



# Public Facilities Committee Report

## City of Newton In City Council

**Wednesday, February 22, 2017**

**Present:** Councilors Crossley (Chair), Albright, Laredo, Lappin, Lennon, Brousal-Glaser, Danberg

**Also Present:** Councilors Norton, Leary, Fuller, Yates

**City staff present:** Commissioner of Public Works Jim McGonagle, Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert, Director of Operations for DPW Shane Mark, Chief of Staff/Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux, Associate City Solicitor Alan Mandl, Associate City Engineer John Daghljan

**#12-16**      **Discussion with the DPW regarding the City's recycling and solid waste programs**  
COUNCILOR LEARY, NORTON, KALIS, HESS-MAHAN, ALBRIGHT, AND CROSSLEY  
requesting an update from and discussion with the Department of Public Works and the Solid Waste Commission on the current status of Newton's solid waste management and recycling program operations and performance objectives, future goals and objectives, staffing, program challenges, and survey data due to be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection. [12/28/15 @ 8:44 AM]

**Chairs Note:** *Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert presented an overview of findings from DPW's Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert as detailed in "Moving Beyond Solid Waste to Sustainable Materials Management".*

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Held 7-0**

**Note:** Recycling Manager Waneta Trabert presented an overview of findings and recommendations detailed in her report "Moving Beyond Solid Waste to Sustainable Materials Management". She noted that the report is the result of her efforts to consolidate and evaluate the City's solid waste programs in response to the City's resolution requesting a long term plan for solid waste and recycling. Ms. Trabert presented information on PowerPoint attached, and the full report can be found at the following link:

<http://www.newtonma.gov/documents/dpw/Recycling/Moving%20Newton%20Beyond%20Waste%20Report.pdf>

Currently, solid waste (17,785 tons) is sent to the Wheelabrator facility in Millbury and single stream recycling (10,358 tons) is sent to the Avon Materials Recovery Center. Data suggests that solid waste curbside collection has steadily decreased since 2002. Although the weight of the single stream materials has remained the same since the implementation of the cart program, Ms. Trabert believes that this corresponds to a greater volume of lower weight materials. Ms. Trabert reiterated the desire to emphasize source reduction and reuse as opposed to treatment and disposal.

### **Residential Service Recommendations**

- Revise the City's bulk waste policy should be revised. The City currently allows for 5 bulk items per week at no cost to homeowners, which is excessive. Ms. Trabert noted that establishing a monetary disincentive may discourage possible abuse and may encourage the reuse of bulk items. She is currently working with DEP to determine how much waste is generated from this program.
- Encourage backyard composting and develop infrastructure to manage organic waste.
- Streamline the cart fleet program; while some cart maintenance is done by the City, other communities do not own their carts. Ms. Trabert is in the process of evaluating possible solutions.

### **Drop off Site Recommendations**

- Ms. Trabert has begun restructuring of the City's hazardous waste collection. She noted that making hazardous waste collection more consistently available may be helpful for residents. Collection days will now be year round, on the first Saturday of every month.
- The establishment of a permanent swap shop may be a cost effective way to encourage reuse. Ms. Trabert noted that swap shops are often run by volunteers in infrastructure maintained by the City.
- It was noted that the Resource Recovery Center is very valuable to residents and hosts a number of reuse options.

### **Multi-family Service Recommendations**

- Currently, the City provides trash pick-up service to some multi-family properties, but not others, irrespective of the number of units served. Ms. Trabert noted that there are a number of large residential multi-family buildings that the City provides service to at significant cost. She stated that this is uncommon in other municipalities and that she is working to evaluate the full extent of services provided to these multi-families.

### **City Building Recommendations**

- Significantly improve waste management services to City Buildings. She stated that while a survey needs to be done, it is likely that there are City buildings that do not need daily trash collection.
- Create physical deterrents and tracking system for illegal dumping on municipal property.

- Mandate recycling and responsible materials management for City staff. Ms. Trabert suggested that new hires with the City are not aware of the expectations and noted that some companies offer new hire training which includes responsible materials management.
- Monitor City dumpsters for contamination and to direct educational efforts.
- Identify opportunities where extra/refuse materials could be repurposed.

#### **Public Space Recommendations**

- Create a policy for public spaces where there are no recycling options. Ms. Trabert noted that there are communities that sell or rent temporary recycling bins for those having events in public spaces (i.e. wedding at a park)

#### **City Operations**

- Improve materials management by reducing and reusing extra materials generated from large construction projects. Identify surplus material at planning stage.

