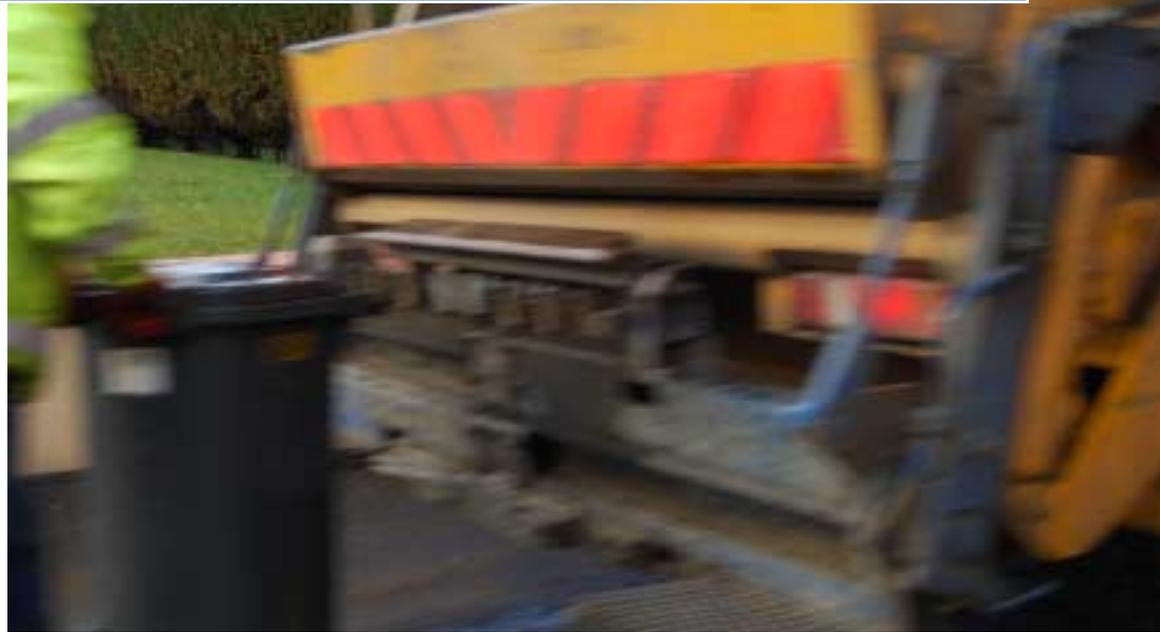


# Solid Waste Task Force Report Sanford, Maine



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**December 10, 2008**

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## 1. Introduction and Task Force Charge

Residents of the Town of Sanford currently enjoy one of the most convenient and comprehensive solid waste collection programs in the State of Maine. The Town of Sanford provides weekly curbside pickup of trash and curbside pickup of recyclables every other week. Sanford has no mandatory recycling ordinance and accepts yard waste in the form of leaves and grass clippings at the Town's transfer station without fees to Sanford residents. Sanford also provides curbside pickup of leaves each fall.

Many other communities in Maine do not provide curbside pickup and/or significantly restrict what can be disposed of into the solid waste stream. A large number of Maine communities charge their residents a fee for any solid waste that is placed either curbside or taken by residents to their local transfer station.

Maine State Planning Office data shows that Sanford's current municipal waste expenditure was right at the state average of \$70 per capita in 2006. However this data also shows that other communities are achieving costs per capita that are well below Sanford's. Maine State Planning Office data also shows that Sanford's current rate of recycling is significantly lower than in many other communities in the State.

Sanford's low recycling rate, combined with steadily increasing disposal costs for municipal solid waste will result in significantly increasing waste disposal costs in the near future. This will result in higher property tax costs in Sanford unless actions are taken to reduce the solid waste stream through improved recycling and other measures such as composting of organic waste.

The Sanford Town Council's Solid Waste Subcommittee has worked pro-actively in recent years to determine methods to reduce the cost of solid waste disposal in Sanford. And in early 2008, the Council's Subcommittee agreed that a citizen's task force would provide a means to foster greater public participation in the decision process regarding the best way to move forward. The Solid Waste Task Force was organized at the direction of the Sanford Town Council on April 1, 2008 and individual members of the Task Force were appointed by Joseph Hanslip, Town Council Chair. Shortly thereafter, the Task Force met for an organizational meeting and elected Town Councilor Brad Littlefield as Chair and Dennis Fortin as Secretary.

Other Task Force members were Stephanie Brock, Sanford High School student; Kevin Chabot, Sanford Town Councilor and Wells, Maine Police Officer; David Gardner, US Military Retired; David Nickerson, Sanford Finance Committee Chair and local business owner; Gordon Paul, Sanford Town Councilor and DHS District Supervisor; and Charles Plante, Sanford Town Meeting member and local business owner.

Council Chair Hanslip attended the first meeting of the Task Force and explained the Council's charge to Task Force. This charge was to investigate and to make recommendations to the Town Council on ways to increase recycling and reduce the solid waste stream in Sanford/Springvale. The Council also outlined factors for the Task Force to consider with any recommendation. These included:

- 1) Convenience to Residents
- 2) Costs to Residents
- 3) Costs to the Town

## 1. Introduction and Task Force Charge (Cont'd)

- 4) Environmental Responsibility
- 5) Conformance with Council Guiding Principle #6 which states that the Town Council and Town staff will strive to make Sanford an attractive and livable community by providing quality municipal services and maintaining our streets, sidewalks, parks and other facilities to a high standard.

Over a period of six months in 2008, the Solid Waste Task Force conducted a number of site visits and interviews with representatives of other local communities, with private trash haulers and with recycling and trash to energy companies. Task Force members also conducted independent research and their own personal due diligence. The Task Force met regularly to discuss and document their progress and minutes of all meetings are included in the appendix to this report. Finally, on October 9, 2008 the Task Force conducted a televised public hearing to receive public comment on the matter of solid waste disposal and to discuss the draft recommendations which are now finalized in section eleven.

When the Task Force initially convened it would be a fair statement to say that about one-third of the Task force members were biased toward a Pay As You Throw type system, about an equal number were biased toward an Automated Collection system and the remaining members had no strong opinion. However, as the Task Force researched these issues a strong and nearly unanimous consensus developed that a Pay As You Throw system would likely be the most cost effective system and the one that would achieve the highest levels of recycling.

The Task Force also learned in the course of its work that emerging technologies may in the near future eliminate the need for separate collection of recyclables. This new technology would shift the responsibility for separation of recyclables from household waste from the resident to the waste processor. In doing so it would obviate the need for much of the capital investment that would be present with any decision to move to an Automated Collection system. The Council is encouraged to fully assess the potential of these new technologies before making any long term decisions regarding the best system for Sanford residents.

The final recommendations of the Task Force are contained in section eleven of this report. However, before proceeding further, the Task Force would emphasize one key action step that should be taken immediately:

**Sanford residents must be encouraged to significantly increase recycling of glass, plastics, metal, paper and cardboard. They should also be encouraged to compost household organic and yard waste such that taxpayer dollars are not expended to transport and dispose of these materials. In the long run, this is both environmentally and fiscally the right thing to do.**

## 2. Acknowledgements

The Task Force gives special thanks to Town Manager Mark Green, Public Works Director Charles Andreson and Public Works Supervisor Eugene Alley. These gentlemen attended nearly every meeting and field trip of the Task Force. Their insight, knowledge and good humor were of great assistance in our work.

The Task Force would like to also thank the many municipal officials and contractor and corporate representatives that gave freely of their time and insight. These include:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| March 15, 2008  | Eric B. Cote, Saco City Council Member   |
| May 15, 2008    | Mr. Gino Gervais of BBI Industries, Sanford's current recycling and solid waste collection company   |
| May 29, 2008    | Ms. Jetta Antonakos, Waste Management and Recycling Coordinator with the Maine State Planning Office, formerly the recycling coordinator in Saco.  |
| June 12, 2008   | Ms. Missi Labbe, Program Development Manager at ecomaine, Recycling Sort and Trash to Energy Plant in Portland<br><br>Mr. Skip Varney, Parks and Public Works Director in Falmouth<br><br>Mr. Dana Anderson, Parks & Rec and Public Works Director in South Portland |
| July 24, 2008   | Mr. Willis Lord, former Waterboro Selectman and Ecomaine Board Member<br><br>Mr. Evan Grover, Waterboro Selectman  |
| July 31, 2008   | Mr. Karl Eckstadt and Mr. Matt Williams of Oceanside Rubbish in Wells.   |
| August 14, 2008 | Ms. Sarah Wojcoski, Recycling Coordinator for Saco and Scarborough   |

The Task Force also recognizes the work of residents in other Maine communities such as the Westbrook Ad Hoc Committee on Solid Waste and Recycling whose report of February 20, 2007 was helpful in the compilation of this report. Likewise, Maine State Planning Office information has served as a valuable resource.

Finally, the Task Force would like to thank all the Sanford residents who attended and/or participated in the public hearing on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008; members of the Sanford press who attended many of our meetings and who have begun to bring public attention to the importance of recycling; and also those who have taken the time to write to our committee or to local papers over the course of the last year to offer their advice and make their opinions known.

### **3. Reducing the Waste Stream – Why and How?**

For many people the issue of reducing the waste stream and increasing recycling is one of environmental responsibility. These people have a sense that it is inherently wasteful and environmentally insensitive to dispose of items that could be effectively recycled and kept out of the waste stream. They take a view that in a world of finite natural resources, and growing demand for those resources, care must be taken to more efficiently use and preserve these resources before they are gone forever.

Environmentally conscious residents not only recycle, they also make an effort to compost food and garden waste, to reduce the use of items which require extensive packaging, to bring reusable storage bags to the market, etc. Modest changes in lifestyle can enable significant reductions in the amount of household waste that needs to be collected and disposed of. This not only reduces the cost of collection and disposal it also preserves environmental resources.

For other residents the issue of disposing of household waste is one of economic pragmatism. For these people environmental concerns take a back seat to determining the lowest short term economic cost to deal with household waste. For example, if it costs more to collect curbside recycled materials for reprocessing than to collect these materials and incinerate them at Maine Energy Recovery Company (MERC), then some would favor eliminating recycling efforts in Sanford altogether.

Task Force members, by and large, came down in the middle of these issues with a belief that it is important to try to strike a balance between economic and environmental considerations.

#### The Current Economic Reality

Currently in Sanford, with its extremely low rate of recycling as compared to many other Maine communities, collection of recycled materials has a short term net economic cost to taxpayers. The Task Force generally agreed that Sanford taxpayers incur a net cost of about \$3,000 per week to recycle rather than to simply send all curbside collection to MERC to be incinerated.

Recycling Collection in Sanford in FY09 is budgeted at \$193,000 to collect approximately 450 tons of recyclable materials. This collection cost is over \$400 per ton as compared to a cost of about \$47 per ton to collect an estimated 7,400 tons of curbside waste.

The Task Force generally agreed that there would be marginal to no additional collection cost if recyclable materials were simply collected and combined with curbside waste. On this basis, these 450 tons of recyclable materials could be taken to MERC and incinerated at the current cost of about \$67 per ton for an annual cost of about \$30,000. This would eliminate \$193,000 in curbside recycling collection costs netting Sanford taxpayers about \$163,000 per year or just over \$3,000 per week in short term savings.

This economic reality will change in coming years as the cost of tipping fees at MERC rises and the costs of disposal become increasingly expensive. These increasing costs together with increasing prices for recyclable materials will make recycling more cost effective in the future. With today's cost structure Sanford would need to achieve about a 30% recycling rate to breakeven on the costs of collection of recyclables. In five years, this breakeven rate will be about 25% due to the increasing costs at MERC. If revenues can be generated from sale of recyclables, this breakeven recycling percentage will go below 25%.

### 3. Reducing the Waste Stream – Why and How? (Cont'd)

#### The Current Political Reality and the Economic Counter Argument

Given the cost data in the prior section many would question the financial wisdom of paying the costs of curbside collection of recyclables. From a political perspective abandoning recycling efforts in Sanford would likely be a non-starter. The Maine Legislature in 1989 set a statewide recycling goal of 50%. And while few communities have reached that goal many have made good progress toward it. Communities which achieve reasonable success with their recycling efforts do realize a tangible financial net benefit and an obvious environmental benefit as well.

From an economic perspective, as higher rates of recycling are achieved and markets for recyclable materials develop and provide revenue from the sale of recycled materials, recycling definitely makes economic sense. The key is to divert a sufficient tonnage of waste from the disposal stream through high rates of recycling, composting and reductions in use of unnecessary packaging, disposable shopping bags, etc.

In Sanford, the present level of recycling of about 7% of the waste stream is unacceptably low and can best be described as both environmentally and financially irresponsible. Evidence indicates that communities which vigorously promote recycling and implement mandatory recycling and/or automated collection or pay as you throw (PAYT) systems can and usually do achieve recycling levels that result in lower costs to taxpayers.

<b>Pay As You Throw Communities</b>	<b>Recycling %</b>	<b>Automated Collection Communities</b>	<b>Recycling %</b>
Cumberland	32%	Saco	28%
Falmouth	45%	Scarborough	37%
Gorham	39%	South Portland	<u>22%</u>
Portland	33%	<b>Average:</b>	<b>29%</b>
Pownal	27%		
Windham	<u>40%</u>		
<b>Average:</b>	<b>36%</b>		

*Data Source: ecomaine*

These and other Maine communities and communities around the country have proven that properly implemented recycling programs can achieve economically viable recycling percentages. These recycling efforts result in both short term economic savings to the taxpayer and long term savings of natural resources.

#### 4. Summary of Programs in Maine

The Maine State Planning Office (<http://www.maine.gov/spo/recycle>) has excellent information on recycling and waste collection programs in Maine. There is little need to repeat much of what can be found on the MSPO website and so this report will summarize some of the major items and leave the reader to refer to the website for further information.

The Maine State Planning Office lists 168 communities in Maine that have mandatory recycling ordinances and 360 communities that do not. From a population standpoint about one-third of Maine residents appear to be subject to mandatory recycling ordinances. Approximately equal numbers of communities have municipal ordinances dealing with waste disposal. However from a population standpoint approximately two-thirds of Maine residents are subject to municipal ordinances regulating waste disposal.

As of 2006, 144 communities in Maine comprising nearly half a million people lived in communities with Pay As You Throw programs. Currently there are three communities in Maine with Automated Collection programs that involve a population base of approximately 60,000.

