



Town of Adams

Massachusetts 01220

Board of Health Department

TOWN HALL
8 Park Street, Suite 203
Tel (413) 743-8300 EXT. 179
FAX (413) 743-8316

Approved

Adams Board of Health – Public Meeting Minutes

1st Floor Mahogany Room in-person only

Wednesday, July 6, 2022

BOH Members Present: Chairman Dr. David Rhoads, Co-Chair Dr. Amy Oberlin, Member Jess Wilson

Others Present: Linda Cernik, Director-Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District, Michelle DeRose-Administrative Assistant, Atty Edmund St. John-Town Council, Howard Rosenberg-Board of Selectman Member, Brian Rhodes – iBerkshires

Call to Order: Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 4:00pm and noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Presentation: Linda Cernik, Director, Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District – waste disposal overview, upcoming waste bans, review of our private hauler regulations

Linda Cernik shared a portion of the 2021 Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District (NBSWMD) annual report which provided the history and services that are included. NBSWMD was established in 1988 through legislation passed by the Massachusetts General Court. This solid waste establishment provides small communities (currently 13 members) to pool resources and obtain professional waste management services for recycling and outreach education programs and special collections such as hazardous and recycling.

Ms. Cernik has been the coordinator since 2016 and loves to keep our communities and environment clean. They have a 13 member Board of Directors and every town has a board commissioner. Adams commissioner is Edward Driscoll. Ms. Cernik is the only employee and she handles everything from administrative work, reporting, collections to even picking up waste. A sampling of her tasks are:

- Work with MassDEP to conduct 3rd party annual inspections to meet the compliance at all the Transfer Stations which are typically done in October. Adams passed with zero corrective actions.
- Bid administration which she explained that process as submitting legal notices in the paper requesting bids. Once all bids are submitted by the timeline requested, they open them at once to review.
- Work with regional entities to challenge increased prevailing wage rates for hauling. A few years, when she pulled the prevailing wages, it had increased from \$25 to \$48 because the prevailing wages were for heavy hauling construction teamsters. Ms. Cernik, along with others filed an appeal with the teamsters and Dept of Labor Standards. A hearing took place just before Covid and struck out because the Teamsters still considered it a construction site. A couple years later, they then brought it to Superior Court and won and got the prevailing wages reversed. In March 2022 it was reduced to \$25-26/hour. With that, it helps save the haulers money and hopefully reduce hauling prices in the near future for the next bid.
- Works with town administrators, Boards of Health, transfer station attendants and the public
- Help keep the town municipalities in compliance with the State and transfer stations clean and neat.

- Outreach with local youth groups introducing Mass DEP “Green Team” educational programs. She worked with Hoosac Valley High School and Middle school and they won awards with the MassDEP recently.
- Introduced a Food Waste reduction program in the Town of Williamstown in 2021. This was a composting pilot program that ran for 6 months. It went well, however, there was not enough interest once the residents had to start paying. Many of them are using the smaller composting companies that will pick up curbside. It would be difficult to enforce this because of that. NBSWMD did sell small composting Earth machines. Each town contributes towards the cost of these machines through grant money which are \$54 and they are sold to residents for \$25.
- Gathers recycling data from each town that is managed to submit to MassDEP for grants each year and reporting. Grants awarded can be used towards the Transfer Station’s recycling programs (tires, paper, plastic, universal waste, etc.) The grants are based on the number of points determined for each category of recycling. Each point used to be worth \$350. The new regulations state that 1-9 points is worth \$250 per point, 10-19 equals \$350 per point, etc. Adams was awarded approximately \$5000 last year. Typically on average, Adams received \$4500-\$5000 a year. It also adjusts by population as well.
- Each year, NBSWMD hosts special collections held each year that member towns can participate in. i.e.: household hazardous waste, bulky waste and electronics, paper shredding, textile. The household hazardous waste event was in April and there were approximately 130 households that came through. There is no cost to the residents for these events as it comes out of the assessment funds that the Town pays for the assessments in the District. This helps keeps our woods and communities free from pollution. These special collections do not require a transfer station permit, however you must be a member Town resident. There was a paper and textile collection held at the Adams DPW in May and the proceeds went to the Old Stone Mill this year and next year it will go to the scholarship fund for Adams. The bulky waste and electronics collection was held in Adams in June. There were a lot of mattresses. They will host 2 more of those drives, one in Lanesborough on Sept 17 and the other in Clarksburg on Oct 8. This will be the last year that mattresses will be able to be collected due to the new waste ban starting November 1, 2022. There will be options for that going forth.
- The District, as a whole, brought in \$40,500 in grants [under the Mass DEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP)]. Each town will receive a portion of that in either by way of small scales grant or recycling dividends. This year, Mass DEP changed the guidance and has eliminated small scales. The towns that do not offer a municipal transfer station were not eligible for grants. The only way that they can qualify is to have private hauler regulations that meet Mass DEP standards.
- Part of the criteria is to list information on the Town website, which can be found under the Transfer Station section.

