

**NORTHEAST KINGDOM WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

April 11, 2023

Meeting held remotely via ZOOM and

The District Office at 224 Church Street, Lyndonville, VT 05851

The Board meeting was called to order @ 6:37 p.m. by Steve Barrup, Executive Committee Member

Present: Nick Rivers (Albany & Irasburg joined at 7:01pm); Paulette Routhier (Bloomfield, Brunswick, Maidstone); Bruce Rumball-Petre (Brighton); Bobbi Brimblecombe (Cabot & Marshfield); Bob Sandberg (Corinth joined at approximately 7:03pm); Walter McNeil Jr. (Danville); Fran Batchelder & Irene Dagesse (Derby); Kirwin Flanders (East Haven); Ken Johnston (Greensboro); Timothy Dailey, Sr. (Groton); Dave Sanders (Jay); Steve Gray (Lyndon); Jan Clausung (Newark); John Narowski (Newbury); Steve Barrup (Newport Town); Gina Vigneault (Norton & UTGs); Jack Smith (Sheffield & Wheelock in person); Emily Cayer (Stannard); Karen & Calvin Altland (Topsham); Gaston Bathalon (Troy joined at approximately 7:03pm); and Richard Degre & Dennis Vincent (Westfield)

Absent: Barnet, Brownington, Charleston, Concord, Glover, Granby, Guildhall, Holland, Kirby, Lunenburg, Morgan, Peacham, Ryegate, Sutton, Troy, Victory, Waterford (on the call, but could not be heard), and Westmore

Staff present- Paul Tomasi, Executive Director

Visitors – Amy Ash-Nixon (Caledonian-Record)

Updates to the Agenda – Steve Gray wanted to discuss in-person meetings. The subject will be included under “other business”.

Approval of Minutes – Motion & 2nd to approve the minutes of March 14, 2023. Motion approved.

Annual Meeting – Paul explained which Supervisors currently comprise the Executive Committee – Nick Rivers (Albany), Chair; Walter McNeil (Danville), Vice Chair; Paulette Routhier (Bloomfield, Brunswick, Maidstone), Treasurer; Gene Perkins (Ryegate), Clerk; Steve Barrup (Newport Center) and Jack Smith (Sheffield & Wheelock), Members-At-Large. There is one vacancy on the Executive Committee due to Joe Noble’s resignation (Member-At-Large). Motion & 2nd to keep the slate of officers the same as last year (2022). Motion approved. Jan Clausung (Newark) offered to fill the vacant Executive Committee position. Motion & 2nd to approve Jan Clausung as an additional Member-At-Large on the Executive Committee. Motion approved. Motion & 2nd to designate the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm as the regular meeting time of the Board of Supervisors. Motion approved. Motion & 2nd to designate the Caledonian-Record as the newspaper of record. Motion approved. Question: Do we need to designate 3 places for posting agendas? Answer: The 3 places we have always used are the Waste District office, the Town of Lyndon bulletin board, and the Town of Brighton bulletin board. Many other towns also post them on their bulletin boards. Agendas are also posted in the NEKWMD website.

Updates –

Personnel – Paul updated the Board on an upcoming personnel crunch with office personnel. Corey (Operations Manager) has been working from home as he cares for his wife while she recovers from a serious condition, which occurred in November of 2022. Michelle (Administrative Assistant) will be out 4-6 weeks for a scheduled procedure beginning April 19th, 2023. Shannon will be leaving the Waste District as of May 12th, 2023. Paul (Executive Director) will be going on vacation overseas from May 14th through May 29th, 2023. Paul is hopeful to be able to replace Shannon prior to her leaving, and have Corey come back into the office on at least a part-time basis prior to May 12, 2023. Paul is asking for patience during May while all of these personnel absences are occurring. Question: How many days do we anticipate the office will not be staffed or understaffed? Answer: Hopefully none, but if Corey cannot come in between May 15th and May 26th, we may face having to close the office. Because we are not open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursday, we will try to use those days as the possible days that no one would be in the office. The District may update our out-going message on our phones if office coverage is unavailable. Office staff did meet to discuss this issue so that everyone is aware of the situation. Question: How will we be handling weekly counts from facilities? Answer: Weekly recycling counts from facilities should still be emailed, but towns should also call and leave a message on the main phone line. Question: Who does our payroll? Answer: Michelle. We've made arrangements for the payroll on April 27th, 2023. It has already been created and parked for deposit that day. Paper checks for the few who receive them have also been cut and will be distributed on April 27th. The next payroll is scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2023. We are hoping that Michelle will be able to begin working part-time from home by May 5th. Payroll for May 11th will need to be started on May 8th or 9th.