#### **Education & Outreach**

- Ms. Trabert stated that her focus for the next year will be on Education and Outreach. She noted that the City has a history of robust recycling efforts and she is working to revitalize them. She is working to develop and continuously promote city-wide recovery and waste reduction goals and is aware that residents will benefit from education. Ms. Trabert is working with a new, part time staff person specifically to help with direct outreach and social media. She hopes to utilize the City's website, print materials and social media to promote greater source reduction.

In her time with the City, Ms. Trabert has revitalized resource recovery operations and collections, applied for and received two DEP grants for educational efforts and bulk waste assessment, reconvened the Solid Waste Commission and become engaged at the state level by joining the Mass Recycling Board. She is looking forward to developing and implementing a Solid Materials Management plan and enhanced education and outreach for residents. She noted that cities across the country have implemented strategies to work toward a significant diversion rate and/or zero waste. It is anticipated that Boston will implement a zero waste strategy in 2017. While she believes zero waste is the ideal goal, she noted that achieving a significant diversion rate is the first step.

Councilors commended Ms. Trabert for her comprehensive, thoughtful report. Councilors noted that it was clear that the scope of work Ms. Trabert has taken on is above and beyond expectations and suggested that she should be presenting her findings and efforts at the Mass Municipal Conference. Council members agreed that education and outreach is very important for

residents and City staff. It was suggested that publicity can be helpful in promoting information and that Ms. Trabert create short informational YouTube videos for posting on the City's website.

Councilors were in agreement that a policy should be created to mandate recycling from businesses and suggested that a reward based system could be successful. A Councilor questioned whether waste management companies can be incentivized to encourage residents to reduce waste, as is done with utility companies and energy.

Committee members noted that special permits on some properties are conditioned to ensure that solid waste is at the expense of the property owner and some properties were grandfathered in to trash collection. Ms. Trabert hopes to receive and utilize another DEP grant to assess these differences and provide policy recommendations. A Committee member suggested that Ms. Trabert work with the Planning Department to craft standard policy recommendations that can be incorporated into special permit Council Orders for large projects.

Committee members questioned whether the fly-ash from incineration is being recycled. Ms. Trabert noted that while the ash currently goes to a hazardous waste landfill, when the contract is renewed the City can inquire about the vendor's long term plans to address toxic byproducts. Committee members were in agreement that a long term solution should be identified.

Councilors indicated support for a focus on backyard composting. Ms. Trabert noted that approximately 20-25% of organic waste is generated. She intends to host free educational forums offered by DEP. Ms. Trabert noted that composting bins are currently sold at cost. A policy change to subsidize the cost of the bins with grant funding may help to incentivize residents and will generate additional grant funding from DEP.

In response to questions regarding the mixing of trash and recycling picked up by Parks & Recreation, Chief of Staff/Chief Financial Officer Maureen Lemieux stated that since November, this has been substantially improved. Parks and Recreation has been picking up trash and recycling separately to minimize possible mixing. DPW is in the process of evaluating the effectiveness of this solution. Committee members inquired about the interrelationship between the Sustainability Co-Directors and the Recycling Manager. Ms. Lemieux noted that while the focus has previously been on residential assessments and energy efficiency, with Ms. Trabert's report they hope to integrate the coordination of the efforts to increase sustainability. Councilors requested that the administration share the revised job description of the Sustainability Co-Directors with Councilors.

Councilors suggested that Ms. Trabert analyze the cost of City services and provide estimated cost savings as a result of having an additional staff person. Councilors also requested that Ms. Trabert include a list of improvements with corresponding cost estimates. Committee members suggested that Ms. Trabert compile a list of possible ordinance changes that require Council assistance. Councilor Albright motioned to hold the item which carried unanimously.

CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON WIRELESS petitioning for a grant of location to attach wireless communication equipment to existing utility poles at the following locations [(Ward 8) 07/01/2016 @11:17 AM]:

Locations

~~Dudley Road (near 530 Dudley Road) at Pole #10-7~~

Hay Road (near 16 Hay Road) at Pole #1368-1

**Action:** Public Facilities Approved as Amended as the Dudley Road location was Withdrawn 6-1-0 (Lennon Opposed)

**Note:** The Chair noted that the Dudley Road petition was withdrawn without prejudice after communications between Associate City Solicitor Alan Mandl and Attorney Elizabeth Mason on behalf of Verizon Wireless. Attorney Mason noted that Verizon Wireless radio frequency engineers still believe that the Dudley Road pole is the best location, but that they are cognizant of the concerns from abutters and the City.