Many communities in Maine do not provide curbside pickup of household waste or recycling. In communities without municipal pick-up residents will typically either bring their waste and recycling to a municipal transfer station or contract with a private hauler for collection. There are a number of possible variations to how waste and recycling is collected.

In 2005 the MSPO reports that Maine residents and businesses generated just over 1.6 million tons of trash - which amounts to about 6.8 pounds of garbage produced by each person each day. This is nearly 2,500 pounds of trash per person per year. Maine's solid waste management hierarchy is a priority list of how residents should appropriately deal with all of this waste, with the goal of reducing the amount of waste needing to be landfilled. This hierarchy was adopted by the Maine Legislature in 1989.

##### **Maine's Solid Waste Management Hierarchy**

**Reduce** - The best way to deal with trash is to not have any! Reducing the amount of trash you have to throw out actually prevents waste from piling up in the first place. To reduce your waste, avoid unnecessary packaging and items designed to be used only once. Reduce the need for 'single use' plastic bags by bringing your own bags when you shop, and use a travel mug when you buy coffee. Choose durable, reusable products to make less trash.

**Reuse** - Reusing items saves a lot of energy and money. Extend the life of items you buy by reusing them. For example, reuse containers and jars, and donate still usable household goods and clothing to charity.

**Recycle** - Every day we use products made from recycled materials. Take your glass, cans, newspapers, milk jugs and other acceptable recyclable items to your local transfer station or curbside collection so that they can be turned into new products like fleece jackets, Frisbees, cars, and soda cans. Recycling saves money, energy, and the environment. Just over 35% of Maine's municipal solid waste was recycled in 2005.

#### 4. Summary of Programs in Maine (Cont'd)

**Compost** - Composting is nature's way of recycling. When you compost, you convert vegetable scraps, leaves, grass clippings and other materials into a nutrient rich soil material. You can use finished compost in your garden and around shrubs or other plants to help them grow. Composting also reduces the amount of materials that need to be land-filled.

**Waste-To-Energy** - Waste-to-Energy facilities accept our solid waste and combust it very high temperatures producing heat that is used to convert water into steam. The steam is used to run turbines to generate electricity. Scrubbers, filters, and other pollution control equipment reduce pollutants released during the incineration process. Ash and other residues are land-filled. Nearly 35% of Maine's garbage was combusted in 2005.

**Landfill** - Today's landfills are very different from the old ones where people just dumped their garbage in an open area. Landfills are constructed and operated to strict environmental standards, including liners to protect groundwater. Within this hierarchy, landfills are the last of the various solid waste management options that should be considered

In addition to the above information from the Maine State Planning Office website additional information on recycling programs in Maine can be found in a report entitled *Municipal Recycling Programs in Maine – June 2006*. This report summarizes recycling programs in Maine and can be found at:

[http://maine.gov/spo/recycle/docs/recycling\\_programs.pdf](http://maine.gov/spo/recycle/docs/recycling_programs.pdf)

Information on recycling in Sanford can be found at [www.sanfordmaine.org](http://www.sanfordmaine.org) at the public works department web page and at [www.mainerecycles.com](http://www.mainerecycles.com).

## 5. Discussion of Automated Systems

Automated systems in Maine are currently in place in Saco, Scarborough and South Portland.

The term “automated” typically refers to the use of a collection vehicle that is equipped with a robotic arm that is used to lift standardized trash and recycling containers and tip them into the collection vehicle. With a fully automated system the driver of the truck operates a joystick control and picks up, tips and sets down the collection bins from the comfort of the truck’s cab.

An alternative to a fully automated system is “semi-automated”. With this type system the use of standardized trash and recycling containers is encouraged but not absolutely necessary and the collection process is slightly different. With semi-automated the crew size is larger and the driver is assisted by personnel on the back of the truck. These personnel move the standardized bins to a lifting/tipping device on the truck which then tips the bins into the truck.

Since a semi-automated system has collection personnel on the ground, there is more flexibility in the type of trash and recycling container that can be used. For example, with a semi-automated system, some households could use standardized bins and some could use their own trash cans or trash bags provided the weight of these containers did not exceed a set limit. In fact, with semi-automated collection it would be possible to combine the use of standardized bins with a PAYT bag type system. With this type system households that generated more waste than would readily fit into the standard bins supplied would be required to use purchased bags for excess trash. However, this could be collected curbside rather than requiring residents to bring excess trash to the transfer station.

Operationally, either an automated or a semi-automated system can be used to collect trash and recycling using standardized bins. The purpose of using standardized bins is twofold:

- Standardized bins are required to be compatible with the lifting arms of an automated or semi-automated collection vehicle.
- Standardized bins are required so as to limit the amount of household waste that can be disposed of weekly.

When this report discusses an “automated collection” system it is referring to a method of using standardized containers of limited capacity to effectively ration the amount of household waste that can be disposed of per week. With this type system residents are:

- Essentially forced to limit their trash to a municipally dictated amount that will be picked up curbside at taxpayer expense.
- Required to use an alternative, and typically less convenient, means to dispose of trash that is generated which exceeds the amount that will fit into the standard trash container. In other communities with automated collection, residents with extra trash are typically expected to bring excess trash to the municipal transfer station and often-times a fee is required for this excess trash disposal.

## 5. Discussion of Automated Systems (Cont'd)

### Advantages of Automated Systems

Proponents of automated systems point to a number of advantages:

- Reduction in Collection Personnel – In Saco, one man in one truck replaced five men on two trucks. Evidence indicated that vehicle collection time for automated and non-automated was more or less equal meaning that labor costs would be expected to be lower with automated collection.

*(However, it was acknowledged that automated collection trucks have significantly higher initial purchase costs and higher long term maintenance costs. The Task Force concluded, after taking testimony from several sources, that the lower personnel costs of the automated system would be likely be offset by higher maintenance and acquisition costs. The Task Force also heard testimony that the need to keep an expensive back up truck available in the event of mechanical problems added significantly to the cost of going automated.)*

- Improved Personnel Safety – Trash collection is a hazardous occupation. With fewer trash collection personnel and with none of these personnel operating outside of the vehicle there is a reduced risk of serious injury to personnel with automated.
- Cleaner Community – Since the standardized bins have lids, animals and birds cannot get in the trash. In addition, with automated the standardized containers can be heavier and these heavier containers are less likely to blow over or blow into the road as can happen with lighter bins or loose trash.
- Uniformity of Appearance – While aesthetic virtues can be debated as a subjective thing, proponents of automated systems tend to appreciate the “curb appeal” of standardized trash bins.
- Ease of Recycling – With large, wheeled, lidded bins used for recyclables; proponents of automated point to the ease of recycling as compared to the use of smaller recycling containers needed for non-mechanized collection.
- Increased Recycling – There is substantial evidence to support the position that curbside recycling will significantly improve with use of an automated system. *(However, the Task Force unanimously agreed that a PAYT system would be the method to achieve the highest rate of recycling.)*
- Political Expediency – Automated is an easier sell politically than is PAYT because the costs of automated are buried within the tax rate whereas the cost of PAYT are purposely apparent. *(One public works director in an automated community advised that his community had come to the decision years ago that PAYT would be the most efficient system but that after a strong public reaction against PAYT didn't want to tackle it as a political issue. It was his position that, “if I could sell it I would do pay per bag with automated recycling”)*

## 5. Discussion of Automated Systems (Cont'd)

### Disadvantages of Automated Systems

Proponents of automated systems admit that initial public acceptance of an automated system will likely be negative. To quote Eric Cote of Saco:

*“According to what we were told by other communities, for about 90 days after implementation, you will have angry citizens expressing wonderment at what bird brains are in local government. After 90 days, it all goes away. I have heard only positive comments since about mid 2003. Actually we get a lot of very positive comments from residents.”*

In addition to these comments, the Task Force unanimously agreed on the following disadvantages to automated collection:

- High Capital Costs – Automated collection would entail the need for the Town to purchase 15,000 specialized containers at a cost to taxpayers of approximately \$825,000 plus \$200,000 in projected interest expense. In addition, there are significant capital costs associated with the purchase of the specialized collection vehicles required to efficiently run an automated collection program.
- Ongoing Program Costs – Automated collection communities in Maine state that collection bin repair, replacement and distribution require one to two people for one day per week on average.
- Less Competition for Trash and Recycling Collection – A move to an automated system will likely result in fewer bidders for the municipal contract for collection services as not all regional collection companies are equipped or willing to provide such a service.
- Less Suited to Urban Areas – Evidence presented to the Task Force indicated that automated collection is better suited to rural areas and suburban neighborhoods where curbside space is not devoted to parking than it is to more urban areas with high concentrations of apartments. In addition the storage and handling of standardized bins may be problematic for residents who currently have curbside pickup but who live in housing that does not have adequate on-site, or street level storage space.
- Operator Satisfaction – There is evidence that the relative social isolation created by single operator collection trucks leads to job dissatisfaction and that repetitive stress injuries from joystick operation may be a concern over time. From discussion with South Portland it appears that they had a difficult time keeping employees assigned to operating the automated collection trucks. This was one reason why South Portland made the decision to outsource collection services to a private contractor.
- Convenience to Residents – The switch to standardized bins will require many residents to change their personal routine when it comes to disposal of both trash and recyclables. For some residents, an automated system will require more work in that trash bins must be retrieved and stored after trash is collected whereas trash left at the curb in a bag requires no such extra work by residents.

## 5. Discussion of Automated Systems (Cont'd)

- Risk of Obsolescence - The Task Force heard testimony that at least one local collection and disposal company is in the process of permitting for a new waste to energy and recycling processing facility. The new processing technology envisioned for this facility would effectively make it unnecessary for residents to separate recycled materials from their waste stream. If this were to occur the large capital investment in standardized bins and specialized collection equipment for an automated system could prove to be unnecessary.
- Illegal Dumping and Burning – Both automated collection and PAYT programs will work to restrict the amount of waste that residents can dispose of curbside and will cause residents that generate more trash to incur out of pocket costs to dispose of that trash. In this respect both automated collection and PAYT will provide some incentive for certain residents to illegally burn or dump trash. While this incentive may be greater for PAYT it also exists for automated.
- Mandatory Recycling Ordinance - Many communities have implemented mandatory recycling ordinances in combination with both automated collection and PAYT programs. If voluntary compliance cannot be achieved with a new collection program then some form of mandatory recycling ordinance might be necessary along with some enforcement mechanism for those who violate program rules.

### Recommendations for Automated Systems

- Container Size – Communities using automated collection have come to the realization that most households should be limited to one 35 gallon trash bin per week. It is strongly recommended that if Sanford goes to an automated system in the future, that it should limit bins to 35 gallons. This not only has the effect of encouraging maximum recycling but also has the added benefit of keeping bin weight within a limit that can be handled manually if necessary.
- Charges for Excess Waste – Some households may be unable to meet the 35 gallon weekly waste restriction and will need to find an alternative means to dispose of excess waste. If so, one consideration could be to provide larger capacity bins to those households for an annual fee. This could be combined with an annual registration sticker or other method such that the larger bins can be identified to a specific household and not be picked up if the registration has expired. One caution with larger bins is that their weight will likely restrict collection equipment to being automated or semi-automated. In the case that collection is manual but the town chooses to go to 35 gallon standardized bins versus PAYT, PAYT bags could be available for purchase as a means to handle excess waste.

## 6. Discussion of Pay As You Throw Systems

Pay As You Throw (PAYT) systems are in place in approximately 144 Maine communities and in thousands of communities across the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a strong proponent of PAYT and publishes a large amount of data and case histories related to PAYT which can be found online at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov). EPA's Summer 2008 bulletin, *Using PAYT Makes You Smart\** (\*Save Money and Reduce Trash) provides timely information on new programs in a number of New England states and has case studies on successful new PAYT programs in Bath and Brunswick, Maine. This can be found at:

[www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/payt/tools/bulletin/bulletin-06-2008.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/payt/tools/bulletin/bulletin-06-2008.pdf)

Pay As You Throw is also commonly referred to as "Pay Per Bag" or "Pay to Throw" and also as "unit pricing", "variable rate pricing" and "volume-based pricing." The term "Pay As You Throw" was adopted for this report as that is the term used by both EPA and by the Maine State Planning Office.

The basic idea behind PAYT is that it places the responsibility for the cost of waste disposal with those who actually generate the waste. Those who generate low amounts of waste and conscientiously recycle and compost pay little. Conversely those who generate large amounts of waste and do not choose to recycle pay more. With the current system in Sanford there is no financial incentive for residents to recycle and compost. With PAYT there is a strong financial incentive to do so and this incentive has been proven to increase recycling percentages more than any other system.

PAYT is a more market-based system than the alternative of Automated Collection. Automated is a one-size fits all approach where every resident, regardless of individual need is forced to use a standardized container of limited volume. Trash volume is essentially rationed at the curbside. And the resident is forced through taxation to pay for the standardized container regardless of whether it is too large or too small to suit that residents needs. On the other hand PAYT allows residents the choice of how much they spend for disposal according to their individual needs. As one example, senior citizens typically generate less waste. However, under Sanford's current system or under an automated system they would effectively subsidize households that generated more waste.

A PAYT system will have much lower initial capital costs and should have lower ongoing operating costs than an Automated System. There are no standardized bins to purchase as is the case with Automated. In addition, there is more availability of collection equipment that can be used to pick up household waste with PAYT. This equipment is lower tech and lower cost than what is needed for Automated Collection. One person interviewed was blunt when it came to the advantages of PAYT:

"You don't want the fancy trucks and you don't want the bins (for automated)." "Americans are lazy, we throw 80% of our recycling away....Pay Per Bag is the stick (to improve recycling)". When asked if he would ever recommend the Town go automated and buy two 65 gallon bins per household his response was "Never!"

