

WELLFLEET RECYCLING COMMITTEE (RC)
Minutes for December 5, 2023
Virtual Zoom Meeting, Recorded

Present: Lydia Vivante, Nancy Najmi (via phone), Nancy Gralla (Alternate), Carol Magenau (Alternate), Jaya Karlson

Others Present: Kari Parcell (MassDEP/Barnstable County), Mike Cicale (Wellfleet Transfer Station (TS), Julie Seabury (Wellfleet Spirits Shoppe)

Lydia Vivante called the meeting to order at 11:02.

UPDATES & NEWS

Swap Shop / Opening & Spring Expo plans: Swap Shop coordinator Roland Blair told Lydia that the new building for the Swap Shop will most likely be ready by the summer or fall 2024. Lydia suggested that in the early spring the RC offer an event at the TS with educational tables and a tour, similar to the Eco Expo that was held many years ago. Mike suggested calling it the Lenny Federico Recycling Expo. The town is planning to do some sort of memorial event for Lenny at the TS this spring.

Mass DEP/Barnstable County: Kari reported that the Cape Cod Times had an article about recycling holiday lights. Americorps will collect the lights from all but two Cape Cod towns and bring them to S & J Exco in Dennis where the metals will be melted for electronics and may end up as holiday lights again. Kari and a working group with town representatives are coordinating a forum for private waste haulers about updated disposal regulations. Kari wants to hold an in-person quarterly review meeting with town representatives in January or February, 2024. The boat shrinkwrap recycling program will happen again this spring.

Transfer Station, Mike Cicale:

- Black Earth Compost is working well, collecting food scraps at the TS and Wellfleet Elementary School (WES).
- On January 1, 2024 new fees for disposing items will be implemented. These costs are listed on the TS page of the town's website. While mattresses will still be charged individually, carpets and upholstered furniture will be weighed and charged accordingly. Access to the recycling plaza and Swap Shop will require a town TS sticker, or a \$10 one-time fee. Lithium battery recycling will cost the town, and ebike battery disposal/recycling will require a different vendor which Mike is investigating.
- Mike is building a new bin for bulky plastic and then will refurbish the old bin for separating tin and aluminum cans from plastic recycling. We can make money with metal cans, while we need to pay to recycle plastic. The purer the plastic recycling is, the more marketable it becomes, so separating the metal and plastic will open up more opportunities. We will need to educate townspeople as we start the transition.

- The bin to collect disposed holiday string lights is already set up for the holiday season.

Fix-It Clinic February 3, 2024, 1-4 PM at the Library: Recycling Dividend Points (RDP) - A town earns 1 point for holding a Fix- It clinic, or 2 points for having a swap shop. Wellfleet always gets 2 points. These are re-use points.

Nips Bottle Deposit Initiative: Nancy G has been talking to Julie Seabury for her perspective as a liquor store owner on the issue of nip bottle litter.