The Wireless Subcommittee has been working to draft guidelines for the location of wireless telecommunication equipment and has been in contact with radio frequency professionals to discuss possible consulting options. One potential consultant suggested that there are alternative options to meet the capacity demands of service providers. Subcommittee members agreed that working proactively and collaboratively with service providers may be beneficial for locating wireless telecommunication equipment while meeting the City's emergency communications needs. The Chair acknowledged that Verizon Wireless must be able to meet service demands per FCC regulations but stated that the City is looking to minimize visual and physical impacts in the Cit. She questioned whether 70'-80' monopoles might be one better way to minimize the number of devices located throughout the City. Current petitions before the Committee are subject to a twice extended tolling agreement with Verizon Wireless, therefor the Subcommittee will not be able to establish guidelines prior to taking action on the current petitions. Attorney Mandl has worked with Attorney Mason to draft conditions acceptable to both parties, and which are within the City's authority and rights under state and federal law. Attorney Mandl provided the draft conditions for the Committee's review.

Attorney Mandl noted that the petitioner must receive and submit approval of the pole owner prior to installation of the equipment. If minor changes must be made at the request of the pole owner, the petitioner must submit for approval from the Department of Public Works.

Committee members discussed whether the language referencing the (\$10,000) performance bond is appropriate. Attorney Mason noted that while other municipalities do not often require a performance bond, one community has bundled the requirement for the performance bond with multiple grants of location. She added that the \$10,000 performance bond required by the City was previously established to address possible trench work, macro sites, or electrical lines throughout the City and perhaps not appropriate for the installation of smaller wireless devices. A Committee member suggested that a bond be posted to cover the repair/replacement of one installation and be replaced as needed. Committee members agreed that as the City's policies may change regarding the bond to be posted, the Council Order should reflect a bond to be posted, that is compliant with City code.

A condition previously discussed would prohibit Verizon Wireless from treating each pole as a base station. Attorney Mason noted that Verizon Wireless would agree to this condition and that any changes to the petition shall be subject to City Council approval. Associate City Engineer John Daghlia confirmed that while the petition is reviewed by Engineering, enforcement is done by Inspectional Services as the petitioner must apply for an electrical permit.

The Public Hearing was opened and closed with no one wishing to speak. Councilor Lappin motioned to approve the grant of location subject to second call and subject to the conditions discussed. The Committee voted 6-1-0. Councilor Lennon voted against the petition and does not believe that wireless telecommunication grants of location should be approved prior to the adoptions of fees and guidelines.

**#281-16      Cellco petition for Grant of Location for wireless communication equipment**  
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON WIRELESS petitioning for a grant of location to attach wireless communication equipment to existing Utility Pole #20-20 at Sargent Street (near the Sargent/Centre intersection). (Ward 7) [07/20/2016 @12:21 PM]

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Approved 6-1-0 (Lennon Opposed)**

**Note:**      The public hearing was closed with no comment from the public. Councilor Laredo motioned approval subject to second call and the conditions discussed. The Committee voted 6-1-0 in favor of the motion, Councilor Lennon opposed.

**#423-16      Verizon Grant of Location petition for wireless communication equipment**  
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON WIRELESS petitioning for a grant of location to attach wireless communication equipment to existing utility pole #405/24 adjacent to 93 Sevlard Road. (Ward 8). [11/21/2016 @ 9:44 AM]

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Approved 6-1-0 (Lennon Opposed)**

**Note:**      With no member of the public wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed. Councilor Albright motioned to approve the item, subject to second call and the conditions discussed. The Committee voted 6-1-0 in favor of the item, Councilor Lennon opposed.

**#36-17      Ordinance amendment to require peer review of wires communication attachments**

COUNCILOR CROSSLEY, ALBRIGHT AND LAPPIN requesting an Ordinance, pursuant to Mass. General laws Chapter 166, Section 22 and Chapter 44, Section 53G, the adoption of which would enable the City Council to require peer review of grant of location petitions, including proposed wireless communications equipment attachments to poles or structures in the public way (and on public lands), at the petitioner's expense, to assist the Council in deciding requested grants of location.

