event idea: meeting with Gretchen from Republic (with SWARC? Or public meeting?)

This committee has 3 roles - advisory, activism- outreach and volunteering for events

Adjourn: 6:32 pm

Next Meeting: January 25, 2023