## **6. Discussion of Pay As You Throw Systems (Cont'd)**

### Advantages of Pay As You Throw Systems

Proponents of PAYT point to some advantages as follows:

- **Lowest Overall Cost** – PAYT has been shown to provide the most cost effective means of reducing the overall waste stream reducing both collection and disposal costs.
- **Environmentally Responsible** – PAYT has been shown to be the most effective method of achieving high rates of recycling.
- **Commercial Waste and Out of Town Waste** – PAYT discourages diversion of commercial waste and waste from other towns from being placed in the local waste stream. With PAYT waste must be disposed of in clearly identifiable waste bags. With the current system, and to some degree with an automated system, there is no barrier to non-residents placing trash curbside in Sanford. Likewise commercial haulers cannot mix waste into the residential waste stream with PAYT.
- **Reductions in Yard Waste in the Waste Stream** – With PAYT residents pay a financial penalty if they choose to place yard waste curbside. With the current system and to some degree with an automated system, there is no barrier to placing some yard waste out for weekly collection.
- **Fairness** – PAYT is the fairest system. Costs are not hidden in the tax rate and those who generate more waste pay more. Those who conserve pay less.
- **Municipal Revenue** – PAYT not only reduces costs for the municipality it also generates revenue that can be used to offset the costs of collection and disposal. Trash collection and/or disposal can be essentially prepaid as revenue from sale of bags is received in advance of their use.
- **Ease of Use** – Nearly all residents currently dispose of trash in plastic bags that are purchased from local retailers. Whether these residents place these bags in trash cans or in a bag curbside, PAYT requires no change of routine. With PAYT residents can continue to store their trash and place their trash at curbside as they do currently. By contrast, an automated system with large standardized bins will require a change in routine for many residents which may be less convenient.

### Disadvantages of Pay As You Throw Systems

Initial public reaction to PAYT would be expected to be negative. However, as with a change to any new system, including Automated, the evidence is that long term public acceptance of PAYT systems is positive. When considering PAYT most objections typically relate to concerns about out of pocket cost and to questions regarding illegal dumping and burning of trash as a means to avoid the cost of paying for trash bags.

## 6. Discussion of Pay As You Throw Systems (Cont'd)

The Maine State Planning Office (MSPO) year 2000 report entitled, *Pay-As-You-Throw Solid Waste Programs in Maine* addresses some of the concerns with PAYT:

- Illegal Dumping and Unauthorized Use of Commercial Dumpsters – 18 of 128 program communities reported some level of illegal dumping after introduction of PAYT. However, in most of these towns officials reported that illegal dumping had occurred prior to PAYT as well. Officials noted that illegal dumping lessens as residents adjust to the new program and officials also noted that household garbage is too easy to identify. One of the waste haulers interviewed in the course of the Task Force study concurred with this, “If someone tosses trash in the woods, you can find them. They leave their stuff (personal information) in the trash.”
- Overweight Bags – With most PAYT programs, there is a limit to how much trash can be put into a bag and residents will attempt to overfill the bags to save money. Only 9 of 128 communities interviewed by the MSPO reported a problem with overweight bags.
- Illegal Backyard Burning – Towns which experienced an increase in backyard burning after institution of PAYT typically reported that the problem lessened over time.
- Cost of Bags to Residents – One of the major concerns with residents is the direct out of pocket cost of purchasing PAYT bags. In theory, with increased recycling and reduced waste disposal costs the Town should have lower overall waste management costs with PAYT as compared to other collection schemes. As long as these reduced costs are passed on to the taxpayer, the lower amount of overall property tax assessed should offset the cost of purchasing PAYT bags for most residents.
- Non-Deductibility of Bag Costs – Another objection to PAYT is that property taxes are deductible for purposes of state and federal income taxes but bag fees are not. While true, this would apply only to residents who itemize deductions and the amounts involved would be negligible per household. For most people, the cost savings of PAYT are larger than any tax deduction.

### Recommendations for a PAYT System

- Proper planning and implementation, including public education is important to the success of any new program. If a PAYT program is to be implemented, Sanford should determine best practices for implementation by talking to other communities about what works and what doesn't. The Task Force observed that it is important that bag costs not be set too high and that bag costs increase at a reasonable rate over time. More on this is included in the Recommendations section of this report.

## **7. Public Education and Communication**

Any effective recycling program must have an initial education/promotion program that is broad enough in scope to reach every household in the community, and comprehensive enough to offer answers to any likely waste and recycling question. After an initial community-wide outreach, readily available resources need to be established to provide and update ongoing information to all residents.

An initial outreach effort should include press releases to all local and regional media explaining the reasons for the increased recycling effort, as well as outlining some of the key elements of the recycling program. Any such release should include information on web links and phone contact numbers for residents to access recycling information and seek answers to any questions. A short video presentation for airing on the public access cable station would be especially valuable.

A likely key element in the initial community education/promotion campaign would be the participation of children in the Sanford Schools. Certainly, recycling promotion materials such as brochures, recycling calendars and recycling container label stickers could be distributed through the schools for delivery to students' homes. Beyond that, however, depending upon approval of the school administrators, a more ambitious outreach effort could be mounted. High School students, members of the environmental club, and other volunteers, could make presentations to elementary and middle school students on recycling, and enlist them (with parental approval) to deliver recycling promotion materials to neighbors, and encourage them to recycle. Younger school children would likely be enthusiastic about promoting recycling, especially after a presentation by high school students. Additional incentives for participation could include class or individual rewards for contacting larger numbers of neighbors and relatives, a contest tracking increased recycling collection volume by collection day, linking to the collection day at a student's home, or in school and online graphs tracking increases in recycling volume toward the established goal. High school students certainly have the requisite skills to gather daily and weekly tonnage statistics from ecomaine, and convert them to a visual graph. Perhaps a community-wide day of celebration for students' efforts and acknowledging their role in achieving recycling goals could be arranged by the Recreation Department.

High school students could also perform some more skilled tasks, such as gathering information on specialized recycling, such as for cell phones, rechargeable, electronic devices and compact fluorescents and posting them to a recycling website. A user friendly guide to backyard composting could likewise be developed by them and posted and printed. On an ongoing basis, they could produce informational videos for the web site and cable access.

The Public Works Department could produce a comprehensive guide to waste and recyclable disposal, including times and locations for disposal of various materials, from yard waste to motor oil, and likewise post and publish the information.

In the initial outreach effort, community involvement could be enhanced by prominent signs and web charts (similar to those used in fundraising drives) to track progress in increasing recycling volume toward the established goal.

## **7. Public Education and Communication (Cont'd)**

Single stream recycling brochures from ecomaine are available in large quantity at no cost. A recycling calendar and promotion material can be produced for two or three cents per copy. High visibility waterproof vinyl labels for recycling containers can be printed for less than twenty cents each. The acquisition or production costs of the necessary promotional material is less than a dollar per household, and much of the distribution could be at no cost through the schools, public service organizations, libraries and community facilities. The return in savings from this minimal cash outlay for materials is likely to be many fold.

The possibilities for effective recycling promotion are many, the cost minimal, and the potential return great. Such a program should be commenced and fully supported as soon as possible, regardless of any other variables in the eventual trash and recycling program.

## **8. Public Hearing Summary**

A televised public hearing was held in Council Chambers at 7 PM on October 9, 2008. The hearing was advertised in advance and letters to the editor appeared in the paper soliciting residents to attend the meeting and offer their input to the Task Force.

Approximately ten residents and three members of the press attended the hearing. The hearing began with Task Force members presenting an overview of their work to date and a summary of their draft recommendations.

Seven residents made public comments with two residents in favor of PAYT and two opposed. One resident mentioned that the automated system in Scarborough appears to work well. Residents expressed concerns about how new programs would affect the elderly from a cost perspective with PAYT and from a bin handling standpoint with automated. Many of the concerns raised in the public hearing have been addressed in other areas of this report. However, the reader is encouraged to review the minutes of the Public Hearing which are attached in the appendix to this report.

A number of comments were directed at the need to educate the public more in an effort to improve recycling. Residents need to be taught the “what, where’s and how’s” regarding recycling. This theme is central to the recommendations in this report. People want to recycle more and throw away less. They need the guidance and leadership of Town officials to communicate to them how they can best achieve this.

## 9. Decision Matrix

The decision matrix was developed at the suggestion of Councilor Littlefield to serve as a summary of the information considered and evaluations made by the Solid Waste Task Force in formulating a recommendation to the Town Council.

<b>DECISION MATRIX</b> Compares PAYT, Automated and Intensification of Existing Program	Pay Per Bag (PAYT)	Automated Collection	Intensify Existing Program
Anticipated Public Acceptance			
Initial	--	-	+
Long Term	o	o	o
Convenience to Residents	o	-	o
Recycling Rates (Diversion)	+++	++	+
Potential Savings in Town Budget			
Operating Costs	+++	++	+
Tipping Fees	+++	++	+
Costs to Residents			
Fee Costs	-	o	o
Tax Costs	++	o	o
Overall Costs	+++	++	+
Costs to Town			
Collection Costs	o	o	o
Tipping Fees	+++	++	+
Environmental Responsibility	+	+	+
Conformance with Guiding Principles	+	+	o
Fairness Equity to Residents	+	o	o

Key: o = Neutral Factor, + = Positive Factor, - = Negative Factor

## 9. Decision Matrix (Cont'd)

The three options remaining for final consideration in this report are:

- 1) A fully automated trash and recycling collection system as proposed earlier in 2008
- 2) A Pay as you throw (PAYT) system with per bag fees and a collection system determined by the lowest overall cost determined by RFP's
- 3) An intensified program of recycling education and promotion, with facilitated collection components, with either the current or some other waste collection system.

It should be noted that the final option of intensified promotion and education is a key element of the first two options, which is to say that it is a critical component of any improved disposal program.

**Anticipated Public Acceptance:** Officials in both automated collection and PAYT communities reported good long-term acceptance of either program.

In South Portland, Dana Anderson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Works told the Task Force that municipal officials had felt that a PAYT program was the best choice, but that initial public resistance had led them to opt for automated collection, which still encountered resistance, but less intense. Both he and Skip Varney, Falmouth's Director of Parks and Public Works, which operates a PAYT system, reported that long term acceptance of both programs was excellent.

The Task Force expects that initial public acceptance will likely be negative for any new system, especially for PAYT. However, in the long-term term, the Task Force believes that residents will accept a new system, especially if that system achieves the objectives of increasing recycling and reducing overall costs of waste disposal in Sanford.

**Convenience to Residents:** It was felt that the existing collection system or pay to throw would require no different efforts from citizens, and would have a neutral effect.

The automated system would require extra handling time for many residents and would require use of specific trash bins that could prove difficult for some residents to store. The automated system would also require that excess trash be brought to the transfer station, and likely paid for by the bag and therefore would be somewhat less convenient.

**Recycling Rates:** Information received from municipal and state officials, trash collection contractors, and State Planning Office reports all concurred that pay to throw systems are most effective at increasing consumer recycling rates. Intense education and promotion of recycling appears to reach a ceiling in the low 20% area, automated collection seems to increase those rates to a ceiling in the upper 20% area, and pay to throw can achieve rates in excess of 30%. Results vary by community and demographics, but the relative relationship seems consistent.

## 9. Decision Matrix (Cont'd)

**Potential Savings in Town Budget:** This category includes potential savings in collection costs, and savings in per ton tipping fees paid to MERC, as well as potential income from the sale of recyclables. Information received by the Task Force indicates that automated collection and manual collection have similar overall costs, with the labor savings of automated collection being offset by significantly higher equipment and maintenance expenses. When all factors were considered, the Task Force agreed that pay per bag offered the greatest potential savings to the Town.

**Costs to Residents:** This section seeks to reflect the costs to individual residents as Fee costs (per bag purchase fees), Tax costs (effect on the property tax rate), and Overall costs, reflecting the two previous items, and the costs of bond amortization for automated container purchase. Pay per bag costs could be offset by giving a certain number of free bags per resident per year. However, there will be a direct fee cost to most residents for these bags. By contrast, the cost of the automated container purchase would be hidden in the tax rate. Overall, pay per bag is expected to save residents because of its effect in providing financial incentives to recycle and to compost and therefore by minimizing the waste stream.

**Cost to Town:** This section reflects an assessment that the costs of operating a collection program under any of the three proposals will be roughly equal, but that the savings in tipping fees will vary based primarily on each option's effect on the recycling rate.

**Environmental Responsibility:** After some discussion on the amount of plastic to be consumed in a bag program or container purchases, the Task Force concluded that the number of trash bags used was fairly unrelated to the collection system, and that the tonnage of plastics needed to manufacture automated collection containers was not very significant when weighed against their long life expectancy. By encouraging the highest recycling levels, pay per bag is perhaps the most environmentally responsible way forward but all methods were deemed to be effective and responsible methods.

**Conformance with Guiding Principles:** This item resulted in discussions primarily about the esthetics of trash curbside of each option. Both pay per bag and automated collection promote uniformity of appearance. Bags are gone after collection, while containers stay curbside most of the day, until collected by returning residents. In the end, this appears to be an eye of the beholder issue, does a particular person think wheeled trash bins or uniform trash bags are more esthetically pleasing?

**Fairness / Equity for Residents:** This item resulted in discussions about fairness and hardship. There was general agreement that allocating costs for waste disposal according to volume was fairest, analogous to water, sewer, or electric utilities. With a curbside single-stream recycling program like Sanford's, residents, with minimal effort, could reduce their waste stream to a single bag per week on average. That this might still impose a hardship on residents with limited or fixed incomes. However, as with utilities and other expenses, those particular instances should be addressed individually, through the provision of free bags or other means. A pay per bag program is envisioned with fees sufficient to pay tipping fees, not the entire solid waste budget, including collection. Property tax revenue would still pay for the transfer station and collection system, bag fees would be targeted to pay the tipping fees, and bag sale revenue and tipping fees would vary in concert, based on trash volume.

## **10. Other Issues**

### **A. Multi-Unit Housing**

The present Town Code Â§ 220-35 says that the Town “shall not collect acceptable waste and recyclables from residences which consist of buildings containing more than 3 dwelling units”. This provision has been in effect for many years and was likely put in place because the writers of the ordinance classified buildings with three or more dwelling units as commercial buildings. Currently this provision of the ordinance is widely ignored and rarely enforced. Consequently the Town is collecting trash that by ordinance should not be collected. The Task Force is recommending that the Town Council review this provision to see if the provision should be modified. Once this review is complete and once any modifications are made, the Council should direct the Town Manager and Public Works Director to enforce the ordinance.

### **B. Yard Debris and Composting**

Residents currently may deliver some yard debris (grass clippings and leaves) to the Transfer Station where it is accepted free of charge. Leaves are also picked up curbside during the fall of each year (the target schedule is a 5 week long program).

Brush may be delivered to the transfer station via the punch passes (up to 4 cubic yards). Otherwise the charge is \$10 per cubic yard, with a minimum fee of \$2.00 for partial amounts.

The Town does market backyard compost bins to the public to encourage small scale composting of refuse and lawn clippings. The leaves from the large scale curbside collection program are composted at Lavigne’s farm on Witchers Mill Road.