**Action:**      **Public Facilities Held 7-0**

**Note:** On February 8, Committee members agreed that it is necessary to amend the ordinances to allow for peer review of grants of location. Attorney Mandl modeled the draft ordinance (attached) after the peer review ordinance for special permits Sec. 22-6. He noted that the language is customized to the grant of location process. Attorney Mandl confirmed that fee increases pertaining to the grant of location process are subject to a cost analysis of the work required to process and review the application. He added that he is drafting a revision to Council rules to address appeals by the petitioner related to the cost of peer review. It was noted that some communities have policies that allow the municipality to require petitioners to pay additional costs when the peer review costs more than anticipated. Committee members agreed that the ordinance should reflect this provision. Attorney Mandl confirmed that he could make the changes discussed. Councilor Laredo motioned to hold the item which carried unanimously.

The Committee adjourned at 9:30 pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Deborah J. Crossley, Chair**

## Moving Beyond Solid Waste to Sustainable Materials Management

City of Newton Sustainable Materials Management Framework Report

Public Facilities Committee Meeting  
February 22, 2017

**Waneta Trabert**  
City of Newton Recycling Manager



## Materials Management Hierarchy



## Where is “away”?

- Solid waste goes to Wheelabrator Millbury
  - 17,785 tons in CY16 = 1,248lbs/household served
- Single stream recycling is processed at WM Avon Materials Recovery Facility
  - 10,358 tons in CY16 = 726lbs/household served
- All other material streams have independent vendors



## Newton’s Sustainable Materials Management Program Overview

- Residential Service
  - Curbside collections
  - Permanent drop-off site – RRC
  - Multi-family properties
- Municipal Service
  - City buildings including public schools
  - City operations
  - Public spaces



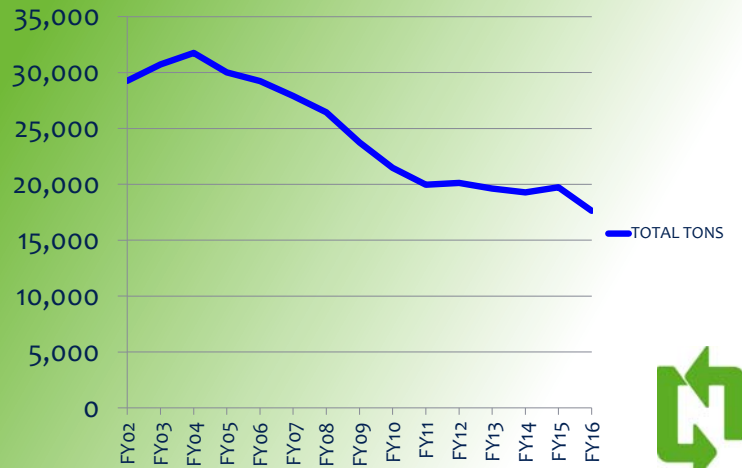


## Residential Curbside Collection

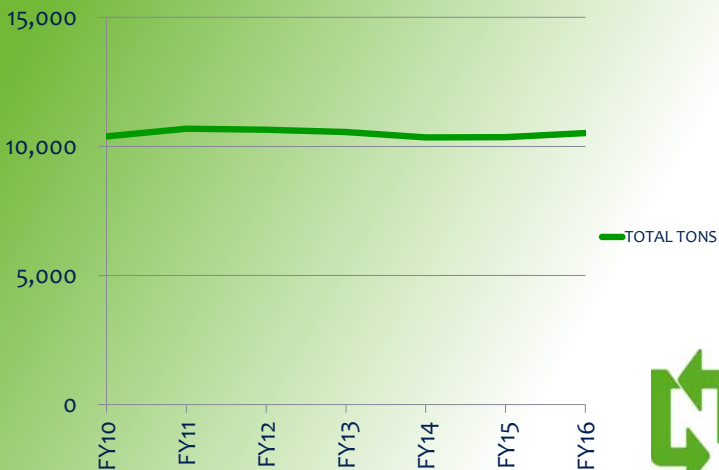
- Solid Waste – blue cart
- Single Stream Recycling – green cart
- Yard waste
- Bulky waste pickup
- Appliance/E-waste/ scrap metal item (fee)



## Solid Waste Curbside Collection



## Single Stream Curbside Collection



## Resource Recovery Center

- Single stream recycling
- Scrap metal
- Rigid plastics
- Styrofoam
- E-waste
- Propane tanks
- Printer cartridges
- Freon appliances
- Universal waste: bulbs, batteries, used oil, used antifreeze, mercury-containing items
- HHW collection events



## Resource Recovery Center - Reuse

- Goodwill trailer
- Salvation Army box
- Red Cross box
- **Book Reuse Shed**
- More Than Words box
- Paint exchange
- Swap Day event 2x/yr



