Agenda

Northport Recycling Committee

Purpose: To reduce and/or offset the cost of recycling in Northport

November 30, 2023

1. Review minutes from last meeting.
2. James – Timing of communication with selectboard.
3. Marnie – Report on PaintCare and Repair Café.
4. Draft a report for the selectboard:
5. Overview
6. Goal: Research options to reduce or offset the cost of recycling while continuing to recycle responsibly.
7. Why strive to reduce cost? Recycling cost is increasing rapidly and is higher than not recycling (sending to Juniper Ridge landfill):

Recycling cost, FY 2022 – 2023 (not including fuel surcharge) = $48,080

Projected recycling cost, FY 2023 - 2024 (not including fuel surcharge) = $54,328

Estimated cost to landfill recyclables as trash = $42,780 based on $99 tip fee. S/B $92.50?

1. What is “responsible?”
2. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle defines “recycle responsibly.” This relates to management of all types of waste, thus all transfer station functions. (eg diverting reusable items from trash, recycling electronics, etc.)
3. Payments to municipalities from the Maine EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) program will begin in 2027. This increases the incentive to maintain recycling habits until then. (See Addendum #1)
4. Some options are unnecessary or untenable; charging for recycling (no other towns do this), swap shop (too much labor), etc. (See Addendum #2)
5. Primary focus areas:
6. Education (Eco Tips) to encourage reducing trash, reuse and diversion (provide examples missing #2) (See Addendum #3)
7. Publishing weekly in Republican Journal Town News.
8. To be published in emailed Northport News
9. Does select board want a brochure printed for distribution from the town office, the transfer station, and/or provided to Bayside summer rental cottages?
10. Communication to inform residents of transfer station policies and practices.
11. The committee recommends an updated web page for the transfer station including what items are accepted, where they go, and fees.
12. We recommend putting Eco Tips (or a link) on the transfer station web page.
13. Current fate of recyclables via EcoMaine. Is it effective?
14. All items we currently recycle (cardboard, glass, #2 plastic, mixed plastics, mixed paper, metals) are eventually used in new products (provide details) (See Addendum #4)
15. Glass is heavy, thus an expensive component of our recycling, but it is used for roadbed construction. We recommend continuing to recycle it.
16. Alternative Waste Services Providers
17. MRC (Municipal Review Committee) for trash/recycling. (See Addendum #5)
18. Updating former Fiberight plant in Hampden. Project to open by early 2025.
19. Recyclables mixed with trash.
20. Produces bio-gas and other marketable products.
21. Projected tipping fee comparable to our current fee for trash.
22. Opening date, effectiveness and reliability of new plant are uncertain.
23. MRC membership . Cost? Commitment? Contract? “Placeholder” membership to hold a space is available. Will joining later be an option? Need to join to send waste to MWS?
24. Committee recommends keeping an eye on this option and tracking their progress.
25. PERC (Penobscot Energy Recovery Co, Orrington) (See Addendum #6)
26. Will convert trash to energy
27. Reopening date, updated technology, and cost are uncertain. (Provide detail)
28. Committee recommends keeping an eye on this option.
29. Belfast recycling facility
30. Requires sorting, driving to Belfast
31. Unknown if Belfast would be willing to contract, either for all of Northport or some individuals.
32. Committee will pursue this if the select board is interested.
33. Compacting recyclables and/or trash
34. Potential cost savings
35. Would reduce container rental expense (fewer, larger containers)
36. Would reduce hauling expense with approx. 7 tons per haul rather than 1 ton currently (provide spreadsheet)
37. Tipping fees would remain the same
38. Additional cost
39. Purchase or lease compactor (provide DM&J proposal, maybe Pine Tree numbers?)
40. Reliable power required (generator not adequate)
41. Requires concrete pad and small, heated space for controller (attach photos)
42. More widely used for trash. Might be more difficult to manage for recyclables due to need to check for contaminates before compacting.
43. Combined project of getting power and compacting might be attractive for grant applications.
44. Committee recommends assessing practicality of a power supply, to be pursued by the Climate Resilience Committee.
45. Fee Structure
    1. The committee is compiling a chart of fees charged for waste disposal in nearby towns. We will continue work on this and make it available to the select board.