

**DRAFT
CITY OF BEVERLY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

CITY OF BEVERLY
RECEIVED AND RECORDED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

2023 FEB 27 P 12:10

COMMITTEE:	Waste Reduction Committee
DATE:	February 2, 2023
LOCATION:	Beverly Public Library, 32 Essex Street, Sohler Room
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Sandy Burgess, Bonnie Dean, Nancy Dillon, Amy Henderson, Susan Higgins (Chair), John Swain, Lisa Willwerth
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Joyce Herman
STAFF PRESENT:	Erina Keefe, Sustainability Director, Brad Pillen, Sustainability Project Manager
OTHERS PRESENT:	N/A
RECORDER:	Danielle Spang

1. **Call to order:** 6:31 p.m.
2. **Review minutes for January 5, 2022 meeting (pending distribution) – VOTE to approve**

Minutes were not distributed in advance of the meeting, so voting is held for March meeting.

3. **Administrative Business**

- a. **Review and discuss Committee openings:** Higgins shared the three members up for renewal in 2023 are not renewing, so there will be four vacancies on BWRC. For quorum, five members need to attend a meeting, so beginning in April all current members would need to attend every meeting. Higgins asks people to share referrals with Keefe or Mayor Cahill, and Swain suggests including a call for volunteers at EarthFest. Pillen echoes BWRC members could wear buttons, “Ask Me About BWRC” or similar phrasing to help recruit volunteers. Calls for volunteers can be shared on social media accounts, through newsletters (Green Beverly, Resilient Together, Endicott College, Montserrat, etc.) as well. BWRC has social media accounts, and Higgins will try to connect other members to administer the account.

- b. **Elect Chair for Calendar Year 2023 – VOTE to approve:** Higgins shared that after she announced her plans to not renew membership, Henderson expressed interest in serving as Chair, and welcomed her to speak. Henderson shared that she will not try to fill Higgins’ shoes, but she has enjoyed serving on BWRC and is energized by the annual events and public interactions. Henderson welcomes members’ thoughts on what energizes them as well, and looks forward to working together. Higgins appreciated different perspectives, and advocates for rotating chairs on committees for that reason. No one else expressed interest in serving as Chair, and Swain commended Henderson for volunteering.

Motion: Swain moved to elect Henderson as Chair effective March 1, 2023; Dean seconded. The motion carried (6-0-1); Henderson abstained.

i. Consider positions of Vice Chair or Co-Chair, and Treasurer – VOTE to approve: Henderson would appreciate a Vice Chair to connect with between meetings and to run meetings in her absence.

Motion: Henderson moved to elect Willwerth as Vice Chair; Swain seconded. Willwerth accepted the nomination, and after a brief discussion the motion carried (7-0).

Higgins explained that Burgess does not wish to continue serving as Treasurer beyond the end of March 2023, and recommends BWRC revisit whether it needs a treasurer at that time. Burgess will help process any open reimbursements until then.

c. Review 2023 meeting dates, times, and locations: Higgins suggested BWRC revisit its monthly meeting schedule especially as new members join the committee, and confirmed the Sohier Room is reserved from 5:45-8:30pm for the 1st Thursday of every month in 2023 except August, when the Barnet Gallery is reserved. The reservations can be changed as needed.

Motion: Dillon moved to hold the March and April BWRC meetings on the 1st Thursday of each month; Willwerth seconded. The motion carried (7-0).

d. Review Committee financial status – outstanding reimbursements, spending allowances: Burgess shared the current account balance is \$23,960.49 (checks to BlackEarth, Henderson, Dillon, U-Line, and Green Beverly). Henderson emailed the Pumpkin Smash survey raffle winners, and they were excited over the prizes. Survey comments included: suggestions for a city-sponsored compost bin on Rantoul Street, and a few responses from people who do not compost but if they did would use a curbside service. Henderson may ask Black Earth whether they would offer 10% discounts to those survey responders. Higgins asked how much of the \$2,000 authorized funding towards banners and signage was used, and Burgess estimated ~\$650 towards the table runner, signs, and poster stands. Henderson will connect with Keefe and Jacobson around banner design and the city's printing vendors to order a banner before LobsterFest.

e. Discuss City of Beverly MassRecycle membership recommendation, and participation in MassRecycle Conference:

i. Municipal membership price: \$300/year (small City, population <75,000) – **VOTE** to recommend or approve

Higgins reviewed what MassRecycle is and its membership benefits, including advocating with the state for recycling, consistency in messaging, legislation, etc., on top of annual conferences and facility tours. Members discussed benefits and level of interest in joining as a city, and whether BWRC would consider funding the membership fee. There was some discussion on how many users could join under a municipal account, and join in calls, meetings, tours, etc. Higgins noted tours are free for members and this year's schedule has not yet been announced but prior tours included GreenWorks facility, a waste energy facility (incinerator), U-Tech (mattress recycling facility), Great Exchange in Devens, and more. Tours are usually limited to a small number of guests.