## SMM Program Analysis

### Program Strengths

- Solid program foundation
- Superb infrastructure
- Wide range of materials collected
- Excellent use of technology
- Rich program history
- Engaging at the state level
- Provide premium services that many other munis do not
- Strong desire to improve

### Room for Improvement

- Education and outreach
- Resident accountability
- Commercial sector
- Emphasis on source reduction
- Increase materials recovered
- Sustainability tie-ins
- Performance measures
- Specific goals



## MA 2010-2020 Solid Waste Master Plan: A Path to Zero Waste

- Shift in thinking to focus on:
  - Reducing the generation of waste
  - Promoting more efficient use of materials throughout their lifecycle
  - Increasing recovery, reuse, and recycling of materials that have served their useful purpose
  - Reducing the amount of waste requiring disposal
  - Reducing the toxicity of the waste requiring disposal
  - Improving the environmental performance of materials management facilities



## Is Zero Waste Possible?

- Nantucket – 91% diversion rate
- San Francisco – 80% diversion rate
- Major cities with zero waste goals:
  - Oakland (2006)
  - Seattle (2007)
  - Austin (2009)
  - Dallas (2013)
  - Los Angeles (2014)
  - Washington, D.C. (2014)
  - San Diego (2015)
  - Minneapolis (2015)
  - Boston (2017?)



## 21 Recommendations for Improvement

- Residential Service (2)
  - Curbside collections (5)
  - Permanent drop-off site – RRC (2)
  - Multi-family properties (1)
- Municipal Service
  - City buildings including public schools (6)
  - City operations (2)
  - Public spaces (3)



## What does improvement mean?

- Reduce costs
- Reduce waste generation
- Increase diversion (reuse, recycling)
- Increase operational efficiency
- Increase in communication, participation, and engagement
- Meet compliance or best management practice standards



## Overall Residential Services Recommendations

- 1) Develop and implement a long term education and outreach plan
- 2) Develop and promote city-wide recovery and waste reduction goals



## Curbside Collections Recommendations

- 3) Assess the bulky waste collection policy and adopt changes to reduce tonnage and abuse (effort underway with DEP grant)
- 4) Further develop infrastructure to manage household organic wastes
  - a) Encourage backyard composting
  - b) Campaign to reduce food waste
  - c) Investigate anaerobic digestion potential
  - d) Promote use of in-sink food waste disposers



## Curbside Collections Recommendations (cont'd)

- 5) Streamline management of City's curbside cart fleet (effort underway)
- 6) Increase recovery of household organics by exploring curbside collection options
- 7) Reward good recycling behaviors with tags on curbside carts



## Drop-off Site Recommendations

- 8) Offer a permanent reuse "swap shop"
- 9) Restructure household hazardous waste collection program (effort underway)



## Multi-family Service Recommendations

- 10) Perform a fiscal analysis to determine the costs and benefits of the City providing service to multi-family properties
  - a) Develop understanding of what properties the City currently provides service for
  - b) Develop consistent policy by setting a unit limit and conditions for providing service to condominiums



## City Building Recommendations

- 11) Evaluate, update, and implement the previously developed waste prevention policy and program
- 12) Assess waste collection service needs of City buildings to reduce pickups and costs
- 13) Begin tracking time and cost to manage illegal dumping – implement locks and cameras to discourage illegal dumping on City properties



## City Building Recommendations (cont'd)

- 14) Mandate recycling and responsible materials management as a job duty for all City staff
- 15) Determine municipal dumpster contamination to guide internal education
- 16) Continuously increase recovery of materials and reduce waste generation by evaluating current practices and finding missed opportunities



## Public Space Recommendations

- 17) Explore development of a formal carry-in/carry-out policy for public spaces that do not have city-managed collection
- 18) Improve education and outreach to reduce contamination and increase recycling
- 19) Mandate recycling for all permitted events held on City property by requiring a recycling plan in the permit application



## City Operations Recommendations

- 20) Improve materials management in project planning by including preferred materials management strategies in bids and internal project planning
- 21) Increase sorting and seek recovery outlets for project wastes (i.e., stumps, concrete, wood)



## Education & Outreach

- 2017 Education & Outreach plan in report
- Communication tools
  - 311
  - Recycle Right Newton app/web platform
  - City website
  - Print materials
  - Direct outreach efforts
  - Social media



## 9 Months In

- Continued focus on improving RRC operations
- Grasp on program costs – particularly WM
- Added e-waste collection at RRC
- Addressed curbside compliance consistency
- Plans underway to revamp HHW collection operations
- Drafted SMM program report
- Received 2 MassDEP grants
- Reconvened Solid Waste Commission monthly meetings
- Implemented Recycle Right Newton app
- Joined MassRecycle Board/MassPSC
- Turning focus heavily toward education for 2017



## A Look Ahead

- Develop long term SMM plan
- New performance metrics/data collection
- Increase education efforts
- Backyard compost campaign
- 2017 Program Guide mailing
- Bulk waste assessment
- Continued program analysis
- Permanent Swap Shop?



