

DATE: October 3, 2023
TIME: 9:10 AM

Belmont Solid Waste and Recycling Committee
2023.03.31

Attendees	Committee Members Not Present
Mahesh Jayakumar, chair	
Doug Koplow, vice chair	
Jason Ketola, secretary	
Terri Goldberg	
	Julie Wu
Jay Marcotte (ex officio), Director of Public Works	
Kevin Bouck (ex officio), Recycling Coordinator	

The meeting was called to order at 8:12am. The meeting was held via Zoom.

Permission to do remote and hybrid meetings was extended into 2025 by the state legislature.

Textile collection

- We resumed our discussion of possible textile diversion vendors, CMRK and Helpsy.
- Doug has concerns about the quality of information around where CMRK and Helpsy are sending materials.
- Terri said there is a new commissioner for the DEP, Bonnie Heiple. Doug and Terri said there is movement to get more information from MRFs.
- Doug said he thinks both CMRK and Helpsy seem like they could be reasonable to start with as long as we can get out of contracts if they're not working. Jay says the town is able to terminate their agreements with 30 days notice.
- Kevin prefers CMRK. His preference is based on a recommendation from Waltham, and he also heard from Weymouth that they've never had any complaints and bins are always clean.
- Doug says where there are overlapping options for reuse (e.g., in consumer goods and high quality clothes), we should make sure that residents are not locked into the selected collection vendor, but rather have a choice to use whichever vendor they wish for donations.

- With CMRK, we get revenue for items dropped off at bins, not for pickups. Residents will receive charitable donation forms for items collected from their homes curbside, which may make them eligible for tax deductions. For this reason, the value of donations to the homeowners via CMRK may be higher than with Helpsy.
- Doug moved to support the town of Belmont to move ahead with establishing a preferred agreement with CMRK for textile diversion as well as small consumer items. Terri seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on getting better data from Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs)

- Doug has been encouraging the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to use its power as a regulator to collect more information on MRF performance. This would be beneficial to towns as well. Doug said there does seem to be interest in obtaining a broader set of data on recycling collection and processing. There is also consideration of modifications to auditing protocols to enable towns to hire an auditor for recycle stream quality rather than relying only on the vendor.

Possible junk collection vendor

- Kevin had shared information about ReSupply, a junk collection service that wants to work with us. They will pick up almost anything. ReSupply wants us to advertise their service on our website, to include a link to donate.
- Doug asks where ReSupply distributes goods it picks up. Kevin said ReSupply tries to donate and recycle what it can and otherwise sends goods to landfill. They say they donate or recycle 85-93% of what they pick up.

Request from Select Board for cost savings opportunities

- The Select Board asked where the town could find ways to save money if budget cuts are necessary in the future. One idea suggested was for the town to charge money for pickups of bulky goods and mattresses as it does in many other towns.
- Doug said politically it would be good to pair any charges like that with a negotiated agreement with a vendor, like ReSupply, that could do pickups because the town can get better rates for residents and also residents will want a more convenient system than Waste Management's call system.

Next meeting

- Jay will circulate dates for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02am.