### **C. Bulky, Heavy and Hazardous Items**

History of Bulky Item Collection - September 2008

The Town of Sanford began a bulky item curbside spring clean up sometime in the middle to late 1960’s. A front-end loader and dump trucks went through the rubbish routes and basically picked up everything that was put out to the curb and took it to the landfill. This was designed to occur one week a year, usually during the end of April or early May. Unfortunately, the crews were unable to complete this in one week due to the volume of debris and it typically took two and sometimes three weeks to accomplish the task. This practice continued through 1989.

In the spring of 1990 The Board of Selectman voted to start a program where the “dump” was opened free of charge for two weeks a year with extended hours for residents to bring bulky items there for disposal. This is outlined in a memo from the road foreman, dated January 9, 1990. This practice continued until 1998.

In June of 1998, the Board of Selectman voted to designate the first Saturday of each month a “free dump day”. The program began on July 4<sup>th</sup> and proved to be extremely costly and eventually got way out of hand. This resulted in the institution of the Punch Pass System.

## **10. Other Issues (Cont'd)**

### Punch Pass System

In the spring of 2004, the staff of the Public Works Department designed a program using a "punch pass". On June 1<sup>st</sup> 2004, the Town Council approved the program. The program began July 1, 2004 and is still being used.

When a resident purchases a dump sticker, he/she is given a punch pass. This pass allows the resident to dispose of a number of bulky items at no cost at any time throughout the year. Currently the punch pass covers 1 TV, 2 tires, 4 brown goods (couch-chair-mattress-box spring etc), 4 cubic yards of brush, 2 cubic yards of demo wood, and 2 cubic yards of sheetrock or asphalt shingles. This system is cost effective for the Town of Sanford, convenient for the residents, and much more manageable for the transfer employees.

### Hazardous Waste Collection and Disposal

There is no program currently in place for the collection of Household Hazardous Wastes (HHW). These wastes might consist of solvents, paint thinner, poisons or pesticides, oil based paints and stains, drain cleaner, and other flammable or toxic materials typically used in the home. There have been considerations of implementing a HHW collection program in the past, but cost issues were not resolved.

In many communities, the collection of HHW has been found to be desirable and costs have been budgeted. One might anticipate an order of magnitude cost for the first year in the vicinity of \$20,000 to \$25,000. In Saco it cost \$16,000 for the first year of the program, and for the current year the budget is \$6000. Saco, Biddeford and Scarborough each host one event during the year, which is open to residents of all three Towns. Sanford should consider such a system.

Universal Waste is a category of items for which the USEPA and MDEP have made special regulations to facilitate their collection, processing and disposal. At the Transfer Station the Town accepts Computer Monitors (16" and Less), Console TVs, Fluorescent light bulbs, Small U-Lamps, PCB Ballast, NiCd, NiMH, Alkaline Batteries, Mercury containing fixtures (eg thermostats or switches) , and CPUs and Laptop computers.

Commercial Hazardous Waste must be disposed of by waste generators in accordance with State and Federal Law. This typically includes manifests documenting origins, destinations, and quantities, and depending on material and scale specific permits or licenses may be required. The Town does not provide any collection or disposal of this category of waste.

## 11. Recommendations

After an extensive process of information gathering and review, and in accordance with the charge given to it by the Sanford Town Council, the Solid Waste Task Force's principal recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Immediately initiate a recycling education and promotion campaign designed to reach every household in the community with information on the municipal recycling program and detailed instruction as to what can and should be recycled and how. This program should include provisions for disposal of the most common types of household solid waste including heavy and hazardous items. It should also include information on locations for recycling of other items such as cell phones, rechargeable batteries and compact fluorescent bulbs. The education program should stress that organic household waste as well as yard clippings and leaves should be kept out of the municipal waste stream through composting and other suitable techniques. Along with the above recycling information, outline the current and expected future costs of solid waste disposal to the Town, and the tax savings and environmental and other benefits that are made possible through increased recycling and composting.
- 2) Form an advisory group to assist the Public Works Department with education, promotion and other forms of assistance related to increasing recycling, composting and other means of reducing the solid waste stream in Sanford. It is recommended that at least one member of this advisory group be a high school student representative.
- 3) Set a minimum annual recycling goal of 2,500 tons per year. This amount corresponds to an approximate recycling rate of 32% of the household tonnage curbside in Sanford/Springvale . (Sanford's current rate is +/- 7%). Explain that this rate is a reasonable expectation based on recycling in other Maine communities and would be the minimum required to offset the costs of the recycling collection program through tipping fee savings and increased recycling revenue.
- 4) Establish a time frame to meet this recycling goal, based on weekly collection volume. Advise residents that if recycling goals cannot be met through education, promotion and voluntary community participation, that a more comprehensive approach to trash disposal and recycling will likely be necessary. Advise that alternatives to the current system could include a mandatory recycling ordinance; restrictions on how much trash could be disposed of per week as would occur with an automated collection system using standardized disposal and recycling bins; or a Pay As You Throw system where residents pay for trash disposal directly in proportion to the waste they generate.
- 5) Issue a request for proposals for the purchase of recyclables from the Town as soon as possible. The Biddeford RFP issued this summer indicates a very competitive market currently among at least three entities. A favorable long term contract could likely be agreed upon, and the variables of destination and transport could be settled prior to the issuance of RFP's for the new collection contract starting July 1, 2009.
- 6) After full implementation of the recycling education and promotion campaign, assess the result to determine if the bi-weekly collection volume has increased to 100 tons. If that level has been reached or approached, give strong consideration to continuing the current "no charge" trash collection program.

## 11. Recommendations (Cont'd)

- 7) When it comes time to re-bid the current curbside trash and recycling contract (expected to be no earlier than spring 2009) issue an RFP for new collection contracts that encourages bidders to submit bids on the basis of what they believe will provide the best value service to Sanford/Springvale taxpayers based upon general collection and recycling program objectives rather than requiring a specific method of collection which could limit proposals. For example, allow bidders to bid under three scenarios:
  - a) Current System Maintained: Residents place trash and recycling at the curb as they do now but with an assumed recycling rate of no less than 20%.
  - b) Town Provides Bins: Residents are required to place trash and recycling in separate wheeled plastic bins paid for with tax or other municipally generated revenue. Trash bin size should be limited to one 35 gallon container per week. Restricting the trash and recycling bin size will allow bidders the flexibility to bid manual, semi-automatic or automatic collection methods. With this method assume a recycling rate of 25%.
  - c) Pay As You Throw: Residents are required to buy Town supplied trash bags at a supermarket or other authorized retailer. Assume a recycling rate of 30%.

If a decision is made to change the current system the final award decision should be based primarily on cost and anticipated reliability, though consideration could be given to the collection method if costs are relatively equal. Any contract should contain a clause to allow renegotiation of terms in the event that new technologies eliminate the need for dual collection of waste and recycling. Any decision to change systems should be taken after making the effort to enlist public support for the change. The high capital cost of going to standardized bins must be considered in light of new recycling and/or collection methods that might render these bins obsolete or redundant in the future.

- 8) If a decision is made to go to a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) system, limit the cost of the bags to \$1.25 for a large bag and \$.75 for a small bag and limit annual increases in bag costs to an index tied to either the CPI or to the costs of tipping fees. Recognize that PAYT systems are intended to provide a financial incentive for residents to recycle and that those who generate more trash pay more and those who generate less trash pay less. PAYT revenues should be solely dedicated to offset costs of the solid waste disposal budget. Some consideration should be given to providing bags at reduced costs in limited quantities to those who can demonstrate financial need.
- 9) If a decision is made to go to Town provided standardized containers that restrict the amount residents can dispose of per week, then residents must be provided with a method for disposing of trash and/or recycling which exceeds the capacity of the bins. Whether this method involves residents bringing excess trash to the transfer station and paying a fee or involves some other method as discussed in section 5 of the report, the disposal of excess trash must be addressed where residents cannot simply put more trash at the curb as they now can with the current system or could with a PAYT system.
- 10) Any new system will likely require an ordinance to make recycling mandatory and/or to address illegal dumping and/or illegal trash fires that could initially be an issue whether residents are subject to PAYT or to a 35 gallon curbside limit on what can be disposed of per week as would occur with a standardized bin system.

## A1. EPA Information

### Cutting the Waste Stream in Half

The United States Environmental Protection Agency fact sheet *Cutting the Waste Stream in Half: Community Record Setters Show How* (EPA 530-F-99-0107) provides some excellent case histories and advice regarding waste reduction and increasing recycling. Published in October 1999 and available at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) this publication summarizes record-setting waste reduction a cross section of eighteen U.S. communities. The fact sheet is based upon a 171-page EPA report (EPA-30-R-99-013) of the same name. The following summarizes this forty two page fact sheet and not the full 171-page EPA report.

### Strategies Driving Record-Setting Waste Reduction Levels

**Target a wide range of materials:** The record setting communities surveyed recover 17 to 31 different types of materials. Poor recovery contributed from 12 to 45% of residential materials diverted and composting of yard debris diverted 17 to 43% of total residential waste.

**Compost:** For ten of the eighteen record-setting communities composting accounted for more than half of all residential waste reduction. Fall leaf collection may be the single largest contributor to waste reduction in communities with fall season.

**Design for Convenience – Make It Easy:** Residents are more likely to participate if set-out requirements are uncomplicated and recyclables collection is frequent. Providing adequate containers for material storage and set-out also improves convenience. Providing both curbside collection and drop-off sites for materials gives residents more recycling options. On-site recycling at multi-family buildings makes recycling convenient to more residents.

**Use “Pay-as-you-throw” Trash Fees:** Under pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) systems, residents pay by volume or weight for trash they set out at the curb. Such fees are direct economic incentive to reduce trash and recycle as much as possible.

**Require Resident Participation:** Local requirements and mandates encourage program participation. These can include local ordinances requiring residents to source separate or banning set-out of some items.

### Cutting Costs

Many factors contribute to cost-effective programs. One common thread in “record-setter” communities is that these communities consider waste reduction a primary waste management strategy. Recycling and composting are not treated as add-ons; rather they form an integral part of overall waste management.

Specific techniques for cutting costs include:

## **A1. EPA Information (Cont'd)**

### **Maximize Diversion Levels**

High diversion levels can reduce costs in two major ways: (1) By significantly reducing landfill or other disposal costs such as trash to energy tipping fees, and (2) by eliminating or adjusting some trash routes and thereby reducing their associated costs.

### **Compost**

Yard trimming collection costs vary among communities but tend to be lower than recycling collection costs because the material is homogeneous and needs less expensive, low-tech processing.

In Bellevue, Washington, one-third of residential waste is composted. Bellevue residents spent about \$102 per ton in 1996 for composting as compared to \$139 per ton for recycling. Chatham, New Jersey keeps its composting program costs low by hosting a regional compost facility in return for free tipping of its grass clippings.

### **Implement PAYT Trash Programs**

In communities with pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) trash fees, trash disposal per household decreases. Dover, New Hampshire instituted its PAYT system in 1991, the same year it began weekly curbside recycling. Between 1990 and 1996, per household trash disposal fell from 6 to 2.3 pounds per day. Dover's net residential solid waste management costs dropped from \$1.1 million in 1990 to \$798,000 while adding more than 1,000 customers. Per household costs decreased from \$122 in 1990 to \$73 in 1996.

### **Augment Curbside with Drop-Off Sites**

While curbside collection is critical to maximizing participation and therefore recycling levels, drop off collection is generally cheaper for the community. In 1996, St. Paul, Minnesota avoided \$75,000 in disposal fees and diverted 1,800 tons of material by offering residents drop-off opportunities for bulky goods from sofas to computers to skis. In Ann Arbor, Michigan a comprehensive drop-off center accepts materials not collected at curbside (such as building materials, hard cover books and appliances). PAYT systems may also encourage the use of drop-off sites. In Dover, New Hampshire drop-off collection accounted for 19% of all materials recovered. Their costs to collect average \$14 per ton compared to \$77 per ton for curbside collection and processing of recyclables and yard debris.

### **Consider Dual-Collection**

One way that Loveland, Colorado and Visalia, California have integrated recycling completely into their solid waste management systems is through use of dual-collection vehicles which collect recyclables and trash in separate compartments on one truck. Dual-Collection systems can save money by avoiding the need for two separate fleets of trucks and by increasing productivity of collection crews. Loveland, Colorado with a population of 44,300 estimated that it saved \$100,000 in 1996 through dual collection as compared to separate trash and recycling collection.

## **A1. EPA Information (Cont'd)**

### **Tips from Record-Setter Communities**

#### **Collection**

Collect as wide a variety of materials as possible

Collect yard trimmings for composting

Use drop-off sites to augment curbside collection

Distribute bins to all participants

#### **Education**

Educate, educate, educate

Target at new residents and at all ethnicities

Repeat messages in a variety of media

#### **Program Planning**

Build broad program support during the planning stages by seeking input, selling the program to those active in the community (such as service and civic clubs) and building political support.

Make participation as convenient as possible. Keep the program easy and user-friendly.

Investigate dual-collection.

Learn from others' experiences. Find out what other communities have accomplished and how they did it.

#### **Policies**

Implement a pay-as-you-throw trash system (and include small container options).

Encourage source reduction and reuse.

Pass a local ordinance requiring residents, businesses and institutions to participate in waste reduction activities or requiring haulers to offer their customers (residential and commercial) a minimal level of recycling service.

Enforce mandatory programs to boost both the quantity and quality of participation.

Offer recycling services to multi-family households, require haulers to provide these services, or require that multi-family building owners/managers provide recycling services to their tenants.

#### **Ongoing Programs**

Be prepared for resistance to change. Try to anticipate questions.

Seek out committed staff and administration to ensure program success.

Secure stable markets for reusable items and recyclables.

## **A1. EPA Information (Cont'd)**

Avoid adding a material to the recycling program and then taking it away, especially if the trash system is pay-as-you-throw.

Track data to document progress.

Be conservative when reporting recycling and composting tonnages and program costs.

Talk to your customers. Solicit input and give feedback on program progress.

Recruit and reward citizen volunteers, who have many skills and can help maintain community motivation.

Be creative.

Yard debris can be a large component in calculation of the waste stream. In Chatham, NJ composting of yard debris accounts for nearly two-thirds of residential waste reduction. In Chatham, trash bag costs are set to cover tip fee costs only.

