



# **RECYCLING** Minutes

May 13, 2020

**Submitted by Claire Anderson**

**Attendance:** Claire Anderson, Nick Joanow, Louise Palagano, Mark Stulbaum, Michael Heller, Edgar Garcia, Oliver Young, Simon Galperin(guest)

Call to Order: 7:05 pm

Approval of minutes-March 11, 2020-The minutes were approved; Michael Heller moved to approve and Edgar Garcia seconded. There were a couple of corrections which Claire will make and resend the minutes.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Recycling Committee meeting scheduled for April 7, 2020 was cancelled. Today's meeting was held via conference call.

**CANCELLATIONS:** The following events were cancelled due to COVID-19:

- 1) Paper Shredding Day - Sat. - May 9.
- 2) Big Truck Day/Electronics Recycling - Sat. - May 30
- 3) Girl Scout Badge - Sat. - March 14 - DPW
- 4) NJDEP distribution of Salem Oak Seedlings
- 5) Earth Day Celebration - Wed. - Apr. 22 - Oakview School

**A. Brookdale Gardens** - No report.

**B. Recycling at the Schools** – Michael said that since the schools are closed, four of the elementary schools are distributing food for families to pick up. He doesn't know what they are doing about recycling, but he assumes it is similar to what was occurring with the breakfast program. He will try to find out how the food is being packaged and he will check to see if the Board is aware of any current issues regarding recycling at the schools.

**C. Other** – Simon is working with the Bloomfield Information Project. They are doing a needs assessment and hope to come up with solutions for those needs such as a daily newsletter including Covid-19 issues, a business directory and Neighbor-to-Neighbor pop-ups in the 3rd ward. The DPW is planning to re-open the yard on Saturday mornings for recycling on May 16th. Anthony doesn't want to start the water filter collection in the Terracycle containers until the 1st Saturday in June. He is afraid they will be overwhelmed on the 16th due to pent-up demand. Louise will do some press releases regarding Terracycle collection. Mark wanted to know if a Terracycle box will be available when the North End electronics recycling is re-scheduled. Louise thought it was a possibility, but it should be discussed.

There is no change regarding the state-wide plastic bag ban. Mark said he thought that plastic bags had become a necessity now due to COVID-19. At Brookdale Shoprite the baggers will not use reusable bags; he thinks that for the protection of the employees it is better for them not to touch other people's bags. Ed reported that he is shopping at Parsippany Shoprite where you can bring your own bags, although you have to bag the groceries yourself. Mark also thought that employees who are delivering food need to use plastic, disposable bags. The State of NJ needs to issue more clarity on insuring the safety of employees and what kinds of bags they should be using.

Louise said that she spoke to Stephanie Hickes at Trex; they do not have a box program like Terracycle for collecting the flexible plastic they recycle into outdoor furniture. There was a suggestion made that we could collect the flexible plastic alongside the Terracycle boxes for the water filters. Maybe we could use our own boxes, then give the collected material to Trex; George will investigate further to see if it is possible. The Township is saving on tipping fees by collecting electronics and keeping them out of our waste stream. The employee cost is approximately \$16,000 per year, but it is difficult to estimate how much is actually saved.

Louise said she and Ed are still working on a simple design for door-hangers that can be distributed town-wide; it was supposed to be a Spring release. Ed will try to do a sample lay-out; everyone should look at the current brochure and suggest changes or ideas to him or bring them to the next meeting. Information on battery recycling was sent to all the committee members. Mark said we could get a Terracycle box for batteries or past minutes may have a list of places to recycle batteries that he had spoken about at a previous meeting.

Louise and Nick attended a virtual meeting about food scrap recycling; effective October 2021 food waste must be diverted out of the waste stream by entities that produce at least 52 tons. A2371/S865 originated in the Senate and was signed by the Governor. This law should apply to the schools; all municipalities have to set up procedures for this diversion. This could be a good opportunity for the Recycling Committee and the Environmental Commission to get involved. Approximately one-third of all waste is food waste; we should discuss this issue further at the

next meeting. George suggested smaller customers could use Java's compost, they pick up a bucket from your home every 1-2 weeks and compost the waste; he wants to take it to his company to get them to participate. He suggested that we should invite the owner to speak to the Committee. Mark says he has heard positive responses from people he knows, he thinks the cost is about \$34 for pickup every 2 weeks. Nick says that unless the wastes are taken somewhere local, it would be inefficient. We should be using the biodigester at Kean or maybe do it in Bloomfield. He thinks composting food waste is the future of recycling. A suggestion was made that we should put information about Java's composting on our door hanger; Louise will check with the town attorney to see if it would be a conflict of interest. She suggested that Java's compost could purchase an ad in the Buzz. Mark thought they might sponsor the door hangers if their name was on it. Louise gave us 2 articles from Costco on what they are doing to increase recycling and reduce waste. One article was about companies that make lawn and garden equipment out of recycled materials and the other was about reducing packaging and improving packaging to reduce waste and use fewer non-compostable materials

Meeting adjourned: 8:10 pm.

**The next meeting of the Bloomfield Recycling Committee will be held on Wed., June 10, 2020 at 7pm on the 2nd floor of the Police Law Enforcement Building.**