... moving in the right direction, but a long way from reaching zero waste



## Contact Me

Waneta Trabert

Recycling/Environmental Manager

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[www.newtonma.gov/recycling](http://www.newtonma.gov/recycling)

Recycle Right Newton app



**Nadia Khan**

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**From:** Alison Leary Mooradian <alisonlearymooradian@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 10, 2017 5:48 PM  
**To:** Deborah J. Crossley  
**Cc:** Andy Savitz; Ann Berwick; Ann G. Berwick; Waneta Trabert; James Mcgonagle; Shane Mark; Maureen Lemieux; citycouncil; Nadia Khan  
**Subject:** My Comments - City of Newton Sustainable Materials Management Framework Report -Public Facilities 2/22/2017  
**Attachments:** Newton Zero\_Waste Report\_Dec\_2016 (1).pdf

Dear Chair Crossley,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments on the SMM Report as part of the minutes of the Public Facilities from 2/22/2017. Please find my comments below;

I think we could be on the cusp of some very positive changes with the release of this report. Many of the recommendations will not only lead to improved environmental outcomes but can yield very significant financial benefits.

For many years Newton enjoyed a long-term contract with WM for all our recycling and solid waste needs. Those days are over. With dwindling landfill capacity and the increasing demands on the WTE facilities costs are very likely to increase. (Just weeks ago the Southborough landfill managed by Casella, was denied a permit to expand capacity by Mass DEP).

As recommended in the report, we need to adopt a more comprehensive and integrated approach to manage materials throughout their life cycle and find the highest and best use for products that we no longer need or want. This type of long term strategic planning is very similar to the very successful work that was done (lead by Councilors Crossley & Fuller and the WSS Working Group) in replacing and repairing water and sewer pipes that resulted in the City saving over a million dollars.

As stated very succinctly in Waneta's report, "*we can no longer afford to continue with the traditional methods of managing waste*".

The major criticism of the report is what I saw as a very sanitized description of incineration, also known as waste to energy (WTE) facilities or "energy recovery" found in section 1.1.1.4.

Incineration is not without controversy and the report glossed over many of the problems with this technology and minimized the negative impacts. We also rely much too heavily on it and reducing the amount we burn should be immediately addressed.

Incineration is one of the biggest barriers to a zero-waste goal described on page 13 of the report. It is irrational living in this day and age to go along with squandering of finite materials and financial resources on a non-sustainable practice such as “energy recovery”.

Also absent in the report any is any meaningful discussion of expanding a pay as you throw (PAYT) program, which would be the most direct and effective plan to reduce trashing tonnage quickly. However, the report does discuss waste reduction efforts such as evaluating the perplexing reasoning behind allowing 5 free bulky curb side pick ups per week and a the idea of pilot program to divert food waste.

The report fails to make the case as to why Parks & Recreation should continue to manage the public space/park s trash & recycling program. This is despite a botched roll-out of the Big Belly program which resulted in many resident complaints and the hasty addition of a dog waste collection vendor. The added vendor reduced the value and purpose of the Big Belly units which was intended to reduce costs and staff time. In addition, little has been done to reduce the contamination of recycling in public spaces or to improve recycling collection. There also appears to be little coordination between the Solid Waste & Recycling division of DPW and Parks & Recreation which could help improve processes.

The report makes many excellent recommendations for improvements summarized on pages 4-5. But if we are serious in making progress it will require the staff to carry it out. This may include a full-time education coordinator to work with schools, the community and local businesses. Also, a staff person to work on enforcement, special projects and assessing the cost effectiveness of programs. This could include, assessing dumpster pickups for city buildings, assessing recycling facilities, managing procurement that includes environmental impacts and writing RFPs that promote increased diversion, mitigate GHG impacts and prioritize creative local businesses, which also creates jobs.

I would urge the Administration to take advantage of the information contained in this report and work closely with Waneta and the Solid Waste Commission in determining program needs and implementing best practices.

Thanks again to Waneta for her outstanding effort in putting together this report. We are lucky to have her talent and expertise.

Kind regards,

Alison Leary



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