Example Case Studies:

### **Dover, New Hampshire** (1996 Costs \$73/Household – 4.71#/HH per day)

This city of 26,000 with 5,641 single family dwellings (4 units or less) and 5,674 multi-family units opened a recycling drop-off center in 1990 and instituted curbside recycling and a PAYT system in 1991. In 1996 Dover diverted 52% of its residential waste (35% through recycling and 17% through composting) up from 3% in 1990. The keys to Dover's waste reduction are convenient curbside residential recycling service, the city's drop-off facility for recyclables and yard debris and a pay-as-you-throw trash fee structure. The curbside recycling program households are given free containers for storage and set-out of recyclables.

The PAYT trash program requires all municipal waste customers to place their trash into bright color bags and tag oversized items. Taking inflation into account per household costs for solid waste management were reduced from \$122 in 1990 to \$73 in 1996.

### **Worcester, Massachusetts** (1996 Costs \$75/Household – 6.2#/HH per day)

This city of 170,000 with 22,500 single-family and 41,088 multi-family units implemented curbside recycling and a PAYT system in 1993. Per-bag trash fees combined with a city ordinance that prohibits the disposal of recyclables and yard debris with trash resulted in the city nearly tripling its residential waste reduction rate from 15% in 1992 to 44% in 1994. This further increased to 54% (27% through recycling and 27% through composting) in 1996 when the city switched from biweekly to weekly recycling pickup.

Worcester provides fall leaf collection and operates three drop-off sites for other yard debris from April through November. Residents can deliver their yard debris to these facilities at no charge. Residents can also recycle large items such as appliances, through a special bulky items collection program.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes**

### **Minutes, May 6, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Dennis Fortin, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock. Hazen Carpenter was unable to attend. Also present were Town Council Chair Joe Hanslip and Town Manager Mark Green.

A discussion was held on who the members would wish to have attend future meetings to present information on waste and recycling programs. Among those suggested were a representative from the state planning office, a number of persons involved in the Waterboro pay to throw program and repeal initiative, representatives from Kennebunk recycling program and Oceanside Rubbish, the Waste and Recycling coordinator from Dover, NH, and a representative from the Portland public Works Department. It was determined that at the next meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>, the Task Force would hear from the Sanford Public works Department and BBI on the existing collection program and transfer station operation.

A bi-weekly meeting schedule was set, with meetings planned for 6 PM to 8 PM on Thursdays, May 15<sup>th</sup>, May 29<sup>th</sup>, June 12<sup>th</sup>, June 26<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, July 24<sup>th</sup>, and a final meeting on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

David Nickerson nominated Brad Littlefield as Chair, and Dennis Fortin as Secretary, and each was elected unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM, just prior to the Town Council meeting.

### **Minutes, May 15, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Dennis Fortin, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock. Hazen Carpenter was unable to attend. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green, Town Engineer Charles Andreson, Public Works Supervisor Eugene Alley, and Gino Gervais of BBI Industries.

The meeting convened at 6:10 PM. After introductions of all present, Mr Andreson gave an overview of the current waste and recycling program as follows:

The current municipal solid waste (MSW) collection is contracted to BBI Industries, which makes weekly collections using two rear packer trucks, each with two-man crews. Collections are made from all residential properties, excluding buildings with more than three units and residences on private roads. Some MSW is collected from buildings with more than three units because of precedent, and some waste from residences on private roads is collected because residents bring their waste to the side of a public way for collection. An estimated 7,240 tons of MSW is collected curbside annually, and another estimated 2,400 tons of MSW is tipped at the municipal transfer station by residents and commercial entities. The MSW is compacted at the transfer station, and hauled to MERC in Biddeford by the Public Works Department. The current

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tipping fee at MERC is \$65.73 per ton of MSW. The current contract fee to BBI Industries for MSW collection is \$334,800, ( for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008) a 5% increase takes effect for the final year of the contract starting July 1, 2008.

The curbside recycling collection is also contracted to BBI, which collects on a bi-weekly basis using a 20 yard rear packer truck and a single driver/collector. All recyclables can be commingled by residents, as they are dumped into a single compartment, and sorted at the processing center. This truck also picks up consumer recyclables left at the transfer station by residents. The total annual volume of recyclables collected is estimated to be 600 tons. Currently, the recyclables are hauled by BBI to EcoMaine for processing. The current contract fee to BBI for recycling collection is \$184,100, with a 5% increase effective July 1, 2008 for the final year of the contract.

Gino Gervais then provided an outline of the collection programs from BBI's perspective. He informed the group that MSW collections were conducted using one 30 yard rear packer, and either a 20 or 30 yard rear packer, each with two-man crews, collecting on two routes each of the four collection days. Recycling collection is done by a 20 yard rear packer and driver covering both routes each day every other week. In response to questions, he indicated that the MSW collection program was not strained to capacity except at times in the spring and fall when volume increased as much as 40% due to high volumes of leaves and yard waste, and that the recycling collection truck was at times close to maximum capacity, but that substituting a larger truck would be a ready solution.

The preceding information on leaves and yard waste led into a long discussion of this matter. It was noted by Eugene Alley that leaves and yard waste are not supposed to be put out for trash collection, but if not composted by residents, should be brought to the transfer station. He noted that there is never a charge for disposal of this material there. Charlie Plante pointed out that this was another example of the lack of fairness in our current system, wherein some residents would dispose of large volumes of trash, and even yard waste, while more responsible residents had to pay for the increased cost to the town. Mr Alley noted that the municipal fall leaf collection picked up 543 tons of leaves in 2007, and these were trucked to Lavigne's farm for mulch and compost, at no cost to the town other than collection and transport. Mr Green remarked that the fall leaf collection program is the issue that generates the greatest number of calls to town hall, and is of considerable concern to the citizens. Mr Gervais voiced the opinion that Sanford might well be the only town currently conducting town wide leaf pickup. There was further discussion on the merits of the current leaf pickup system, and potential alternatives, though any further discussion or action was suspended to a later session.

Next Eugene Alley presented the group with the results of his recent survey of MSW and recycling collection. He estimated that community wide, approximately 22% of households put out recycling on a typical collection day. Of that percentage, around one quarter have relatively high volumes of recycling, multiple containers. He reported that the recycling participation rates vary dramatically by neighborhood, from approximately 5% to 80%. There was some discussion regarding the various rates of recycling and their relationship to demographics. Gino Gervais indicated that in his experience, homeowners are more likely to recycle than renters. It was noted that the town has not conducted any recycling education or promotion for a number of years. Mr Alley also asked some 80 residents for their reasons for not recycling, and summarized the responses in order of frequency as: 1) "too much trouble", 2) "too lazy" 3) "I pay

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enough taxes I shouldn't have to recycle" 4) "no time" 5) "not paying for bin" 6) "no space" 7) "water and sewer costs too much to rinse out cans". Charlie Plante made the point that one purpose of recycling is to save money on tipping fees, and that our current program loses a great deal of money. Brad Littlefield said that there were other considerations in the decision to maintain a recycling program, including environmental responsibility and state mandates. Mr Plante suggested that segregating income from waste and recycling to operate the collection programs might be advisable. Mr Alley reported that transfer station revenue was approximately \$130,000 for the year. Mr Gervais indicated that a fee system triggered other questions, that a pay per bag system required a significant recycling system, that yard waste collection was not economical, and that recycling education was most effective when conducted through the schools. Responding to a question from Mr Nickerson, Mr Gervais indicated that BBI does not currently contract with any municipalities that have a pay to throw system, but he assumes that recycling rates would be higher with such a system, but not as high as some towns and the state planning office figures suggest.

David Nickerson noted that the current collection costs for MSW in Sanford are \$45 per ton, and the collection costs for recycling are \$300 per ton. He questioned Mr Gervais on that, but Mr Gervais indicated that he had no knowledge of the agreement between the town and BBI, since it predated his work for BBI. Responding to a question from Mr Nickerson, Mr Gervais said that he would project the annual rate of cost increase for an automated collection system to be approximately equal to the rate of increase for our current system, because much higher equipment replacement and maintenance costs offset labor savings. Dennis Fortin raised the issue of Sanford's current collection costs with Mr Gervais, asking why it was that on the weeks when there was both waste and recycling collection, the town pays more for the single 20 yard rear packer and one man collecting recyclables than it does for the two 30 yard rear packers and four men collecting waste combined, whether we were just paying too much for the recycling collection, or whether the two were in tandem, and we were paying too little for waste collection and made up for it by the recycling collection overcharge. Mr Gervais responded that he thought we were paying too little for both, but he had nothing to do with the contract. Mr Fortin asked that if we were now paying more than \$7,000 per collection week for recycling, we could assume that BBI would continue to collect all our recycling even if we increased the volume dramatically, Mr Gervais said no, the cost would have to be renegotiated.

There was a discussion of recycling enforcement. Mr Green indicated that he believed a mandatory recycling ordinance and a recycling enforcement officer would be needed as part of any improved program. Mr Fortin opined that such a mandatory program and especially enforcement was impractical, and would likely generate resentment and resistance, and perhaps even stronger reactions from residents seeing someone rifling through their trash. Mr Gervais stated that the Saco and Scarborough recycling coordinator did indeed do enforcement, going through people's trash and pointing out the items that had to be recycled.

Mr Gervais was asked about combined or alternative collection options, and he indicated that Augusta collects trash three weeks each month and recycling on the fourth. Asked about his preferences for collection systems, he said that he preferred the uniformity of appearance that the containers in an automated system provided, and that though the containers posed particular issues in the winter, in his experience, they were no worse than those with other systems. In response to Mr Plante's report of very high initial residents calls and complaints in

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

implementing an automated collection system, he responded that people eventually come to accept any system.

It was determined that a representative of the State Planning Office will make a presentation at the May 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40.

### **Minutes, May 29, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock, Dennis Fortin, Gordon Paul and Hazen Carpenter were unable to attend. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green, Public Works Director Charles Andreson, Public Works Supervisor Eugene Alley, Finance Committee Vice Chair Carol Cabana.

The members reviewed and approved, with changes, the minutes of the May 14, 2008 meeting.

The members considered and approved the goals and objectives of the Waste Task Force as proposed.

The members discussed the planned June 12 community observation visits to Falmouth, ecoMaine, and South Portland. There was discussion of additional visits to Portland, Saco and Scarborough. The members agreed to a potentially earlier start to the trip to permit observation of collection and processing in normal operating hours, and to leave the final decisions and arrangements to the Town Manager.

The Task Force then heard a presentation by Jetta Antonakos, Waste Management and Recycling Planner with the Maine State Planning Office, who had previously served as the recycling coordinator in Saco, and implemented the automated collection system in 2003. Ms Antonakos supplemented a power point presentation with her own experiences and observations as a state and municipal recycling official. She explained that the state recycling program began in 1987, primarily as a response to the limited and declining capacity of the various landfills in the state, and the significant environmental and regulatory issues with the majority of existing landfills. At that time, the statewide recycling rate was less than 10%, and fewer than 6% of the state's 365 landfills were legally compliant. As part of its waste reduction process, the state adopted a waste disposal hierarchy of "*Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Compost, Process and Landfill*".

As of 2005, the most recent date for complete statistics, the total municipal and commercial solid waste stream for the state totaled 2 million tons, or approximately 3,000 pounds per person. The final disposition of this waste stream was 35% waste to energy (incineration), 36% recycled, 25% land filled, and 4% exported. Ms Antonakos stressed that these figures included the total waste stream, including commercial and bulk waste and recycling, and indicated that there had been a decline in total recycling from the peak rate of 41% and that the current

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

statewide goal was a 50% recycling rate. Ms Antonakos provided information on the market value of a range of recycled commodities, and the information that industrial use of these recycled materials results in a 70% to 90% energy savings over the use of virgin materials.

Ms Antonakos outlined the state's recycling education and promotion campaign, and highlighted a solicitation of student recycling videos that resulted in enthusiastic response, with 80 videos received, including one of special note from task force member Stephanie Brock. She stressed that any effort to increase recycling must include a strong education, information and motivation component.

Following the presentation, there was extended discussion regarding the questions of which types of collection programs for waste and recycling were more effective in raising recycling percentages, and what the strengths and limitations each presented. These focused primarily on the relative merits of automated collection and pay-to-throw systems, but also on relatively smaller changes to a collection system like Sanford has now. In response to questions from David Nickerson, Ms. Antonakos stated that pay per bag systems were most effective in providing incentives to recycle, and increasing recycling percentages, but stated that in her opinion, automated collection systems also motivated increased recycling while providing advantages in cost, convenience and safety. Mr. Plante and Mr. Nickerson contested the latter points with her, questioning the increased maintenance requirements and costs related to the hydraulic collection arms and waste bins, and the effect on resident safety and convenience of the automatic collection trucks, and 15,000 trash and recycling containers at Sanford roadsides.

There was some discussion of the disadvantages of implementation of pay-to-throw and automated collection systems. Mr. Plante reported that the information he had received from communities that had implemented automated collection indicated that the number of resident complaints was very high. Mr. Alley indicated that large numbers of resident complaints were already a reality in Sanford, and were routinely handled. Ms. Antonakos stated that any program changes result in complaints and disruption, that Saco encountered a lot of initial resistance when she was in charge of their automated collection implementation, but that people eventually get used to any program. Mr. Green asked Ms. Antonakos what the primary problems were with pay-per-bag, and she replied that they were primarily political, in gaining acceptance of the new system as not primarily a way to increase municipal revenue, and the problem of illegal dumping. Mr. Nickerson read from a State Planning Office report that illegal dumping has not proven to be a problem in pay-to-throw communities.

Councilor Chabot inquired whether there were other successful systems for recycling collection other than the 18 gallon bins in common use, such as distinctive plastic bags or alternative containers. Ms. Antonakos related her experience in Seattle, where residents select various waste container sizes, and pay waste disposal charges accordingly, but receive large recycling bins at no charge. She indicated that Saco is now offering new waste containers approximately one half the size of the original rolling bins. Mr. Fortin expressed the opinion that the 18 gallon typical recycling bins were an anachronism, and that since the current recycling collection is a single stream system collected in a rear packer truck, any suitable container, such as a trash can or plastic bin should be acceptable, as long as it was easily identifiable as recycling by a brightly colored sticker or other means.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

Town Manager Green asked Ms. Antonakos what community in Maine had a very effective waste and recycling program. She replied that Portland, with a pay-per-bag waste system, and a curbside single stream recycling collection program had among the best success statistics.

Public Works Director Andreson stated that he believed that pay-per-bag was the strongest incentive for increased recycling, but that it was politically difficult. He asked Ms. Antonakos if there had been such a system approved by any community in Maine in a public referendum. She replied that she was not aware of one.

Councilor Littlefield asked Ms. Antonakos if the state was likely to mandate recycling programs or rates for municipalities. She replied that she believed that the state would continue to limit its efforts to promotion and establishing goals and guidelines.

