

## **Borough of Doylestown**

### **Environmental Advisory Council**

#### **Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, January 19, 2021**

**Attendance:** George Mullikin, Victoria Holderer, Kristin Winters, Karen Graziano, Grant Alger, Wendy Margolis, Mayor Strouse, Karyn Hyland

**1) Call to order:** The group was introduced to the new members, Grant A. and Karen G. George M. called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

**2) Reorganization:** George M. nominated Victoria H. for chair of the committee, Kristin W. seconded. George M. nominated Kristin W. to be secretary, Karen G. seconded. Kristin W. nominated George M. for vice chair, Victoria H. seconded. All nominees were approved by the committee. Grant A. said he will serve as a backup to record minutes when needed.

**3) Approval of minutes:** Kristin W. noted that the date of the next meeting had been corrected on the minutes from 2020 to 2021. George M. moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting, Grant A. seconded, and the minutes were approved as written with the correction.

#### **4) Charging stations update**

- Karyn H. reported that the Public Works director is recommending the Bosch model, even though there have been some issues, since it is simpler and less expensive. At the Environment and Recreation meeting in February she'll present the information regarding the grant application for approval to submit to Council. We will know by our next meeting if Council approves it.
- Karyn H. summarized the charging station project for the new members.
- Victoria H. asked if there was any movement on fixes for the old charging stations. There have been no updates.
- Grant A. asked if the stations will provide any usage data. Karyn H. said the stations will be outside Borough Hall and will be observed by staff and the electric bill will be monitored, but the stations will not be attached to a network and don't have the capability to provide advanced tracking that a networked station would have. There are no plans for the Borough to charge for the stations' usage.
- George M. said that Bosch has a website where you can go to see a history of usage and some basic info, including for the ones that we already have in use.
- Wendy M. asked Karyn H. for an update from Public Works listing the reasons they recommend the Bosch model to bring to the Environment and Recreation meeting.
- The networked units are very expensive.
- Victoria H. asked George M. to send the Bosch usage website to the group via email, and he said he will.

#### **5) Trash and recycling**

- Victoria H. summarized that the EAC has spoken to different providers recently to find out how they are handling trash/recycling.

- Karyn H. said she talked to DelGuericco's about their not separating trash and recycling. They are short-staffed. DelGuericco's was very open and said they are trying to fix the problems, and they are doing some hand sorting right now.
- Karyn H. noted that we are very limited on enforcement.
- Wendy M. said that Whitetail had a different company's truck going around recently; the reasons were unclear.
- Victoria H. asked how many providers we have information about; Wendy M. and Karyn H. confirmed there are 7 providers, with 5 of them being the primary providers.
- We will continue to keep tabs on this issue.
- Mayor Strouse asked about enforcement; we don't have very effective means, but do any other municipalities have better enforcement that we could study for some information, perhaps through zoning or some other mechanism? Karyn H. will reach out to the consortium to get some feedback. The consortium is a group of municipalities that join together to address common needs.
- Grant A. asked if the Borough provides info about local providers, their recycling practices, etc. George M. reviewed the work the EAC had done before and said we could update the list for 2021. Karyn H. noted that there are two lists on the website: an overall list and one with environmental information. Victoria H. said it sounded like a good idea to update the environmental list, and the group agreed.
- Karen G. asked if we have reached out the community regarding their interest in/the importance of having trash haulers that are diligent about separating trash from recycling. Wendy M. said that there has been a high amount of interest, but it is difficult for companies to recycle plastic right now so it is unclear exactly what is happening in the industry.
- There are many differences between all of the companies. Some in the group have heard that Waste Management may be the only one that is truly recycling right now. WM also has a trash-to-energy program. Republic is also committed to recycling in the business sector; it is not clear if this applies to residential collections.
- Price is a factor with resident choices.
- Victoria H. asked Mayor Strouse about the PennEnvironment meeting mentioned at the last EAC meeting. Mayor Strouse said the meeting did not take place.
- George M. suggested dividing the list of providers to solicit updated answers to the questions we asked previously. Karyn H. will pull up the old spreadsheet and send it to the group. George M. said it's good to ask if they use waste to energy, if they avoid landfills, and about any other environmental info, including whether or not they are a local company. Grant A. asked what would be considered the gold standard; George M. said we'd like to see a "yes" answer for every environmentally responsible practice, although waste to energy has pros and cons.
- George M. will contact Whitetail and Republic. Grant A. will contact Advanced Disposal and DelGeurico's. Victoria H. will contact Waste Management, Leck, and Enviro Green. Wendy M. noted that Enviro Green is a sub-company of one of the larger companies.
- Karen G. asked if the previous results were put on the website. George M. found what had been posted on the website at <https://storage.googleapis.com/dtown/2018-Trash-Haulers.pdf?mtime=20200314130326&focal=none>. This list of companies posted doesn't necessarily match the hauler list.
- Grant A. suggested noting on the list if a hauler is nonresponsive. The group agreed with this suggestion.

- Karen G. noted that there is an important alignment between this project and efforts in the Borough to reduce plastic use, work with restaurants and other businesses, etc., although this has been changed with COVID. Karyn H. noted that COVID has also impacted haulers, with increased residential waste and companies needing to cut back on staffing. Grant A. asked if this is not an ideal time to do the survey because of COVID? The group discussed that since it will take some time to complete the survey, it is ok to begin working on it.
- Victoria H. asked about Mascaro and some other haulers on the list that had not been discussed. George M. said that the EAC only surveyed residential haulers. Karyn H. summarized some of the different needs that commercial haulers would be meeting. If a company that is called does both residential and commercial hauling, the caller can ask about both.
- Grant A. asked how callers should pose the questions. Karyn H. said to open by saying the call is for the Borough EAC.
- Karyn H. sent the spreadsheet to the group. She noted that we can update the questions as we go along - for instance, if there is a question that better fits the conversation that takes place.
- Karen G. asked if there has ever been a discussion regarding a place for residents to bring their recycling like a community dropoff. The group noted that this discussion has not taken place. Mayor Strouse said it is a good cause, but it would require a major effort that currently the Borough cannot meet. He noted that Lambertville has a dropoff and has kitchen waste recycling, but their program has been supported by a grant from the State of NJ. Karen G. wondered if in the future perhaps cardboard recycling would be a good starting place. Wendy M. noted that gardeners would reuse cardboard, and Kristin W. agreed that cardboard reuse could be part of a future discussion about this topic.

#### **6) Old business/new business**

- Victoria H. asked if in addition to plastic bag recycling the EAC would consider collecting batteries for recycling. Wendy M. noted that rechargeable batteries can be brought for recycling to Home Depot and some other locations, while alkaline batteries can go in the trash.
- Mayor Strouse said some research could be done with the County; he believes they do their hazardous waste recycling with state funding. Karyn H. noted that County recycling events are posted on the Borough website for many items.
- Cardboard recycling creates an issue with storage. The main issue with some items is whether there is a place to take what you collect.
- Victoria H. will spend more time researching this topic.

**7) Adjournment:** Victoria H. moved to adjourn the meeting, George M. seconded, and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:27 pm.

**8) Next meeting:** The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7:30 pm.