Motion: Henderson moved to recommend the City of Beverly become a member of MassRecycle using \$300 of BWRC funds to cover the membership fee; Swain seconds. The motion carried (7-0).

Henderson shared the next Massachusetts Products Stewardship Council meeting will be Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 1pm, and asked whether another member would be available to attend. Higgins is available and plans to attend for her university as well.

- ii. 2023 MassRecycle Conference and Trade Show – **VOTE** to sponsor attendance by one or more Committee representatives

Members are encouraged to check their availability for March 23, 2023.

4. City Updates – Styrofoam collection event and Earth Fest 2023:

EarthFest 2023: Henderson shared that today was the first official meeting, and it will be Sunday, April 23, 2023 at Lynch Park from 11am to 2pm (rain date Sunday, April 30th). Last year it was from 1-5pm, so with an earlier start they plan to have more food options and appreciate BWRC help with waste sorting. Henderson noted the Endicott volunteers at Pumpkin Smash were highly effective, and suggests working with them again on waste sorting so BWRC members can also educate. Henderson unofficially reached out to Carey to check her availability for a “Stump the Expert” or miniature model MRF (materials recovery facility) display. Members discussed composting vendors and the sorting process from last year. Keefe noted this year they can reach out to food vendors sharing last year’s attendance records to hopefully attract more zero and low-waste food vendors. Keefe challenged BWRC to keep its education and outreach accessible for people of all ages and abilities. Members asked whether the Beer Garden will return, and Keefe said they are actively seeking someone to coordinate it. Last year’s feedback included that weather impacts sales and in late April it can still fluctuate greatly.

Higgins asked about any giveaways or raffles, or other opportunities for BWRC to support the event. Relating to BWRC’s purview, potential expenses could include event composting fees and raffle prizes. Swain inquired whether vendors are charged fees, and they are not outside of temporary one-day food permits or liquor licenses. Members asked how many people attended last year, and Keefe shared that Green Beverly estimates between 1,000 and 1,500 people and they may check some resident drone footage. Members reviewed who retained which BWRC materials and bins, and Keefe offered to store the items in the City Hall basement.

Styrofoam Collection Event: Keefe confirmed the event went very well, the four municipalities filled the truck (Beverly, Salem, Lynn and Danvers), and each sent volunteers to help. They collected 72 bags, and counted 216 vehicles – plus a few trips with DPS to transfer Styrofoam from the Barnet Gallery. A teacher took two giant bags to her classroom at the high school to make eco-bricks, so they did not need to turn anyone away. Vendor charged \$1,600 for the truck and staff, plus per-bag processing/disposal fees. Keefe may price out other vendors, and appreciated sharing costs with four communities. Dean asked how the Styrofoam is used, and Keefe confirmed they condense it into bricks to make boat furniture, walk-in refrigerator insulation, etc. The vendor estimated one truck produces roughly two pallets of bricks.

Members discussed electronic waste events, and Keefe inquired which groups host +/- or fundraise through e-waste recycling events (Black Earth in March, scout troops, music boosters, sports team boosters, etc.). Danvers and Salem host e-waste events, and possibly a summer Styrofoam collection event could include electronic waste as well. Dillon and Higgins strongly recommend the city continue providing at least one annual minimal-cost electronic waste collection event, to help residents divert e-waste from the trash.

Composting: Keefe asked Connor from Black Earth for his perspective on possibly scaling up to offer residential curbside composting citywide and their capacity in the new Manchester facility. He estimated roughly \$2/household per week, and roughly \$1.5M per year citywide (assuming ~40% participation, Henderson noted maybe 30% Manchester residents participate), and Black Earth could accommodate a new municipality at their new facility which will roughly triple their capacity. Black Earth conducted its own audit, sorting food scraps from trash for 100 households, and they found 48% of materials were compostable, much higher than MassDEP's 20% estimation that informs Beverly's discount credit for curbside participants. Black Earth's findings have not been replicated, but the City is exploring the feasibility for a program that may reduce our tipping fees. Members share BWRC's history advocating for pay-as-you-throw trash fees, and its potential benefits / disadvantages especially paired with unlimited recycling. Keefe reviewed slurry compost versus Black Earth's model, and shared the City does not want to roll out a slurry compost plan.

5. Old business and miscellaneous items

Swain proposes a press release to announce new BWRC Chair and request volunteers.

6. Upcoming events

- a. Green Beverly Compostable Containers Pilot Program (February 6, 2023 at 5pm): kickoff meeting in the Beverly Public Library, 32 Essex Street, Sohier Room
- b. City of Salem, Repair Café and TerraCycle Collection (February 11, 2023)

7. Other updates and discussion items by Committee members

N/A.

8. **Adjourn**: Dillon moved to adjourn; Higgins seconded. The motion carried (7-0) at 8:28pm.

NEXT MEETING:

March 2, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Location: Beverly Public Library, 32 Essex Street, Sohier Room