

Winthrop Board Of Health Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2021

REMOTE PARTICIPATION BY ZOOM

Call to order: 6:33 pm

Roll call: Bill Schmidt, Chair, Jeanne Holgersen, Member, Marianne Dalton, Member

Present: Wendy Millar Page, Zero Waste Committee Chair; Karin Chavis; Betsy Shane; Kurt Millar; Michael Dimento.

Public comment: This meeting is for the purpose of inviting public comment on trash regulations or black plastic recycling issues, and for the Board to discuss any additions, deletions or other changes to the current draft of trash regulations, with the intent to vote by the end of this meeting upon finalizing said changes.

Karin Chavis: poses question as to why past regulations were not enforced, and how will new regulations be enforced. Bill Schmidt replies that the new regulations and trash barrel fees are in response to the rising cost of trash disposal incurred by the Town of Winthrop. The hope is that through education and added revenue from trash barrel fees, the Town will be able to offset these rising costs. Bill adds that the BOH itself is a policy-making entity, and that its designees (Inspectional Services and DPW) will be managing enforcement.

Michael Dimento: has question about why a 28-inch rug he wanted to discard was deemed unacceptable by Capitol Waste collectors when they were on his street. Wendy Millar Page, Zero Waste Committee Chair responds that the item in question needed a \$5 trash sticker in order to be eligible for curbside weekly trash collection, which Wendy

states that she already advised Mr Dimento in earlier discussions. Mr Dimento requests specific weight parameters for trash collection; Wendy states that this is determined by the trash collectors on the truck. Wendy refers Mr Dimento to Steven Calla, Director of Public Works for further clarification.

No further public comment, public comment closed.

Trash, recycling and solid waste disposal regulations: The draft to be reviewed by the BOH this evening was presented 9/7/21 by Bill Schmidt and Wendy Millar-Page to the Town Council, and Bill Schmidt revised the draft to reflect comments offered by Councilors at that meeting, as well as from Chief Terrence Delehanty, Steven Calla, and the Town legal counsel.

A section-by-section review follows, focusing on changes.

Definitions: change “town compost” to “yard waste”

Wendy: leaf/yard waste is not recyclable.

Receptacles must be town-provided.

Town duties and responsibilities: Wendy provides an overview of what overflow trash bags in Winthrop will entail. She states that her job is educating the town’s citizens on how to reduce their trash. The price per bag for the overflow bags will help defray the costing of “tipping fees” (fees paid by anyone disposing of waste at a waste processing facility).

Jeanne Holgersen shares concerns she, along with others townspeople, have about the cost of overflow trash bags and the difficulty of limiting trash and recycling barrels to one each per household. Wendy replies that once the regulations have been voted in by the Board, her job is to make the implementation as pain-free as possible. Wendy states the “bottom line” is reduce tonnage=savings. Extra trash with no fee=uncontrolled costs. Wendy further states that the price of overflow bags is not going to be determined tonight.

Wendy states that the town's contract with Capitol Waste does not include extra containers for recycling. This is due to fluctuating recycling rates, and is beyond the Town's control. Bill comments that if individuals want to utilize Black Earth Compost for food waste, this would reduce tonnage of trash for the Town. Bill echoes Wendy in stating the town cannot handle the cost alone, citizens need to start thinking about reducing trash.

Karin Chavis adds that the \$160/household is a charge for curbside pickup only. The disposal fee (carting it away to a waste facility) is picked up by the town. Karin reports that the Town paid \$1.3 million for trash disposal last year. This year's contract is closer to \$2 million. The Enterprise Fund [special fund created for specific business purposes, designed to be self-sustaining, where the revenue generated by the fund is used to cover the expenditures] will partially cover the dumping fees. Karin states the if households cannot fit their weekly trash and recycling into 1 bin each, they will need to pay for overflow bags. Wendy adds that the metric is simply more trash equals higher costs, thus the need to reduce trash.

Bill states that the job of the BOH is to make regulations that will match the reality of what the Town Council has passed.

