DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2018, 8am – 9:30am

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Council Chambers

Minutes taken by Rob Gogan

**Members Present**: Ilana Bebchick, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Martha Henry, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Laura Nichols, Michael Pappas, Anne Sherman, Quinten Steenhuis, Matthew St. Onge, Mary Verhage

**Members Absent**: Meera Singh, Kristen Watkins

**Staff Present**: Meryl Brott, Camilla Elvis, John Fitzgerald, Paulie Kelsey, John Nardone, Owen O’Riordan, Mike Orr

**Members of the Public Present**: Judy Nathans, Helen Snively, Ruth Davis

**Housekeeping**

June minutes were approved. Members signed up for taking Meeting Minutes for the rest of the year. Michael Pappas will be taking October Minutes.

**City Updates**

Through August, the City saw a 9% reduction in trash, thanks to the curbside organics program.

Bob Cappadona from Casella Recycling was unable to attend the meeting as scheduled. Mike summarized the changes in recycling specifications and costs to the City for contaminated loads. Mike said the new emphasis, as shown on the curbside “OOPS” signs to be posted on contaminated bins, is on the four products that Casella does want for recycling: cans & foil; glass bottles and jars; plastic containers; and paper & cardboard.

Contaminants: plastic bags and film; food and liquid residue; clothing and linens; tanglers (cords, hoses, hangers or e-waste); hazardous items, wood and scrap metal. Owen and John emphasized the financial penalties Casella is assessing Cambridge now, due to a contamination rate of 9%. The City’s contract says that contaminants are to be under 7%.

Commissioner Owen O’Riordan thanked us for the invitation to appear, and expressed gratification for the reduction in trash. We expect to meet our goal of 30% reduction by 2020. Long-term plan is to buy trash containers in FY21. This may be ambitious, because of expenses related to curbside compost expansion, commercial recycling starting later this fall 2018, mattress recycling in spring 2019, hiring a safety officer, engaging ergonomics consultants, and other expenses related to sizing and designing the most appropriate trash toters, which will be emptied mechanically rather than manually. We also hope the new trash toters will reduce rodent activity. We want there to be an incentive to consumers to cut trash. We will need to offer differently sized households differently sized bins. HDR will do a survey of trash set-outs to determine best toter sizes.

If Boston were to institute curbside composting, it could create the possibility of bigger and closer facilities for food scraps. Mike is confident that the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District is doing a great job. CORe facility sends 27 tons per tanker truck, which is a very efficient system. PBS News hour will soon air a story on Cambridge waste systems.

In November, commercial curbside trash and recycling service will begin for 131 businesses. Restaurants, retail, non-franchise, minority and women owned businesses are especially encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. The City will provide carts and twice weekly pickup, probably by Save That Stuff.

Camilla reported that the Fixit Clinic in August went well! Lively and positive response from the community, with cross-pollination of knowledge and skills. Library publicity was extremely helpful--lots of kids, 40 bikes repaired, 63% of items brought in were fixed. We hope to run another Fixit Clinic in about 6 months. Rob said the next Harvard Fixit Clinic will take place on Tuesday 10-2-18 from 11-2, at the Cabot Science Library.

Mike requested that RAC members and other Zero Waste advocates attend the City Council Zero Waste Committee hearing on October 9 from 1:00 - 3:00 in the City Council chambers. Judy mentioned that it is helpful to send comments in advance.

Laura announced that the next Shred Day is 9-29-18 at City Hall.

Camilla still needs volunteers for PARKing day, Friday 9-21-18 in front of Boomerangs 10 am - 4 pm and Octoberfest 10-8-18, in Harvard Square.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 AM.