Councilor Littlefield proposed the creation of a public information subcommittee to propose a public information and education program to increase the recycling rate in Sanford-Springvale. Councilor Chabot, Stephanie Brock and Dennis Fortin were named to the subcommittee, and scheduled the first meeting for Wednesday, June 11, at 2:30 PM, in the Town Hall Annex conference room.

Ms. Antonakos made the members aware that the State Planning Office had an online tool kit with customizable promotional and educational materials.

Mr Nickerson proposed that a media release be prepared on a regular basis to attempt to inform and involve residents in this process. Stephanie Brock agreed to take charge of producing the press releases.

The members agreed that the site visits on June 12<sup>th</sup> would replace any other formal meeting, and that the next regular meeting would be June 26<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in the annex conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

### **Summary, June 12, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Site Visits, ecomaine, Falmouth, South Portland**

Members on trip: Brad Littlefield, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock. Hazen Carpenter and Gordon Paul were unable to attend. Also on the trip were Town Council Chair Joe Hanslip and Town Manager Mark Green. Public Works Director Charles Andreson and member Dennis Fortin met the others at ecomaine, and visited the other locations with them.

At ecomaine, Business Development Manager Missy Labbe welcomed the group and gave them a brief history of Regional Waste Systems, now ecomaine, explaining that the operation had started as a waste baling and landfill operation, moving to energy generation through incineration, subsequently adding multi stream recycling and then single stream recycling in 2007. She provided information on the economics of the energy generation and recycling operations, explaining that the former was not operating in the black, but required annual

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

assessments to member communities, but that the recycling operation had positive cash flow of approximately \$950,000 for the year. She gave the group a tour of the single stream recycling facility, which separates the various recyclables into marketable categories. She explained that for most recycled commodities, ecomaine requests bids for quantities of the commodities, securing competitive market prices, many currently in the multiple hundreds of dollars per ton. She briefly explained that associate member towns could contract to bring waste or recycling to the facility, and that the recycling agreements were either for a guarantee of no cost for disposal, or on an income/cost sharing basis, with communities sharing the net income or costs proportionately to their percentage of gross tonnage.

The next visit was to the Town of Falmouth public works department, where Skip Varney, Director of Parks and Public Works outlined Falmouth's waste and recycling program, and answered questions. He explained that Falmouth has had a pay per bag rubbish collection system for many years, and that it in fact was instituted before he came to work for the town, and he therefore could not tell us if there had ever been significant citizen resistance, but that it was currently very well accepted. He noted that the current cost for a 33 gallon bag was \$2, and that they were sold widely in Falmouth and major supermarkets and other stores. He explained that the public works department generally purchases a year's supply of bags, and distributes them as required to the stores, charging them slightly less than the retail price. Skip explained that Falmouth had a very good recycling rate with their prior system of "silver bullets" located around the town for residents to drop off recycling, but that town officials had decided that with the advent of single stream recycling, it would be worthwhile to institute curbside recycling, and attempt to increase the recycling rate from 35.1% to 50%. The Town contracted with Pine Tree Waste, their rubbish collection contractor, to conduct curbside collection every other week. They have also maintained a number of the "silver bullets" for drop off of recyclables. To facilitate recycling collection, the Town printed recycling calendars and distributed them to households so that they will be aware of recycling collection weeks, and though they require the use of at least one blue recycling bin, its purpose is essentially to serve as a "flag" that recyclables are at the curb for pickup, and other containers can also be used for recycling. Mr Varney indicated that the citizens of Falmouth appeared to be quite satisfied with their waste and recycling program.

The final site visit was to South Portland, where the group met with Dana Anderson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Works. Mr Anderson recounted a long history and experience in the area of municipal waste and public works. He explained that some years ago, the City went through a process to develop an improved waste collection system, and that their determination was that a pay per bag system would be most efficient. There was strong public reaction against instituting such a program, and city officials did not implement it, but later instituted a program of automated curbside collection of waste, and manual collection of recyclables using municipal trucks and employees. Mr. Anderson gave the group a great deal of information about the strengths and weaknesses of automated collection. The strengths were primarily in reduction in manpower needs, speed of pickup, and relatively easy public acceptance. The weaknesses were high equipment costs, high maintenance costs, inability to replace inoperable trucks, problems with smaller containers, little contribution to recycling, and the difficulty in keeping employees assigned to operating the collection trucks. He told the group that he anticipated that contracting with Pine Tree Waste for combined automated rubbish collection and automated recycling collection would pass most of those problems through to the contractor, and that providing 65 gallon wheeled containers for recycling should boost the amount collected curbside. He anticipates that the contractor will have more labor flexibility, better equipment

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

service facilities, and spare equipment to cover breakdowns. Starting in July, Pine Tree Waste will use two split body automatic collection trucks to pick up combined waste and recycling weekly at a contracted cost of \$798,000 per year. In response to questions from Mr. Nickerson, Mr. Anderson indicated that in his mind, pay per bag was the most efficient system, but politically very difficult to initiate, and that automated collection had significant advantages, and that it was politically easy to implement, that residents came to like the system very much.

### **Minutes, June 26, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Dennis Fortin, Charlie Plante. Also present was Public Works Director Charles Andreson.

Acting chair Gordon Paul opened the meeting with a discussion of the recent site visits. There was general agreement that the visits were useful, but Dennis Fortin voiced the opinion that the limited time left to complete the Task Force charge might make further visits less valuable than completing our deliberations in a timely manner.

Mr. Paul relayed a suggestion from Brad Littlefield that the Task Force meet weekly in July, and the members unanimously agreed to the change in schedule after July 3.

Mr. Plante expressed the opinion that curbside recycling collection would never be self supporting, and that most of the benefits of recycling were enjoyed by the processors and end users, with little or no financial benefit to the community. He pointed out that the town was currently spending \$150,000 more on curbside recycling than it is saving in avoided tipping fees. Mr. Fortin also expressed his concern with the current costs, but expressed the belief that by maximizing recycling and implementing cost effective collection, most likely with combined collection, at least a cost neutral system could be implemented.

Mr. Andreson pointed out that both pay per bag and automated collection systems have volume constraints that promote greater recycling.

Mr. Nickerson voiced the opinion that our investigation thus far indicates that manual and automated collection have roughly equivalent costs, but that pay per bag provides the maximum incentive to recycle. In response to questions about the political acceptance of pay per bag, he indicated that he would favor a program to give out for free an initial supply of bags to each household.

Mr. Chabot responded to Mr. Plante's earlier comment that ecomaine is a nonprofit, returning the proceeds of its recycling program to participating communities, and that other considerations argue for curbside recycling, including environmental responsibility. He indicated that he believed recycling drop off containers might be appropriate as part of an enhanced recycling program, as should a significantly improved recycling page on the town website.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

Mr. Paul pointed out that a pay per bag system put the control of trash expenses in the hands of residents, who can recycle more and minimize their trash, while an automated system puts the municipality in control, deciding what volume of trash will be picked up from each residence.

Mr. Fortin reported to the group that on June 11, when the subcommittee met to formulate recycling promotion ideas, Bill Botting, the Sanford Information Technology chief, was in attendance, and suggested that a new recycling page could be created, with a direct link to the Town home page, as could a page reporting the progress of the Task Force. Mr. Fortin proposed that new recycling page be set up ASAP, with the ecomaine recycling graphics, a collection schedule calendar, and a section to strongly promote recycling, including instructions for the use of alternate containers to the red bins.

Mr. Chabot stressed that making the citizens more aware of the issues with trash and recycling would motivate them to get involved in the process.

Mr. Gardner raised the broad issue of collection systems, whether by private haulers, contracted collection, or in house, and whether the collections should be separate, or combined, and whether recycling processing might be accomplished locally.

Mr. Andreson voiced the opinion that single stream recycling is gaining rapid acceptance because of the labor efficiency of sorting and processing in a central location as opposed to at various municipal processing centers. He indicated that looking toward the current contract expiration date in twelve months, any RFP's should be planned for no later than six months prior, longer ahead if automated collection were the system sought.

Mr. Nickerson indicated that from the information reviewed to date, he believed that a pay per bag trash system with combined collection of recyclables either manually or with a semi-automatic system (rear packer with bin tipper) was the most financially responsible and practical system. He asked the group if anyone felt that automated collection offered any advantage over such a program.

Mr. Fortin responded that he was in general agreement with that position, but that he wanted to see the results of the Biddeford RFP. The bids are scheduled to be opened on June 30, and should present head to head comparisons of prices of manual, semi-automatic and automatic collection, as well as bids for bags, recycling bins, and recycling processing. No one disputed Mr. Nickerson's position.

Mr. Andreson indicated that he would get copies of the bids from Paul Casavant at Biddeford Public Works, and provide them to the members.

Mr. Plante stressed that the Task Force must make the most practical decision, not the politically most palatable one.

Mr. Paul pointed out that the average resident has a busy schedule, with little spare time, and that even the relatively small effort of recycling may be difficult for them. He reminded the group that we are entering tough economic times, perhaps not the best for implementing change.

Mr. Nickerson responded that he shared his concerns, and that a pay per bag system would present the opportunity to cut taxes.

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Mr. Fortin pointed out that whatever the final result of our process is, that increasing recycling will be a critical element, and that the Town should start ASAP to promote recycling through distribution of ecomaine brochures, a collection schedule calendar, and a recycling promotion letter.

Mr. Plante stated that the trucks used for collection should be universally adaptable. Mr. Nickerson said split rear packers for pay per bag and recyclables would be. Mr. Paul related the high level of citizen concern voiced to him when automated collection was proposed, but related an even stronger resistance when a pay per bag system was proposed a few years prior.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM

### **Minutes, July 10, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Dennis Fortin, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green and Assistant public Works Director Eugene Alley

Chair Brad Littlefield called the meeting to order at 6 PM. The first item was the approval of the minutes of the June 26, 2008 meeting. Councilor Littlefield then raised the matter of additional site visits and guest speakers. Councilor Chabot voiced the opinion that the task force had sufficient information at this point from past speakers and visits upon which to base its deliberations. Councilor Littlefield indicated that he felt we should hear from representative speakers from Waterboro and Lyman to debate the results of their pay per bag experience. Dennis Fortin expressed the opinion that if we were to hear from communities about pay per bag experiences, larger communities, such as Brunswick or Dover NH would be more appropriate for their similar size and method of collection. Charlie Plante questioned whether our increased recycling effort should include 4 unit and larger residences and businesses. Chair Littlefield responded that the Council had envisioned that as a possible second phase of any program. He went on to suggest that we also have speakers to provide us information on the Saco and Scarborough experiences, specifically, the recycling coordinator and a councilors. There was general agreement to at least hear from Sarah Wosjcoski. Charlie Plante stated that if we were to hear about the Waterboro experience, we should also get financial information regarding the effects of pay per bag and its repeal.

The next item was a report on the education Sub Committee recommendations for recycling promotion. Dennis Fortin reported that the group met on June 11 and formulated recommendations as follows:

ASAP: Replace the 10 year old recycling info on the town website with current information and graphics on single-sort recycling from ecomaine. Post a recycling collection calendar, information on using alternative recycling collection containers, and a brief statement on the reasons for the need for increased recycling on that page. Provide a direct link to the page from the Town home page. Bill Botting, Town IT chief, attended the meeting, and indicated that he could readily accomplish this. Press release(s) to local media outlining the economic and other

## A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)

reasons for increased recycling, and providing current info on recyclables, collection, containers and schedule. Using free distribution methods, Town Hall, stores, service organizations, local events and the summer playground program to distribute the ecomaine recycling brochure (provided free by them) and a recycling calendar and brief recycling promotion statement as a handout to residents.

Intermediate Term: Set up a recycling promotion program through the summer playground program, and then the schools, perhaps in a contest or other format, with a pizza or ice cream party, or individual prizes for participants. Deliver by mail or hand complete recycling info to every household. Posting a recycling results chart on the web page, showing weekly/daily recycling tonnage, to track and encourage increased recycling. For those items that entail expense, for which there is currently no budget, it was suggested that the \$65 per ton savings in avoided tipping fees for increased recycling would offset the modest expenses incurred.

Chair Littlefield then opened discussion on how our eventual proposal would support Town Council Guiding Principal 6, *“The Town Council and staff will strive to make Sanford an attractive and livable community by providing quality municipal services and by maintaining our streets, sidewalks, parks and other public facilities to a high standard.”*

Charlie Plante opened the discussion by stating that trash bags are the predominant container now, and no change would be required for a pay to throw system. David Nickerson pointed out that the biggest visual issue was the variety and poor condition of trash containers, and that either pay per bag or automated collection would remedy that with uniformity. Councilor Chabot stressed that maintaining curbside collection was crucial, that either automated collection or pay per bag would improve appearances, but that ongoing maintenance and condition of municipally provided containers has proven to be a significant issue and expense in automated collection communities. Councilor Paul pointed out that opposition to pay per bag is primarily a matter of cost, and that giving away a number of bags to each household is an option that a number of communities have employed. He pointed out that State Planning Office figures demonstrate that communities that institute pay per bag quickly reach a 30% or higher recycling rate. David Gardner pointed out that different neighborhoods have different norms, some nearly universal using trash cans, some with numerous various size bags, and often large mounds of trash at the ends of private roads and in front of some multi-family buildings. Stephanie Brock indicated that she felt that cost would be the ultimate determinant of a collection system, and that that choice would have little impact on general livability in Sanford. Councilor Littlefield reported that trash bags placed curbside in his neighborhood were often torn open by wildlife. A long discussion ensued, but one solution offered was for Mr Alley to contact any residents whose trash is routinely torn open, and ask them to use solid containers. Councilor Littlefield then raised his concerns that were a pay per bag system to be adopted, residents would grossly overload bags, creating collection and income problems. David Nickerson stated that SPO reports demonstrated that in pay per bag communities, reported problems with overweight bags were minimal.