Many towns in our area may not have the necessary resources that larger towns and cities have so they may not meet the necessary criteria for these grants. Ms. Cernik will continue to work them to get the most for them with the resources they do have. Northern Berkshire county works very hard doing their part in recycling.

Dr. Rhoads relayed information that Ms. Cernik had circulated on what can be recycled and the information can be found at recyclesmartma.org

Ms. Cernik mentioned that the District has a contract with Sayer’s. Sayer’s will provide the container and hauling at no charge. The Town can recycle metals and would generate revenue for the respective towns.

Mr. Rosenberg inquired about the end use. How are we assured where the recyclables are going where they should? For example, plastics. Many plastics were dumped and have ended up in our oceans because there was no use for the plastics. Ms. Cernik answered that the materials are brought to materials recovery facility and has to trust that it is being processed properly. There is more of a market for paper recycling than that of plastics. There is decrease in cost for hauling with paper recycles. She will inquire with Casella Waste as she cannot answer for them on how that decrease is determined.

Glass recycling was looked into, but the District did not have enough glass to recycle. If the Town could partner with larger communities such as Pittsfield and North Adams, they could possibly be able to provide enough glass recyclables to make it a commodity.

Ms. Cernik circulated the list waste materials banned from disposal (by 310 CMR 19.017). It was noted again that you do not need a Transfer Station permit to discard your recyclable materials such as scrap metal since the metal generates revenue. The universal waste shed contains hazardous items such as fluorescent light bulbs, batteries which is paid for by the District assessment program. There is also a shed from the Boy Scouts at the Transfer Station for the returnable .05 cent cans and bottles that generates revenue for the Boy Scouts. Tires are also recycled, but is handled differently. The individual contacts the Adams Town Treasurer to purchase a ticket to be given to the Transfer Station attendant and once approved, they can bring their tires to the tire recycle bin. There is a cost for hauling of tires away.

Dr. Rhoads mentioned that there are regulations from the MassDEP for private haulers to follow and it is up to the Town to align the Town regulations to match that of MassDEP. Ms. Cernik stated that MassDEP would like all the towns to have private hauler regulations. In 2018, the regulations were adjusted then to have the private haulers meet the MassDEP regulations, but were rescinded in 2019. She recommended that the regulations be reviewed. She agreed that enforcement is difficult to uphold as you don't typically open up trash bags to check for recyclables. The Town can audit a permitted private hauler occasionally and confirm where the waste is being disposed of so you know it is be dropped at a licensed location.

Since Adams has a mandatory recycling program, the private haulers are required to provide a recycling bin for their customer base. Haulers can charge the customer accordingly as a bundled service. Customers can also use their own container marked "Recycling". The haulers have a separate pick up for solid waste and recycling.

Dr. Rhoads will plan for the next meeting with the updated regulations to be reviewed with the following meeting have a public hearing for the private haulers.

Ms. Wilson inquired about the larger dumpsters located outside apartment buildings. Ms. Cernik said that that would be more of a commercial base. It is rare to see a separate recycling dumpster, but there should be something made available. Dr. Rhoads will follow up with apartment owners to see how they handle it. Ms. Wilson said that her business location does not have a recycle dumpster option.

Dr. Rhoads and Mrs. Cernik will update the regulations for review at the next meeting.

Ms. Cernik shared that there is a new waste ban on some items:

- Textiles (clothing, quilts, etc.): Any textile that is not wet or moldy must be recycled. Textile Bins are located around town at the Old Stone Mill, Transfer Station, Pizza house and the Express Mart Mobil Station as well as Goodwill. When the ban goes into effect, those bins will most likely fill up quickly and would like to see more bins available around town. There are companies (HELPSY and CRMK) that can place bins and would pay municipalities .08 - .10 cents a pound to generate revenue.
- Mattresses: Currently North Adams is regional Transfer Station site that has a 3 year grant for mattress recycling that will end this October. Ms. Cernik is working with Dalton to have 13 town members allowed to recycle clean mattresses in Dalton for a fee but no Transfer Station permit is required. If the mattress is soiled or has bed bugs, then it would go into the demo bin. The cost for hauling it away is still to be determined as the closest processing site is in Gardner, MA. They are looking into the possibility of having a special collection for mattresses like they do for bulky waste. Ms. Wilson inquired about foam mattresses and old mattresses are not hauled away. Ms. Cernik will need to look further into that. The Town's would be responsible for documenting why a mattress may not have been recycled such as soiled or bed bugs. Mrs. DeRose inquired who determines if the mattress has bed bugs? Ms. Cernik stated it is difficult to determine.
- Commercial Food Waste (schools, restaurants, hospital etc.) If a commercial facility generates over a half ton of food waste per week, they must compost it. The current regulation is 1 ton, it will be ½ ton.

Ms. Cernik left the meeting after her presentation.

Ms. Wilson left the meeting due to a prior engagement. At 4:45pm

Public Comment:

none

Public Hearing:

none

Dr. Rhoads asked for a motion to move the New Business item regarding Public Health to be the next topic as a courtesy for Mr. Rosenberg. Dr. Oberlin so moved, Dr. Rhoads seconded. Both voted Yes unanimously.