- Julie wrote a letter to Julian Cyr to express her thought that the only way to conquer the nip trash issue is with a statewide initiative.
- Julie said Connecticut is requiring purchasers pay a \$0.10 deposit on each nip, \$0.05 of which will go to the town in which it was sold. That money goes to litter education and establishes a means of recycling the nips that are too small to go into commercial bins.
- Change.org has a petition regarding nip bottle litter. Needs 10,000 signatures, has 8000 signatures. This will move the bottle bill forward to increase the deposits on standard bottles and add deposits on nip bottles. With a bill the distributors and the state would need to be more involved in the disposal of the nips. Currently the state doesn't require liquor stores smaller than 2000 square feet to redeem bottles. Julie said she doesn't have the space to store returned bottles/cans.
- Lydia wondered how much nips cost. Julie said from \$1 to \$8, with most of her sales coming from \$1 and \$2 nips. Typically glass bottles are slightly more expensive than plastic. Fireball caffeine drinks are \$1.25,
- Lydia commented that a \$0.05 deposit is not enough of an incentive these days and wondered if a \$0.25 per bottle deposit makes more sense. Julie said since deposits are printed on bottles the state would need to legislate the amount. An updated bottle bill would seek deposits for juice, wine and liquor bottles.
- Jaya commented that the nips sales benefit a very narrow audience - liquor store owners and workers, compared to the broader degradation to the local ecology and finds it difficult to imagine people saving and returning nips bottles for the miniscule deposit return. Julie said liquor stores, restaurants, convenience stores and all businesses generate some amount of trash, yet things like cigarettes, coffee cups have not been banned for ecological reasons.
- Lydia would like MASSDEP to spend time on this and develop a market to address nips litter. Kari doesn't know a lot about this. They talk about revising the bottle bill, but her understanding is that they are not to legislate or advocate for any bill. Mike reiterated that the DEP can't legislate so we should all keep individually contacting our local legislators and write letters. The Mass Product stewardship council (Mass Recycle has a website that provides links/guidance) have in the past worked on light bulbs, the paint bill, the mattress bill and the bottle bill.
- Lydia said we will see how the nips bans in other Cape towns are impacting local litter.
- Kari wondered what was the incentive for people to purchase nips. Julie suggested the biggest rationale for buying nips is for portion control, or affordability, rather than catching a quick illicit drink.
- Final discussion centered around the potential for refilling liquor bottles or bringing

growlers to the liquor stores for filling in the future.

- Nancy Gralla spoke to Alan Kogoss of Seaside Liquors who is speaking to his distributors about clean up days. He hopes to attend our next meeting. Route 6 from Coles Neck Rd north to Truro is available for the adopt-a-highway cleanup if the liquor stores are interested.

Energy and Climate Action Committee, Carol Magenau liaison: Nancy Gralla was welcomed as their new alternate. Steve Tupper will help with their new climate action plan. The committee met with the new Assistant Town Administrator. They are finalizing plans for contacting restaurants about composting having learned from Mike that the TS compost is only for residential compost. Van Rensselaer's Restaurant saves their food scraps for a woman involved with the food pantry (she composts the scraps at home). Carol would like to connect people who want restaurant food scraps for composting with restaurants. Lydia suggested Carol speak with Black Earth Compost, and Kari confirmed that they do pick up food waste from businesses on the Upper Cape and will share contact info.

Care for Cape and Islands Take Care Summit, November 20, 2023: Four from the RC attended: Nancy G, Nancy N, Lydia and Christine S learned about how other Cape Cod communities were dealing with reducing plastic waste. Kari presented "The State of the Cape": an overview of MassDEP work in reducing/diverting waste along with resources available for grants. The Falmouth Plastics Reduction Advisory Committee provided information on how they have brought together a diverse group of citizens to research single-use plastic problems, options, and solutions. Amber Schmidt of ReThink Disposables shared valuable data about the benefits to restaurants for using reusable vs disposable dinnerware. Representatives from businesses such as Black Earth Compost, Island Eats MV, provided valuable information as well. Access to the presentations is available on the link below.

<https://careforthecapeandislands.org/2023/11/20/2023-summit-recap/>

Bakers Field Water Station: Thank you to Jaya and her husband for cleaning the surface of the water station. The manufacturer thought the water itself was causing the discoloration on the surface. Jaya noted the location is exposed to wind and salt air.

Boomerang Bags: Saturday December 16, 2-5PM at the library

Fix It Clinic: February 3, 2024 at the library: Lydia asked Mike to forward a list of materials we will need for the clinic to rewire lamps, etc..

Feb 1, 2024 Wellfleet Annual Town Report due

Holiday recycling guide will be sent out by email. Eastham Qwik Pack & Ship is always happy to collect clean packing material. Christine S said Doug Winkworth at the Swap Shop takes packing material.

Community Classified Ptown Independent: Lydia wrote about borrowing items from the Library of Things for holiday dinners. Future posting will relate to ecological gift wrap ideas and info.

RC members: Lydia will contact the town of Wellfleet about changing Carol's status to alternate, and Nancy Gralla's status to regular member. Nancy G may need to go to a Select Board meeting to get approved as a regular member.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04.