

**Newton Sustainable Materials Management Commission (SMMC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, August 25, 2022, 7:00 p.m.**  
**City Hall, Room 205**

**Members in Attendance:** Sunwoo Kahng, Chair, Marian Rambelle, Vice Chair, Carl Valente, Secretary, Karen Slote, Miles Smith, Meryl Kessler, Alan Gordon, Robin Maltz and Jim McGonagle, Commissioner, DPW, Ex-Officio.

**Members Absent:** Steven Ferrey and John Lewis,

**Other Participants:** Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer, Shawna Sullivan, DPW Deputy Commissioner and Waneta Trabert, Director, DPW Sustainable Materials Management Division.

**Discussion with Mayor Fuller on Waste Reduction in Newton**

Ms. Kahng facilitated the discussion with Mayor Fuller. A summary of Mayor Fuller's comments included:

- Recognizing Ms. Trabert's leadership and expertise in solid waste management;
- Generally, she supports the six goals identified in the SMMC Report: *Setting the Path to Zero Waste: Recommendations on the Future of Residential Curbside Waste Management in Newton (11.2.2021)*.
- The SMMC should recognize that an important aspect of the Report involves changing the behaviors of residents regarding solid waste and recycling, which will be a challenge. It will be imperative for the Commission to focus on educational efforts, to prepare residents for making changes in their consumption and solid waste habits and/or changing the payment model for our solid waste and recycling services. As an example, the Mayor remarked how moving to the cart system in 2010 was a significant challenge for the community, and the SMMC Report is proposing actions that will require even more significant changes in resident behaviors. The Mayor also commented that Green Newton is a good model for bringing about change through education and advocacy;
- The SMMC should be cautious in not establishing goals and timelines for Ms. Trabert. Rather, Ms. Trabert should be the one to explain/propose which SMMC goals can be reasonably accomplished in a given time period.
- Increasing the staff of the SMMD will be a challenge, given the City's financial condition and other competing demands. There is discussion to add a superintendent to the SMMD. This role would focus on operations, which will increase administrative bandwidth for 2.5 existing administrative FTE positions.
- The Mayor has set aside funding for hiring a consultant to complete a comprehensive solid waste management plan. This plan will not, however, likely be completed by the end of the existing trash and recycling hauling contract. That being said, the MassDEP funded solid waste report currently underway is expected to be completed in draft form shortly and

should help inform the next curbside collection contract, which can also be extended if necessary.

On behalf of the SMMC, Ms. Kahng expressed the Commission's appreciation for the Mayor's leadership and support on solid waste and recycling matters.

**Approval of June 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes:**

On the motion by Miles Smith, seconded by Alan Gordon, the Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2022 were approved 7-0-1 vote (Ms. Slote abstaining).

**Swap Shop/Recycling Committee Briefing:**

Mr. Smith made a presentation regarding the Swap Shop located at the Rumford Avenue facility, noting:

- The concept began in 1991 when the Recycling Committee received approval from the DPW Commissioner to open and staff the Rumford Avenue facility with volunteers on Saturdays when it was otherwise closed;
- Volunteers staff the swap shop, many who have continued to serve from its earliest days;
- The current 'look' of the swap shop began in 2018;
- The Swap Shop has a Facebook page to help market itself; and
- The amount of activity at the Swap Shop can, on some days, overwhelm the volunteer staff.

**SMMD Update:**

Ms. Trabert reviewed the August 2022 SMMD update, dated August 19, 2022, responding to a number of questions and comments from Commission members.

**Public Comments/Open Announcements:**

There were no public comments/open announcements.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the SMMC is Thursday, September 29, 2022 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

***Documents Provided/Discussed at Meeting:***

1. *June 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes*
2. *Swap Shop presentation*
3. *August 2022 SMMD Update, dated August 19, 2022*