- **Discussion on how the board can be more proactive in promoting public health in town**
Dr. Rhoads said there is reporting of reasons of a unhealthy community due to income quality, lack of access to health care, supportive services and cost of child care.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that overall, we are unhealthy due to behaviors such as drinking alcohol, smoking and drug use and obesity because of diet. Understanding that it is factual of being of a lower economic region, there are ways of increasing health without cost. Behaviors change more effectively with peer support and the social aspect.

The North Adams Mayor is promoting a wellness challenge that is no charge and could be a place to start.

The Town administrative assistant had distributed wellness challenges with Town staff. This challenge would be for the public. People are more apt to get more into healthy habits with peer support. Having a partner to help you be accountable. The Town has many options that are free to the public such as the bike trail, hiking trails at the Greylock Glen, Mt. Greylock, etc.

This would be a joint effort of the Board of Health and Select Board to collaborate in creating this challenge. This topic will be continued at the next meeting. Mr. Rosenberg will approach the Select Board at the next meeting on the idea. The message is to be proactive and not reactive to public health. It's one thing to get vaccinated but by having a healthy lifestyle turns into healthy immune systems that can fight the next pandemic more successfully.

Approval of Minutes: June 8 Dr. Oberlin motioned to approve with edits from Dr. Rhoads, Dr. Rhoads seconded. Both Voted Yes unanimously.

Code Enforcement Officer:

- **Status** Dr. Rhoads has not heard any updates as of yet and will inquire with the Town Administrator, Jay Green what the status is in the replacement of the code enforcer officer.

Old Business:

- **Review of board's coronavirus message (posted on town website)**
Dr. Rhoads inquired with the Board on what suggestions they would like to see on the website message. He suggested to include CDC Advisory Panel recommended the approval of the Moderna vaccine for children ages 6-17 as a 2nd choice and either Pfizer or Moderna vaccine could be considered for children 6mos to 5 years of age. It is recommended to consult your doctor for the best choice option for the individual. He also noted that the vaccines would be able to evade the new Omicron variants BA.4 and BA.5. The recommendation is still to get vaccinated and follow the protective guidelines set forth. Dr. Oberlin suggested that the specific links be placed on the Town website for ease in navigation.
- **Status of new members, business cards, training/orientation opportunities, email lists (HHAN, BCBOHA, DPH Local & Regional Public Health etc.)**
Dr. Oberlin to sign up to be included as a contact. Dr. Rhoads inquired about the status of the business cards. Mrs. DeRose answered that she is waiting on one last piece of information from Ms. Wilson before placing the order. Current budget has just come through. She will send each board member a proof of the business card information for their approval of the text before submitted to the vendor to print.

New Business:

- **Spring dinner registration**
Dr. Rhoads will submit the information for the board members to attend the dinner.

Local & County Updates:

With the help of Michelle DeRose and Gerry Garner, they coordinated the receipt of in home Covid-19 test kits delivered to the Council on Aging for distribution. Mrs. DeRose stated that Sarah Fontaine of COA handled the bulk of the distribution and Town Hall received a couple of boxes for distribution as well.

Upcoming Events:

- **July 13: Harm Reduction van** may be parked by the Adams Memorial Building or at Walgreen's.
- **July 24: Adams Street Fair, 8am-8pm (BOH tabling opportunity);** The correct opening time is 12pm-8pm. Dr. Oberlin may be able to work some time at the fair. She shared her thoughts on how to make the table more impactful. Instead of pamphlet handouts, perhaps offer to provide QR codes as an option for information. She mentioned that her husband may be able to help with that strategy.

She will follow that lead. Dr. Rhoads said that the Faerie Fest was successful with the handing out of the sunglasses and would like authorization to purchase another \$120 worth of kids' sunglasses for the future events as the inventory is low. He inquired about purchasing posters to promote the sunglasses. Dr. Rhoads was in the communication with Joe Martin, who is organizing the Adams Street Fair, because someone had inquired with the Public Health Alliance as to the process of the food permits at the street fair. He had instructed Mr. Martin to be in touch with Mrs. DeRose to get everything in order prior to the event.

- **July 28: BCBOHA Spring Dinner**

Dr. Rhoads said this has been talked about previously.

Review Mail:

- Dr. Rhoads received mail from FDA removing their approval for Juul vaping product sales. It has been discussed by staff of the Tobacco Awareness Program and Mass Municipal that there is nothing that we can or should be done now. Vendors do not need to make any changes at this point. Juul is taking this to court and it could take time before and if any changes are required.

For the Good of the Order

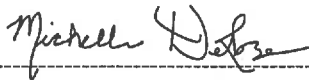
none

Schedule Next Meetings: August 3, 2022

Adjournment:

Dr. Rhoads asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Oberlin so moved, Dr Rhoads seconded. Both voted Yes unanimously. Adjourned at 5:20pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle DeRose
Administrative Assistant

11/3/2022

Date