Chair Littlefield then opened discussion on the environmental responsibility of proposed collection methods. Councilor Chabot stated that the Town needed to set a standard for environmental responsibility by having a broad and effective recycling program. Charlie Plante expressed the opinion that our current recycling program is not environmentally responsible, that the consumption of fuel, and money is wasted in relation to the minimal amount of recycling

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

collected. He proposed that curbside collection be eliminated, and replaced by a series of recycling dropoff containers around town that could be collected and transported with significantly less waste of fuel and money, along with the implementation of a pay per bag system for trash to encourage recycling. David Nickerson stated that the greatest savings could be accomplished by moving to a system of combined collection of trash and recyclables, that the two rear packer trucks currently collecting 7,200 tons of trash per year could readily handle the 600 tons of recycling, and that using divided body trucks would permit those two trucks to collect all the trash and recycling, saving labor costs, fuel and equipment costs. Mr Plante replied that such a system would not work because of imbalance between the volume of trash and recycling, and the lack of a local location to dump recyclables. Mr. Nickerson replied that the Town would only have to provide an area to temporarily stage recyclables at the transfer station, until a full load could be transported to ecomaine in a compactor trailer. Mr. Fortin pointed out that such a system would be highly efficient, but would require a serious recycling promotion effort to increase recycling volume near its ultimate level to properly size the collection equipment and get the lowest possible contract bid price. Councilor Chabot noted that changing to drop off containers would be environmentally irresponsible, because of the numerous car trips residents would need to make to drop off recyclables, that curbside recycling collection is an incentive to recycling, and a drop off system a disincentive. Councilor Littlefield expressed skepticism that enough locations could be found where property owners and neighbors would accept dumpsters. Mr Plante requested that the members reflect on the question, and that we hold a vote on eliminating curbside recycling at the next meeting. Councilor Littlefield expressed his concerns that instituting a pay per bag system would open the door for future Town Councilors to arbitrarily raise bag prices to generate additional revenue. Mr Fortin acknowledged that risk, but pointed out that successful pay per bag programs were usually based on prices intended only to offset tipping fee costs, not collection and other expenses, and that they were therefore self regulating, as trash volume declines, both bag sale revenue and tipping fees do also, maintaining a revenue balance.

The next order of business was discussion of a final report. Councilor Littlefield indicated that he and the Town Manager had concluded that issuing both a minority and a majority report would be appropriate, anticipating a lack of consensus and a relatively even split in opinion on the final recommendation. A quick poll of the members ensued, the result of which was that Councilor Littlefield was the sole member still advocating an automated collection system, with the other members either advocating for a pay per bag system, or acknowledging its advantages over the automated system.

The Task Force then reviewed a summary of the bids received by the City of Biddeford as a result of their RFP's for recycling collection, recycling materials purchase, recycling containers and trash bags for a pay per bag system.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

### **Minutes, July 24, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Dennis Fortin . Also present were Town Manager Mark Green and Assistant Public Works Director Eugene Alley, and guest speakers Willis Lord and Evan Grover.

After some informal discussion while awaiting the chairman and guests, the chair called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM. The first order of business was the unanimous approval of the minutes of the July 10, 2008 meeting. Mr. Nickerson then received the task force members' unanimous approval to schedule a representative of Oceanside Rubbish to speak with us at the July 31 session. Chairman Littlefield called the group's attention to information on the internet of Dedham Massachusetts' recent implementation of automated collection.

The next item on the agenda was the scheduled discussion of the Waterboro pay per bag experience with Willis Lord, a proponent, and Evan Grover, an opponent.

Mr. Lord spoke first, relating that the recycling rate in the town of Waterboro had been approximately 10% prior to the implementation of pay per bag, and that the rate increased to 50-55% after the implementation, then declining to approximately 15% after the repeal of the program. He informed the group that the program was set up to pay the entirety of the town's waste disposal cost other than the annual assessment as a founding member of ecomaine with bag fees of \$1.50 and \$1.25 respectively for large and small trash bags, which were sold at the Hannaford Supermarket. He indicated that he believed that the price set for the bags may have played a significant role in the opposition to the program, and perhaps lower prices would have been better accepted. He told the group that after implementation, a large number of residents subscribed to the private trash collection service that did not require paid bags, but did have a significant cost. The contractor for that collection service then paid \$225,000 in tipping fees for the trash that he collected and hauled to ecomaine. Mr. Lord then provided details of the current system, after the end of pay per bag, wherein residents once again either haul their own trash to the transfer station, and dispose of it for free, or pay the private contractor to collect and dispose of it. He pointed out that the town's current waste budget is nearly \$600,000 annually. He stressed his firm conviction that trash to energy, combined with a strong recycling program was the most economically and environmentally responsible system, and that it required either pay per bag or a mandatory recycling system to succeed.

Evan Grover spoke next, explaining that he and others had initially formed the "Speak Out Waterboro" group as a reaction to pay per bag and other governmental issues, and eventually led him to election as a selectman. He pointed out that the residents of Waterboro had rejected pay per bag prior to implementation in two "straw polls", and then in two formal votes leading to its end. He listed the primary complaints about pay per bag in Waterboro: 1) That the bag fees were not tax deductible, like property taxes; 2) That the revenue generated by pay per bag did not lower property taxes because selectmen used the funds received to increase the fire department budget by \$180,000; 3) That the cost of bags posed an issue of affordability, particularly to the elderly; 4) It resulted in a substantial amount of trash dumping on roadsides, in fields and woods, and in private dumpsters; 5) That it led to increased burning of trash, particularly in the Lake Arrowhead area. Mr. Grover disputed any savings achieved by the pay

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

per bag program, saying that “there are no savings unless money is returned to the taxpayer”. He also disputed the accuracy of the recycling rates stated by Mr. Lord, since a significant portion of the trash in Waterboro was being collected by the private contractor, and therefore was not considered in arriving at the percentage figures, he stated that the recycling rate as a percentage of the entire town’s waste stream actually topped out at 23% under pay per bag.

Questions and discussion followed:

Mr. Plante stated that the 11 months of pay per bag operation in Waterboro was not sufficient for residents to become adjusted to it and see the financial benefits. Councilor Littlefield replied that the financial effects had been anticipated and applied to the town’s budget. Mr. Lord indicated that roadside dumping and trash burning were an issue in Waterboro before and after pay per bag, and were enforcement matters. Mr. Grover disputed the degree and nature of the problem during the different periods. Mr. Grover indicated that at \$1.50, the bag fees were not high enough to cover the entire waste budget. Mr. Lord pointed out that lowering the tonnage of trash by increased recycling not only lowered the tipping fees, but also reduced the \$180,000 annual assessment to ecomaine proportionately to the drop in trash volume. Councilor Paul asked Mr. Grover that since the 140 communities in Maine that have successfully implemented pay per bag in Maine have an average 30% recycling rate, could Waterboro be more of an exception than a typical scenario? Mr. Fortin opined that the implementation of pay per bag in Waterboro without first dealing with resident’s objections, and the use of the revenue to fund other municipal expenses may have been the primary reasons for the high resistance to, and eventual repeal of the program. Mr. Grover stated that he and Mr. Lord, who both serve on Waterboro’s solid waste committee continue to try to improve the town’s recycling performance. He indicated that the lack of municipal recycling containers might be an issue, and that the town was reworking its transfer station, doing recycling education in schools, and moving to single stream recycling. Responding to a question, Mr. Grover suggested putting any pay per bag system to a referendum. Mr. Nickerson suggested that the Sanford Town Meeting might be the best venue to consider and vote on the issue if the Town Council were to consider that appropriate.

The task force members thanked Mr. Lord and Mr. Grover for their gracious assistance in our considerations.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM

### **Minutes, July 31, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock, Dennis Fortin. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green, Public Works Director Charles Andreson, Assistant Public Works Director Eugene Alley, and Karl Ekstedt and Matt Williams of Oceanside Rubbish Inc.

The meeting was convened at 6:05 PM. The first order of business was the unanimous approval of the prepared minutes of the July 24, 2008 meeting.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Karl Ekstedt, owner of Oceanside Rubbish Incorporated. Mr. Ekstedt provided an outline of his company's operations and his experience in the waste and recycling collection industry. Oceanside is currently the collection contractor for the Town of Kennebunk. Mr. Ekstedt indicated that he was not a proponent of automated collection systems for reasons of equipment cost, limited availability, and limited flexibility. His company uses primarily rear packer trucks with bin tippers, and has a range of truck sizes to handle various road and collection conditions. He indicated that he views pay to throw systems as the fairest cost assessment system for waste, and the greatest incentive to recycling. He cautioned that in planning for a pay to throw system, bag prices and revenue projections should take into account the fact that residents will maximize the trash they put in each paid container, significantly increasing the weight per bag or can relative to a free collection system. David Nickerson asked Mr. Ekstedt to cite the towns that currently have best practices for waste and recycling. He responded that Kennebunk has an integrated pay per bag and recycling system that meets most of its stated goals, that Kennebunkport has a comprehensive system that includes commercial collection, and that Kennebunk provides low cost recycling bins to residents, some sponsored by area businesses. Mr Plante asked which size bags were preferable from a collection standpoint, smaller for reduced weight, or larger for maximum volume. Mr Ekstedt responded that fewer, larger bags were the quicker to collect. In response to a question about combined collection systems, Mr Ekstedt said that he viewed them as impractical because of the difficulty in matching the equipment to the relative sizes of the waste and recycling volume. Mr Plante stated his position that curbside recycling collection was a waste of money and fuel, and that Sanford would be better to move to a system of drop off recycling and pay per bag. Matt Williams responded that drop off containers are difficult to find locations for, and have to be constructed with restrictive openings to discourage their use for disposal of trash. Mr Ekstedt noted that in regards to efficiency and use of fuel, curbside collection is far more efficient than the tens of thousands of resident trips required to bring recyclables to drop off points.

Mr Ekstedt stated that separating trash from recyclables takes time and effort, and that in large part, his business is based on citizens' unwillingness to bother, which led into the second part of his presentation. He pointed out that New England has by far the highest tipping costs for waste in the country, due to geographic and other considerations, and that the most practical way to maximize landfill density is to eliminate demolition debris from that waste stream. He explained how he and Matt Williams had long been interested in processes to sort and remove large portions of the waste stream. They have traveled through Europe to observe various systems and technology that automatically sort the waste stream, removing readily recyclable commodities, and eventually producing fuel pellets that are marketable, with the primary end user currently Sweden. Mr Ekstedt has licensing agreements with manufacturers of the technology to establish processing operations in the United States. At this time, he is in the permit stage of a plan to construct such a facility in Wells, adjacent to the current transfer station. Once in operation, hopefully in 2009, the plant, which would be totally enclosed, would take in loads of waste and process them in such a manner as to sort and remove organic material and recyclables, shipping the organic waste to a facility for composting, and marketing the recyclables. Most of the remaining waste would be processed into a fuel that could be used on site to power operations, and potentially excess electrical energy, or marketed to other users. The facility is designed to handle 300 tons of waste per day, and would therefore be able to process a significant portion of York County's waste stream. He cautioned that though he has very high expectations of this facility, and would very much like to see Sanford as an eventual

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

client, our current decisions should be made without any consideration of its potential operation. Mr. Ekstedt stated that he definitely has an interest in bidding on municipal collection in Sanford, and feels that the experience, size and flexibility of his company would well serve our needs.

The meeting schedule and agenda were discussed. Councilor Littlefield has sought and received an extension of time to complete the Task Force process. There is to be no meeting on August 7 due to a conflict with other programs in town hall. The next meeting will be at 6 PM Thursday August 14, when the guest will be Sarah Wojcowski, the recycling coordinator for the towns of Saco and Scarborough.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM

### **Minutes, August 14, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Dennis Fortin,. Also present were Public Works Director Charles Andreson, Assistant Public Works Director, Eugene Alley, Willis Lord, and Saco and Scarborough recycling coordinator Sarah Wojcowski.

The meeting was convened at 6:10 PM. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the July 31, 2008 meeting. Gordon Paul and David Nickerson abstained.

Willis Lord provided the group with budget figures from the Town of Waterboro for the period around their adoption and revocation of a pay per bag system, and statistics from ecomaine, on whose board he sits.

The invited guest speaker, Sarah Wojcoski, Recycling Coordinator for Saco and Scarborough, provided the group with information gleaned from her experiences, and answered questions. She explained that Saco had initiated a system of automated trash collection and semi-automated dual stream recycling collection in 2003, and that their prior recycling rate of 13% increased to approximately 25% subsequent to the implementation of the new collection system. In January of this year, Saco switched to a single stream collection system, with BBI as the contractor, and the recycling rate increased to approximately 29%. She noted that Saco uses 35, 65, and 95 gallon wheeled plastic carts, and now primarily issues 35 gallon carts for trash, reserving the larger carts for large households and multi unit buildings. Recycling carts are primarily the 65 gallon size. Municipal trash collection includes residential buildings of 6 units or fewer. In response to a question, she indicated that one or two persons are assigned to the duties of cart repair/replacement/distribution one day each week. Scarborough, which initiated curbside recycling collection at the same time that they implemented automated collection for both trash and recyclables this year, increased its recycling rate from 20% with the prior drop off program to 36-37% with the single stream curbside collection. Their collection contractor, Pine Tree Waste, uses three split-body automated collection trucks to do combined collection, and direct delivery to ecomaine. The bodies are split 60%-40%, and after initial weeks, the contractor began using the larger compartments for recyclables, due to their lesser density, resulting in both compartments reaching capacity roughly simultaneously. Public Works

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

Director Andreson reported that Sanford's waste stream for the past year was 7,240 tons of curbside trash, 2,400 tons of trash dropped at the transfer station, and 615 tons of curbside recycling. In answer to a question about maintenance and reliability of the automated collection trucks, Ms. Wojcoski stated that BBI replaces the automated arm on its trucks each year. In answer to questions about policies and regulations, she stated that Saco had implemented its collection system by Council decision, not referendum, and that both Saco and Scarborough had enacted mandatory recycling ordinances, though they were not actively enforced. Regarding excess trash beyond the single container capacity, both Saco and Scarborough require that it be dropped off at the transfer station, where Saco charges a per bag fee, but Scarborough does not. Saco also allows for collection of extra waste at the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. David Nickerson asked for her recommendations for Sanford. She stated that automated collection was best suited for a town where curb space not devoted to parking, and sufficient yard space for the carts was available. She said a rural/suburban town like Scarborough was a prime example. Willis Lord asked about winter issues related to snow banks. She stated that they were not a big problem due to the long reach of the arm that could extend into driveways. Councilor Chabot asked if she had encountered complaints about the size of and storage space for the carts, and she responded that that had not been a significant issue. Charlie Plante questioned the inefficiency of collecting only one side of a street at a time, and Eugene Alley stated that his observations of automated operation led him to believe that it was no slower than manual collection of both sides of the street. There was a discussion of collection policies and their fairness as applied to multi-unit buildings and home businesses. As the discussion moved to fairness and practicality of a pay per bag program, Kevin Chabot stressed that revenues from such a system should be structured to only cover tipping fees and recycling costs, not the entire waste budget.

