



**Town of Plaistow, NH**  
**Trash & Recycling Advisory Committee (TRAC)**  
**145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865**

**TRAC MINUTES**  
**July 8, 2021**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

**ROLL CALL:** Isabel Gautreau, Chair, *excused*  
Robert Kinkaid, Vice Chair  
Richard Anthony  
Deborah Esparza-St. Louis  
Kelley Fox  
Maryann Little  
Mary Anne LoCascio

Also present: Jay DeRoche, *Selectmen*

**Agenda Item 2: Review/Approval June 10, 2021, Minutes**

★ *M. LoCascio moved, second by D. Esparza-St.Louis, to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2021, meeting as written. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 6-0-0 U/A*

**Agenda Item 3: Discussion with JRM Hauling**

Rich Pearl, JRM Hauling was present for the discussion.

R. Kinkaid noted that because there was an open Request for Proposals (RFP) for the trash/recycling collection contract, the discussion would be limited to questions about the current recycling matters, particularly about the contamination rate.

R. Pearl noted that he mostly handled the commercial side of the business but would be able to answer many of the TRAC's questions regarding recycling. He explained the process that was used for trash collection and recycling processing. He noted that recycling was sorted and processed to mill vendors and that trash was sent to incinerating facilities.

The Committee members asked many questions about the recycling process. Responses were:

- The #1 item that causes recycling loads to be considered contaminated is plastic bags
- All jars need to be free of food products and rinsed
- Labels do not need to be removed for a jar to be recycled
- Plastic/Nylon caps do not need to be removed and can be recycled
- Wet cardboard is acceptable, waxed cardboard (i.e., coffee cups with wax coating) is not
- Plastics #1 - #6, with the exception of black and Styrofoam are all permitted for recycling
- Aluminum caps on jars are permitted for recycling

There was discussion about how contaminated content is put to the side at the recycling processing center and then sort between trash and recycling. It was noted that technically when something considered to be contamination is put in the truck, the entire load is considered to be contaminated, but it still goes to the recycling center for processing anyway.

There was discussion about the consistent 35% contamination rate for Plaistow last year. Mr. Pearly suggested that the consistent number might be related to COVID-19.

There was discussion regarding how the loads are weighed and how contamination is calculated in that weighing process and how it impacts the tonnage charged to the Town.

It was asked if anything could be done at the point of pick-up to reduce contamination. It was noted that contaminated containers could be stickered and not picked up, if the Town wanted it to be that way. It was discussed that if contaminated containers were not picked up, then ideally the Town would have a zero contamination rate as only qualifying recycling materials would be picked up.

It was questioned if the stickers would have details on why the load was left behind as contaminated. It was noted that it would most likely be a generic this load is contaminated sticker and wouldn't detail why, except perhaps to reference the Town's website for a list of allowable recyclables.

There was discussion about some way to check around Town to see where there was contamination prior to it being picked up. One suggestion that was discussed was a volunteer team that would go around and check the recycling that was being put curbside to make sure it was all appropriate to be recycled.

There was discussion about the incineration of trash to convert it to energy. It was noted that it was better than a landfill, but there was concern about the emissions being produced by incineration. It was also noted that the majority of the incineration was done by Wheelabrator and Convanta.

R. Pearl noted that all the recycling mills that they deal with are located in the United States. He also noted that plastic bags in quantity can be bailed separately and recycled in bulk, which is how it is often handled commercially. However, in regular household recycling loads with loose plastic bags are considered contamination because they cannot go through the machinery.

There was discussion about the recycling flyer and the need to increase awareness and education regarding contamination.

It was asked what portion of the recycling goes to the secondary market. Mr. Pearl noted that all recycling goes to mill to be recycled and all trash is incinerated, nothing goes to a landfill.

There was discussion about what JRM could possibly offer to assist the Town in reducing the contamination rate and increase recycling. R. Pearl reminded that he didn't really deal with the residential recycling collection and suggested that the office be contacted for additional assistance.

It was asked how Plaistow compared to other towns in the area. It was offered that the same issues are consistent across the board with apartment buildings being low in recycling and high in contamination rates.

There was additional discussion regarding ways to increase recycling rates and decrease contamination. It was noted that there are many areas where education would be helpful. It was suggested that the Board of Selectman (BOS) re-institute the stickering of contaminated recycling and authorize it being left behind. J. DeRoche will bring that to the BOS. (Action Item)

#### **Agenda Item 4: Old Business**

##### **a. Rescheduling Guest Speaker – Waste Zero**

There was discussion about whether to schedule the presentation from Waste Zero with the BOS as originally intended, or to have them present to TRAC first. It was decided to have them come to TRAC first, but to wait until after Old Home Day. There was discussion about having them come to a regular meeting, but it was noted that Thursday nights weren't convenient for the

representative from Waste Zero. There was discussion about additional meeting dates. M. LoCascio will contact them about coming to a meeting to be scheduled for Tuesday, August 31, 2021.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Action Items – Updates and Review List of Added Items (if any)**

##### **a. Additional Educational Materials (for posting)**

I. Gautreau had provided information about how to get all the product out of plastic bottles to be added to tips on the TRAC webpage.

##### **b. Old Home Day Table**

There was discussion about what would be needed for the TRAC Old Home Day table. A number of game possibilities were discussed as well as what information could be made available. A list from I. Gautreau was discussed. Members were asked to bring unique recyclables to the next meeting, items that either people might think are recyclable, but are not, or items that people think are not recyclable, but are. (Action Item) These would either before display or for a game.

It was noted that there was no budget for TRAC to purchase materials for the table. K. Fox offered to make name tags for members from recycled materials. (Action Item) D. Voss will check with the Town Manager regarding staff time and paper to print information materials. (Action Item) Posters were discussed for the table. It was noted that the new recycling flyer could be printed in poster size at Town Hall.

M. Little and R. Anthony offered to provide tables. M. LoCascio offered an E-Z Up canopy.

J. DeRoche and K. Fox offered to check into resources for free or inexpensive magnets or stickers, possibly through a sponsor.

M. Little offered to create signs for the table focusing on contaminants and resources.

#### **Agenda Item 6: New Business**

J. DeRoche offered that he was looking into resources for curbside composting pick-up, which would reduce the weight and volume of trash being collected.

There was additional discussion regarding the consistent 35% contamination rate provided by JRM for the entire 2020 year. It was suggested to recommend that the weight slips be reviewed. There was additional discussion regarding the importance of educating the residents on recycling and contamination to help reduce the rate.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Recycling and Plastics Beyond Plaistow**

There was discussion that one of the take-aways from the discussion with R. Pearl was the status of the recycling industry, which emphasizes the need for education, not only of the residents, but town officials and the legislature, using the local representatives as resources, to get a more state-wide supported approach to recycling.

It was also suggested that where/how trash is disposed of should be a discussion item for the next trash collection contract.

There was discussion about putting a non-binding referendum question regarding trash and recycling collection on the Town Ballot. J. DeRoche offered to contact the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) regarding the process to do so. (Action Item)

D. Esparza-St. Louis offered that she had found that the current single-use batteries contain less mercury than before and can be tossed. She offered to continue to research recycling and proper disposal methods.

There was no additional business before the committee and the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dee Voss  
Administrative Assistant