

Bridgton Recycling Committee Meeting Minutes

March 9th, 2023

Present: Therese Johnson, Maureen McDevitt, Donna Joss, Sally Chappell, Kate Fitzcharles, Carrye Castleman-Ross, Rachel via GTM, visitors Irene and Larry Fitzgerald. Special guest Joe Whitten from Apparel Impact via GTM.

Old Business:

Apparel Impact-

- Serves Maine, Vermont, NH, Ma., NY. HQ is based in NH.
- 30-40 sites in Maine
- Takes clothes, shoes, accessories (anything you can wear)
- Main goal is the diversion of textiles from landfills. 85 % of all textiles end up in landfills.
- Family and Vet owned
- Provides, services, cleans, and picks up bins weekly. Responsible for any trash in the bins (approximately a 3-5 % margin).
- Provides an annual report to all municipalities
- Clothes over 4,000 people per year, mostly the needy and veterans
- Majority of the clothing remains in the USA
- Raised over \$150,000 for veterans.
- 80 % of what is collected can be reused as clothing. The remaining 20% is repurposed. Textiles are considered a domestic commodity. Clothing graders determine the use and sell the product to vendors. This generates income for Apparel Impact.
- Main goal is the diversion of textiles from landfills. 85 % of all textiles end up in landfills.
- Currently has the best “drop out” of program rate of any textile recycling business.
- Recommends bins in other locations as well as the transfer station
- 4’x4’x6’ bin holds 55 bags or 700 lbs. textiles
- Low threshold is considered 150 lbs. /wk.

Concerns were raised over possible negative impact to other non-profit clothing collectors such as Salvation Army and local thrift shops. Joe responded that they have had discussions with Salvation Army who voiced few objections due to their continuing

labor shortage and inability to pick up loads as often as they would like. Irene suggested reaching out to other local non-profits who could be impacted. Donna suggested the Town Hall, Community Center, and Town Office as possible additional bin locations. Joe informed the committee that they have a heavy social media presence and a great marketing team. "Getting to know us" can be uploaded from their website.

Annual report-

Sally reviewed the committee annual report. Patty Howard is withdrawing from the committee.

Rotary-

Therese reported the Rotary will coordinate Earth Day clean-up with Emily Baker of A and M Enterprises.

Ecomaine Award-

Grady's Motel is a recipient of an Ecomaine award, but does not have time to attend the ceremony in Portland. Sally and Maureen will accept the award on their behalf. We will invite them to our next meeting for a small celebration and BN photo op.

Recycling Matters-

Rachel working on an article detailing the EPR extended producers bill.

Comments and Concerns-

Sally confirmed that Worsters is in possession of a commercial haulers sticker. She also mentioned Julie Russell of J Décor, was not allowed to dispose of 50 cubic feet of compostable peanuts at the TS. She even offered to bury them herself. The committee will look into this.

Maureen stated that Ecomaine can help the town get DEP clearance for composting other organic waste if we decide to pursue.

Kate would like to follow up on composting with Agricycle and will reach out to them.

Next meeting –

April 13th at 5 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37.

Respectfully submitted, Kate Fitzcharles