Councilor Littlefield informed the group that he had requested that Council Chair Hanslip extend the deadline for completing the process to early September, and that he had agreed to do so. He then proposed that along with its recommendation to the Council, the Task Force produce a decision matrix detailing the information the group had received and considered, and the positive and negative elements of each alternative. He proposed that he and David Nickerson formulate an outline of such a matrix for the next meeting. Dennis Fortin stressed that the primary element in any recommendation and matrix should be the acknowledgement that the greatest cost savings will come from increased recycling, and that an aggressive promotion and education campaign should be the first and primary element in any program. Councilor Chabot pointed out that any matrix should clearly define the problems and issues to be resolved. Charlie Plante and David Nickerson voiced the opinion that issuance of Requests for Proposals should be integral to any recommendation. Councilor Paul stated that in his experience, such a matrix is a decision making tool, and that he was concerned that presenting one to the Council would give the impression of indecision. He stated that he believed that the Task Force would make a strong and firm recommendation, and that any matrix or other information should support that decision.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM. The next meeting is Thursday, August 21 at 6 PM. In the annex conference room.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

### **Minutes, August 21, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante and Dennis Fortin. Also attending, Public Works Director Charles Andreson and Assistant Public Works Director Eugene Alley.

The meeting was convened at 6:00 PM. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the August 14, 2008 meeting, with changes and corrections.

The next item on the agenda was work on the decision matrix. Councilor Littlefield presented a draft matrix developed by him, Charles Andreson and Dennis Fortin as a means to compare the relative merits of the various program alternatives in regards to a range of categories reflecting cost, convenience, public acceptance and achievement of stated goals. Each alternative was to be assigned values, one or more + for a positive rating, - for a negative, and 0 for neutral. The Task Force then spent the remainder of the meeting discussing and finalizing the ratings for approximately half of the categories. At the next meeting, August 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM, the group will pick up where it left off.

There was discussion of a workshop with the Town Council, tentatively scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup>, and for a public meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup>. The current plan is to have a recommendation ready for the Council by early October.

### **Minutes, August 28, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock and Dennis Fortin. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green, local reporters Tammy Wells of the Journal Tribune, Ellen Todd of the Sanford News, and Renee Worthing of the Register.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the August 21, 2008 meeting, with one abstention.

Acknowledging the attendance of the representatives of the press, Chair Littlefield asked the members to summarize the process the Task Force had been engaged in thus far, and to share some of the information we had received. The members did so for the next forty minutes, answered questions from the reporters, and indicated which courses of action they were most likely to seek to recommend to the Town Council.

The next item on the agenda was the completion of the decision matrix started at the prior meeting. That process was completed at 7:55. A copy is attached to these minutes.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

Chair Littlefield reported that it was his belief that the Town Council would be unwilling to extend the time for presentation of a final report until early October, as had been discussed at the last meeting. A discussion ensued regarding ways to shorten the timeline, including eliminating one or more of the possible sessions, such as the workshop with the Town Council. Town Manager Green suggested formulating a final recommendation prior to any workshop or public meeting, so as to have a specific plan on which to focus any discussion.

Councilor Paul called the group's attention to recent news about a nascent plan to purchase and close MERC. A brief discussion of the implications of such a closure followed.

There was some discussion of financial implications of a pay per bag program. Councilor Littlefield again stated his concerns that bag revenue would not be applied to reduce property taxes, but used to fund other purposes, and that increasing per bag fees would be a constant temptation to future councils. Other members voiced the opinion that bag prices be set, and revenue allocated just to cover tipping fees and education and promotion costs, with collection costs remaining as budget items paid for by tax revenue, thereby limiting the bag sale income to an amount that would correspond to the tipping costs of the varying volume of waste. Mark Green noted that in his discussions with officials from other municipalities, they noted that the critical element of bag pricing was reasonableness while sufficiently high to create an incentive for recycling and waste reduction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM. The next meeting will be September 4, at 6 PM.

### **Minutes, September 4, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante and Dennis Fortin, . Also present was Town Manager Mark Green.

The meeting was convened at 6:15 PM. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the August 28, 2008 meeting, with one member abstaining.

There was a general discussion of the issue of Councilor Littlefield's suggestion to the Town Council of including an advisory referendum question regarding the initiation of a pay per bag program on the November ballot. Other members had varying opinions regarding the advisability of a referendum or Town Meeting vote prior to initiating such a program, but all agreed that such a referendum at this time would be premature, not allowing sufficient time to lay the groundwork for approval, and therefore likely resulting in a guaranteed negative vote.

The next item taken up was discussion of the draft narrative for matrix. A number of changes were approved. A copy of the amended draft is attached.

The next topic was a discussion of possible bag pricing. A number of rationales for pricing the bags were discussed, including: pricing for maximum recycling incentive, pricing to cover tipping fees, pricing to cover tipping fees and some recycling program costs, and pricing at a minimal level sufficient to serve as a recycling incentive. The eventual consensus was to choose the

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

minimum effective price, a likely range of seventy-five cents to one dollar and twenty-five cents, with a maximum price of \$1.50 with an annual adjustment for increased tipping fees. Distribution of free bags was discussed in some detail, but the complexity and labor cost of such distribution appears to make that impractical, and the minimized projected bag cost makes general free distribution unnecessary. Distribution of free bags to the needy could be handled as required through the general assistance office.

David Nickerson next presented the index to the general narrative which he has been working on, briefly describing the likely content of each section. He indicated that as he continues to work on the narrative, he will distribute drafts to the Task Force members. He indicated that a final draft would be ready for the October 9<sup>th</sup> session, which would likely be the public meeting/hearing.

There was a general discussion of the schedule going forward to the final recommendation to the Town Council. The next meeting will be September 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

### **Minutes, September 18, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, Kevin Chabot, David Nickerson, Dave Gardner, Charlie Plante, Stephanie Brock, and Dennis Fortin. Also present were Town Manager Mark Green, Public Works Director, Charles Andreson, Assistant Public Works Director Eugene Alley and Sanford News reporter Ellen Todd.

The meeting convened at 6:07. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the September 4, 2008 meeting.

The next order of business was the narrative of the Task Force process being written by David Nickerson. Mr. Nickerson presented the outline and index of his work, and indicated that he would have much of the body of the narrative prepared for review at the next meeting.

A general discussion followed. Charlie Plante pointed out that any recommendation from the Task Force should stress the need to put out request(s) for proposals early in the process to assess likely costs of new collection contracts. Public Works Director Andreson indicated that in publishing any RFP's, the Town would need to specify approximate tonnages of trash and recyclables to receive accurate bid proposals. Dennis Fortin pointed out that this was an additional reason to begin a recycling education and promotion program as soon as possible, so as to increase recycling tonnage closer to the eventual level anticipated prior to seeking bids, since giving bidders a range of our current 600 tons to a possible 3,000 tons annually of recyclables would require them to bid based on greater equipment and manpower needs due to the possible variation in the waste and recycling stream than if those streams were brought closer to their eventual levels by education and promotion. Mr. Nickerson indicated that any RFP's should be broad enough to allow bidders to specify manual or automated collection, and

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

that bidders should be encouraged to bid on either or both collection programs, with cost the likely final determinant of both contractor and method. Mr. Green pointed out that if the recommendation were for a pay per bag system, an ordinance would have to be enacted to mandate the use of those bags, and to set fees. There was again a discussion of a mandatory recycling ordinance. Mr. Green felt that it was a necessary and desirable tool, which would only be enforced selectively. Mr. Fortin voiced the opinion that such selective enforcement was open to abuse, and that with a pay per bag system, bag cost would serve as the recycling incentive, and the only recycling ordinance necessary would be one prohibiting the deliberate disposal of trash in recycling containers. Mr. Alley told the group that any changes proposed had to consider the transfer station as part of the overall program. He said that policies would have to be established for disposal of trash and other materials at the transfer station, along with a fee schedule for trash, which is currently accepted from residents at no charge.

Mr. Andreson and Mr. Alley then reviewed the current policies and procedures for the various waste streams at the transfer station. They indicated that aside from the limited quantities of materials being accepted at no charge under the permit system, leaves, lawn clippings, metal, and certain special waste, such as fluorescent bulbs, are accepted from residents at no charge. Mr. Alley also said that waste motor oil is accepted for disposal at the Public Works Garage, where the uncontaminated oil is used as heating fuel, for a charge of \$.50 per gallon. Oil contaminated with anti freeze or other fluids is accepted for \$1 per gallon, and processed through a waste oil contractor.

Mr. Andreson suggested consideration of a household hazardous waste collection program. He pointed out that numerous communities currently conduct such collection through contractors on scheduled drop off collection days, and that such a program is desirable to keep hazardous materials such as pesticides, herbicides and household chemicals out of the trash stream, where they risk causing environmental contamination through improper handling and incineration. He indicated that the initial costs of such a collection were high, \$15,000 to \$30,000, but that as regular collection reduced the amount of accumulated hazardous waste, costs would likely decline. The consensus of the group was that such a program had merit, and should be considered.

A brief discussion of meeting schedule followed. Chairman Littlefield informed the group that because of the amount of time and resources required of the Town Council regarding the proposed Methadone Clinic Ordinance, a workshop with the Council would not likely be possible, and that a general public meeting would therefore be the next step in formulating the recommendation to the Council. The next meeting of the Task Force was scheduled for Thursday, October 2, at 6 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

### **Minutes, October 2, 2008 Meeting Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Annex Conference Room 6 PM**

Members in attendance: Brad Littlefield, Gordon Paul, David Nickerson, Stephanie Brock, Charlie Plante and Dennis Fortin. Also present were Public Works Director Charles Andreson, and Sanford-Springvale Register reporter Renee Worthing.

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes of The September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. A vote on approval was tabled to the next regular meeting.

Next, the Chairman reported that a public hearing on the draft task force recommendations had been scheduled for October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. The consensus of the group was to make every effort to televise the meeting, and to have the secretary send letters to local newspapers notifying the public, and urging attendance. David Nickerson indicated that he would prepare a final draft of the recommendations for posting at the beginning of the week.

A discussion of the four draft recommendations ensued. It was suggested that item 3, regarding establishing a recycling tonnage target that would avert implementation of a new collection system be reviewed and moved further down the list of recommendations.

There was substantial discussion of the eventual issuance of RFP's for new collection contracts. It was agreed that any RFP's be broad enough to permit bidders to submit a proposal for whatever system they found preferable, so that a final decision could be made, largely on the basis of cost, without foreclosing any options, such as automated, semi-automated or pay to throw. Mr. Andreson indicated that the latest practical date for issuance of an RFP for collection would be February, and that a contractor needing to purchase new equipment, particularly automated collection trucks, would need a longer time frame to secure equipment. He broached the possibility of seeking a one-year contract extension with BBI, as had been done in the past, if the additional time would be likely to permit resolution of issues, and permit a more generous time frame for the RFP for a long-term collection agreement.

The Chairman proposed that at the public hearing, he would make the opening remarks and acknowledgements, that Dennis Fortin would address the history and current status of the waste/recycling program, and that David Nickerson would present the draft recommendations and background information. It was agreed that members would answer and respond to citizen questions and suggestions as appropriate, without making the process appear adversarial.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

### **Minutes, October 9, 2008 Public Hearing Sanford Springvale Solid Waste Task Force Council Chambers 7 PM**

1) There were approximately ten residents and three members of the press in attendance. The hearing was also televised.

2) Speaking were:

a) Denise Cunningham - She is a recycler and fills 3 red bins per week. Denise believes that we need better education of the public on the issue.

In the event that a new system was implemented, she asked if residents could bring their trash to the transfer station and would there be a charge for doing so.

She also asked if there would be an increase in roadside trash with a new system and asked how multi-unit properties would be affected.

She also inquired as to whether there might be a market for things some people throw away. In other words should Sanford encourage some type of "trash to treasure" program?

Denise was a proponent of PAYT if the Town needs to go to a new program and thought that spending \$800,000 to buy the bins for an automated system was a waste of money.

b) Carol Cabana - Ms. Cabana emphasized the need for public awareness of the issue and cited the need for publicity and advertising of what the issues are. Specifically she suggested use of public access channel 12; seniors organizations; Kiwanis, Rotary and other service organizations as ways to get the word out.

Ms. Cabana also advised that there are good resources at the library to learn about recycling and discussed her concern that perhaps the Town's leaf collection program should be more consistent in its coverage as some neighborhoods are taken care of by the Town and others aren't. So she would like to see a standardized policy.

c) Richard Lamb - Mr. Lamb stated that the Town could do a much better job of promoting recycling in the community. He also was concerned that under a new trash collection program some people might store trash in their houses and that this could create a fire hazard. In this regard, he recommended we consult with the Fire Department about whether this might be a problem.

d) Felix Goodrich - Mr. Goodrich stated that he opposed PAYT but that he was for better recycling. Mr. Goodrich was concerned about the impact on the elderly of a new program.

e) Patrick Ainsworth - Mr. Ainsworth was against PAYT. He was concerned about the cost and about property taxes going up. Mr. Ainsworth also mentioned that we already see illegal dumping on the sides of the road in Sanford and he is concerned that PAYT would result in more dumping.

## **A2. Meeting Minutes (Cont'd)**

f) Kendra Williams - Ms. Williams said she was really impressed by the work that the task force had done and that our presentation had answered most of her questions. She also mentioned that she already sees trash dumped illegally now and asked what enforcement will be under a new system.

She stated that she believed PAYT would work in increasing recycling and lowering costs but wondered whether taxpayers would see the benefit.

She mentioned the importance of communication and discussed the idea of a "trash to treasure" type program. She also mentioned that PAYT bags could be sold at pharmacies to make it easier for seniors to have access to them.

At this point in the program Mr. Nickerson presented information from the Maine State Planning Office year 2000 report which discussed that most communities with PAYT had not experienced an increase in illegal dumping and that for those which did see an increase, the effect was transitory.

g) Jerry Brown - Mr. Brown mentioned that he drives through Scarborough frequently and that the automated system there appears to work pretty well. He pointed out that older people typically have someone to help place trash at the curb and so was not concerned about the larger containers necessary for an automated system. Mr. Brown also stressed the need to educate and promote recycling and suggested that weekly recycling should be considered.

## **END OF RECORDED MINUTES**

The Task Force met in the remaining weeks of October and November primarily to conclude work on this report for final presentation to the Council in a workshop on December 23, 2008.