

Salem Recycling Committee

Meeting Minutes, September 11, 2023

6:30pm, City Hall Annex 1st Floor, Conference Room

Appointed Members

Mari Alix, Jen Birenbach (Clerk), Bruce Cohen, Joel Dashnaw (Chair), Catherine Deo, Demi Fox, Cameron Fullerton, Nancy Gilberg, Carol Hautau (Vice-Chair), Daniell Hepting, Sandy O'Donnell, Lucie Patrowicz, Brian Romer
City Liaison: Janelle Rolke

Meeting Attendance

Attending: Joel Dashnaw (Chair,) Demi Fox, Cameron Fullerton, Nancy Gilberg, Carol Hautau Vice Chair,) Daniell Hepting, Sandy O'Donnell, Lucie Patrowicz, Janelle Rolke (Liaison)
Virtual Guest: Counselor Andy Varela
Absent: Mari Alix, Jen Birenbach (Clerk), Bruce Cohen, Catherine Deo, Brian Romer

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.

Old / Ongoing Business

Approve August 2023 Meeting Minutes

Due to insufficient number of members attending this meeting, voting on the minutes will take place at October's meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Book Swap & TerraCycle Collection, Saturday, 9/23 - Janelle

Volunteer numbers: Fri. 4-7 (21), Sat shift 1 8:30-11 (14) & shift 2 11-1:30 (7)

Janelle has requested a press release be sent out and is hoping for more volunteers to sign up

Food Truck Festival 9/23-24: Beer Can Recycling - Janelle

Same day as Book Swap

Janelle was intending on composting for this event, then she found out there are over 7,000 cans used and none are recycled. She decided she'd like to focus on the can recycling first, then composting later. This event is the largest solid waste producing 2-day event all year. Food Truck Festivals of America organizers are interested in helping. DPW will help by collecting the cans, store them until Monday when they'll bring the cans to a redemption center.

Janelle believes 2-3 volunteers would be needed all day (11-6,) each day, for this to be managed. Contamination issues are assumed to be low due to alcohol management guidelines & food is not served in the beer tent. Discussion over how to find volunteers to cover such a long period of time on such short notice at the same time as the Book Swap. Incentives could help- free passes, t-shirts, etc. Committee felt it would be difficult to manage this on such short notice.

Action: Janelle is going to ask about getting free passes to give to the potential volunteers, then she'll reach out to the Sustainability contact at SSU to see if students would like to volunteer.

Demi can volunteer for some time on Saturday

Repair Cafe & TerraCycle Collection (11/4) - Demi

There is a subcommittee meeting soon to manage this event and then report back with decision making during the committee meeting. Janelle will try to join.

Members: Brian, Mari, Nancy, Catherine, Janelle

Action: Demi is coordinating this subcommittee moving forward and will report back to committee on actions taken

Textile Drive & TerraCycle Collection (11/18) - Janelle

Press release hasn't gone out yet, seems routine at this point

Google sign ups worked well with the BookSwap so she'll be using it again for the Textile drive

No changes to location, Helpsy is confirmed to collect extra textiles

No action required at this time

NEW BUSINESS

Document Shredding Event- Janelle

Janelle feels this is a needed event for Salem, citing other towns that provide this service. She researched companies that provide this service, didn't find many options, received 1 quote from a company in Peabody for \$1,600. Iron Mountain (Marblehead) hasn't responded yet.

Action: Her focus is finding a service that can provide document shredding.

New Item from Joel: Cardboard Recycling - Janelle

Is this a popular request? Janelle: yes, very popular with both residents & businesses

Is Waste Management (WM) seeing more cardboard recycling?

Janelle found out that WM was instructed by Salem to not collect bins that were open or overflowing. Cardboard pieces often forces bin lids to catch the wind or remain open and with increased curbside cardboard recycling many bins were being left behind, only to return and collect them anyway. Janelle has corrected this with WM. They will now collect all recycling bins, regardless of lid status and recoup their time, including Janelle's time. Staples in Vinnen Square was temporarily receiving cardboard for a few summer months from Salem Chamber of Commerce members. This small segment were dropping off over 3,000 boxes a week. Janelle is actively working on long term cardboard recycling solutions with the City of Salem departments and reaching out to businesses. The pressure is on given the holiday season is upon us.

New Topic: Flyers

A person well versed in graphic design would be helpful.

Forming a Styrofoam Subcommittee - Joel

Styrofoam is popular but the merits are undetermined - we need to get to the bottom of whether it's worth having more events, investing in a machine, etc and make progress on this area of recycling.

Beverly is on board with working together on this. Last event: cost Salem \$1,100 after sharing with Beverly

Andy Varela - he would like to apply for a grant for the purchase of a styrofoam machine. The EPA has 2 grant programs with large pools of money, around \$400k minimum each. Joel is willing to work on one of the grants. Janelle would need to be involved. They're due in the new year, perhaps February.

Andy Varela would like to get Mayor Pangallo involved to write the grant(s) *along with two city staffers with grant writing experience to support this effort*. The committee doesn't have a lot of grant writing experience.

Action: Janelle reaching out to the Mayor and others

2nd Action: Create a subcommittee to determine work to be done, timeline for application, details about budget and spending. A grant working group can be created later.

Action: Subcommittee members to be found, Joel is on board first.

Upcoming Meeting w/ Mayor Pangallo - Jen/Joel

Jen sent request to Mayor's office, the Mayor is joining us for the December meeting.

In the past when the Mayor came to the Committee Meeting, the Chair created a summary and throw out a few suggestions and members said it was really fun in the past.

Open Discussion

This time is for open topics that committee members want to discuss or learn about.

October Haunted Happenings Parade 10/5: Nancy

Sustainability would like to join forces and be in the parade together. The committee has been in the parade on it's own in the past, but not for awhile. Sign up deadline: 9/19 Would committee members like to participate? An email will go out to committee members to see if there is any interest and go from there.

Paper Agenda in the meeting? Is there interest in bringing in paper agenda's to take notes? Not really.

Tour of recycling facility - there is interest in another tour so more members can see it

Action: Janelle looking into it

Textile ban in trash: Massachusetts banned textiles in the landfill stream effective Nov. 1, 2022

It would be good to remind residents would be a good idea, even annually, in the October Newsletter. Having it in the newsletter right before the textile event would be good timing.

Can wood items, like a small table, be in the trash stream? Yes, if it fits. (No construction wood)

Learning/Education time on the committee: would that be helpful for the committee members? Every meeting we could learn about what is NOT recyclable. RecycleSmart is a great resource, we could go over that. The committee then reviewed the Recycle Smart website.

Correspondence

Newsletter

September / Early Fall & Back to School Content

Open Time: General Announcements & Guest Participation Welcome