Compliance – The District has been keeping an eye on the activities of Blume Farm in Charleston. We have visited the site a couple of times. The District just received a letter, signed by approximately 12 neighbors, who are complaining about Blume Farm's activities. The most recent site visit was on Friday, March 31, 2023. The Town of Charleston's Health Officer and a representative from VT DEC joined me on-site. Odors were immediately detectable from the roadside. No one from Blume Farm was present during the inspection. Upon returning to the office, I received an email from Blume Farm apologizing for not being present during the inspection and hoping that everything was satisfactory at the site. I immediately responded to their email by saying that everything was not satisfactory and that I would be pursuing enforcement action on Monday, April 3, 2023. On Monday, April 3rd, 2023 I received an email from them with photos showing the site had been scraped to the ground and the materials allegedly moved to their chicken feeding enclosure further from the road. One of the things making enforcement difficult in this situation is the lack of clear regulatory authority from the Departments of Agriculture and Environmental Conservation. Blume Farm was allegedly supposed to answer several questions posed by the Ag Dept in order to help determine jurisdiction. They failed to do so. Dept of Ag eventually sent a letter stating that because Blume Farm had not responded to their request for information, they (Ag) could not and would not make a determination. Upon receiving that letter, DEC informed Blume Farm they needed to immediately apply for a small-scale compost permit. They were given a 2-week deadline (April 21, 2023) to respond. Paul recommends waiting to see what Blume Farm does so by April 21, 2023 before pursuing legal action. Question: What is the Board's responsibility in all of this? Answer: The Board could choose to hold a public hearing in order to determine whether or not to revoke Blume Farm's permits. Our Ordinance requires private facilities located within the District to be permitted and operate under local and state rules and regulations. The District will know when and if Blume Farm takes the necessary steps towards compliance. We have been in close contact with the both State Departments – Ag and EC. The District will wait and see what the State Agencies do.

Administrative Rules – They have not been distributed to the Executive Committee yet. Paul is hoping to do so soon. This process should go quickly as the League of Cities and Towns has already provided their feedback.

Financial – The District has a fairly substantial deficit. This is not uncommon for this time of the year. We had three pay periods in March and some quarterly payments that made our bottom line look worse than it is. Low prices received for recyclables continue to adversely affect our bottom line. We are hoping to ship tin and aluminum soon. Both materials have gone up in value recently and should provide a little boost in revenues. We also expect surcharge revenues to increase as the year goes on. Question: Have we shipped any Styrofoam yet? Answer: Not yet. We are still operating with only 2 of our 3 trucks. We hope to ship as soon as the fleet is back to full force. Question: How much will it cost to ship the foam and how much do we stand to make? Answer: We'll get about \$400-500 in revenue. Our expenses for the trip are unclear, but will probably be in the neighborhood of \$150. We are looking into sharing transportation costs with Gilford, NH, so this may increase our revenue.

Grants – The District is still waiting on a decision from the USDA regarding the grant for the purchase of the foam densifier. A decision is expected in April or May 2023. We have received all of the signed grant agreements for the Organics Grant. I was hoping to receive proposals for the remaining funds, but failed to issue any definitive timeline for submitting proposals. An RFP will be issued in order to accomplish the remaining allocation of grant funds (~\$7,100) prior to the next meeting. We are still waiting to hear back from Senator Sanders office regarding a grant to purchase a new truck. We are also waiting to hear from the Town of Lyndon regarding ARPA funds available for grants. The District will be pursuing about \$12,000 to help pay for the foam densifier.

Clothing – Apparel Impact is reluctant to venture too far from the I91 corridor. The District moved the container here at our facility so it can be accessed more easily.

Other Business – In person meetings. Question: Should we try and have in person meetings during snow-free months? Answer: We may want to try and schedule at least 1 in-person meeting annually. Supervisors are encouraged to think more about this for future discussion. There was a brief mention of the 2022 surplus allocation. Paul will bring a proposal before the Board at a future meeting. The 2022 budget surplus was approximately \$5,600. Question: Any word on the bottle bill? Answer: No, but we should have some updates at tomorrow's District Managers Meeting.

Motion to adjourn, 2nd, approved @ 7:41pm

Respectfully submitted, Paul Tomasi

There is a video/audio recording of the April 11, 2023 meeting. It is available upon request.