Time of putting out trash for weekly pickup : discussion concerning current regulations vs proposed changes. Board members and Wendy agree to change the time from not before 7 am the day of pickup to not before 5 pm the night before pickup. This is to accommodate those who work 3rd shift.

Overflow trash, holiday curbside collection: Wendy requests change in wording to limit only one overflow barrel on holidays designated by the Town.

Mandatory recycling: Wendy clarifies that there is NO overflow recycling, definition removed and paragraph referring to same is removed. Wendy states further that as of November 2022, mattresses,

box springs and textiles will be prohibited per Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP). This item will not be included in the Town's regulations at this time, but will be added when the DEP adopts the prohibitions. Wendy defines single stream vs dual stream recycling: Winthrop only requires single stream, no separation of items in recycling bin.

Procedures for placement of materials for curbside collection: Wendy provides a brief synopsis of the procedures for recycling: place glass and plastic jars, rinsed with or without the cap/lid on, in recycling bin. No lids alone not attached to containers. Paper labels do not need to be removed, plastic labels do. Cardboard boxes need to be broken down so they fit in the recycling bin, cannot be left next to bin not broken down. Capitol Waste has said that a "reasonable" number of broken down boxes may be placed under the recycling bin. No times allowed under 3"X3". Wendy requests adding to definition of aluminum and steel/mixed cans: items including aluminum foil, rinsed clean; aluminum foil trays, coffee cans, disposable pie pans. Wendy asks for a more detail definition of "cardboard", to include food container boxes, any paperboard, cardboard containers, lightly soiled pizza boxes. Wendy also asks that "preferably" be struck concerning flattening cardboard boxes. It is required.

Scavenging: The Board and Wendy decide to change wording to allow scavenging for bottles/cans with a deposit, until it becomes problematic.

Disposal of bulky items, white goods, yard waste and specialty items (hazardous waste): Wendy asks that the Board consider limiting the number of bulky items per household allowed to be picked up weekly, as currently the number is unlimited. Decision was made by the Board to not limit at this time. Decision was also made by Board to not include limits on dimensions of items allowed. Specialty items are

collected the 3rd Tuesday of every month. The Board also agrees to not include mattresses under bulky items.

Yard waste: Wendy stresses that yard waste for curbside pickup is for fall leaves only, is done only twice in the fall, and takes place on a Saturday in November and again in December. No plastic bags. Only leaves in compostable paper bags or in barrels will be accepted. Section concerning “waiver” for citizens over 65: this section was not approved by Town Council so will be removed from regulations.

Complaints and disputes: currently these come to BOH, and BOH refers them to Inspectional Services. Bill adds “BOH or their designees” to whom disputes will be brought, designees being Inspectional Services or DPW.

Violations: Bill consulted the town legal counsel and they recommended a reduction in fines for violations, lowered from \$500 to \$300. Wendy requests an addendum stating “no leaf blowing into street. Wendy clarifies that violations are not just mailed, they may be handed to homeowner; change “mailed to” to “issued to”.

Enforcement: Bill reports that Chief Delehanty requested that enforcement be the responsibility of Inspectional Services and/or DPW. Bill also states that town attorneys requested a change of violation class to “non-criminal”.

Bill Schmidt will incorporate all changes discussed this evening into the final draft.

The regulation as amended is voted unanimously in favor, 3-0.

Black plastic: Bill states that the BOH has authority to fine businesses that continue to use black plastic containers. Wendy recommends that BOH encourages businesses to use alternatives to black plastic, due to

potential future statewide bans, the health risk of disposing black plastic in the trash, and the fact that black plastic is NOT recyclable. Wendy comments that her job as chair of Zero Waste Committee is to work toward Winthrop becoming a “green town”. This goal will entail providing education and continuing collaboration between the BOH and Zero Waste Committee.

Bill reports that he was unable to find anything concerning black plastic in other towns/cities trash regulations; he will put this item on the agenda for the next meeting (Tuesday, November 16 @ 630 pm). Wendy will start the process of implementing the changes in these regulations now that the Board has approved them.

Motion to adjourn: 8:58 pm, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Marianne Dalton, Member