



**ADOPTED WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**April 4, 2024**

**10:00 AM–12:00 PM**

**Community Center & Zoom**

**Commissioners Present:**

G. Murphy, *Treasurer*  
S. Malinowski, *Secretary*  
K. Stevens, *Employee Liaison* (Zoom)  
M. Doyen, *Community Liaison*

**Staff Present:**

B. Stern, *Business & Administration Manager* (left at 11:44 AM)  
E. Maggs, *Interim Manager* (left at 11:44 AM)

**Commissioners Absent:**

D. Burnham, *Chair*

The meeting began at 10:01 AM.

**1. Additions to Agenda**

B. Stern requested a review of Payables—agenda item 7.

**2. Minutes**

**a. March 21, 2024**

Discussion ensued to clarify parts of the March 21, 2024 draft minutes about casual laborers, an architect estimate, and the horizontal grinder. Amendments are kept on file and available to the public upon request.

**A motion by M. Doyen to adopt the March 21, 2024 minutes as amended was duly seconded by G. Murphy. On a vote of 4–0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote.

**3. Reports:**

**a. Station Report**

The Commission reviewed E. Maggs' station report. Discussion ensued about the horizontal grinder, which was off-site at Running Brook Farms in Killingworth, CT, to receive a repair estimate. D. Burnham had been in touch with Running Brook Farms, and there was no update at this time. Getting an update was added to D. Burnham's tasks.

April 1 was the last day of wood processing. The Commission had previously asked E. Maggs to research the options for repairing or replacing the wood processor. Running Brook Farms has a processor run by two people that can process 20 cords per day. The Commission agreed that it was worth considering selling the FIWMD's wood processor and outsourcing the work in the future. The Commission briefly discussed the various merits of this idea, including the potential benefits of selling the FIWMD's machine. E. Maggs will continue working with D. Burnham to explore this idea.

Discussion turned to the breathable compost cover recommended by the compost consultant, Jayne Merner. E. Maggs was awaiting (anticipated on April 4) a complete quote from the company in Canada, including the freight cost (sometimes costs more than the product). E. Maggs consulted with J. Merner (via EE #15) about the size of the cover, and J. Merner confirmed that it only needs to cover the top of the pile to keep crows away, so 15" x 90" would suffice. J. Merner does not cover the sides on her piles, but the Commission briefly discussed whether this would sufficiently keep the crows away. It was clarified that 15' should be wide enough because the crows only go after the newest compost material. J. Merner would be visiting the Island on Tuesday, April 16 (time TBD) and Commissioners were encouraged to attend. The Commission thought her visit would be particularly helpful to get needed feedback on commercial drop-offs of food scraps and to confirm the size of the compost cover. The Commission agreed that E. Maggs should order the compost cover as soon as possible after consulting with J. Merner on April 16, not to exceed \$1,200, including freight. E. Maggs added that the area marker flags had arrived for the compost piles.

Next, the Commission discussed the new firewood shed and the best method to create uniform bundles of wood (e.g., buckets, baskets, or tied with twine). The Commission agreed that it is beneficial to think about plans like this through to fruition, so these decisions can be anticipated in advance. The Commission had agreed to place the firewood shed near the compost that is ready for pick-up. The Commission decided there should be a box with a slot anchored to the shed for honor system payments. Lastly, the Commission decided that the wood should be left unbundled, with a large sign recommending a payment of \$1/log, in addition to asking users not to take too much. This plan will reduce employee time and labor spent bundling. The Commission will evaluate the success of this method at the end of the summer program. The Commission agreed that June 1 would be best to have the firewood available.

E. Maggs received a quote of \$1,500 from Roots Up Plant Health for removing 15 invasive Trees of Heaven in the future native plant buffer at the Compost Station. The Commission agreed that this was a reasonable cost and approved E. Maggs moving forward with the \$1,500 payment to Roots Up Plant Health (quote in Google Drive). The Commission also agreed that it would be important to confirm the proper disposal of the plant material once it has been cut down. Further discussion ensued about this quote not including extracting the stumps. Roots Up should be advised to not cut the trees to the ground so they can be extracted in the future to prevent the trees from growing back. There was also a suggestion to paint (*not* an herbicide) the tops of the stumps to prevent regrowth. G. Murphy agreed to contact the Conservancy to understand protocols and best practices for this effort.

There was a brief mention of credit for hauled products. The District only gets credit for recyclable cardboard from CWPM (hauler); the hauler sells the cardboard for recycling and the FIWMD gets a percentage of the sale. The

Commission confirmed that the current hauler gets to sell the scrap metal and the District is only charged for the transport, with no credit. The District has no share in the value of hauled scrap metal.

***i. Employee Schedule***

Tabled until Executive Session.

***ii. Office/Shop Walkthrough + Issue List Estimate***

K. Stevens confirmed details of the office/shop architect walkthrough and list of issues from Sam Fitzgerald (proposal in Google Drive). The Commission did not need further drawings of the building, as they exist already. K. Stevens and E. Maggs met with S. Fitzgerald at the building for brief introductions and to request an estimate. S. Fitzgerald provided a rate of \$195/hour for work not to exceed 4 hours. The Commission agreed that the estimate was fair and that K. Stevens should proceed with S. Fitzgerald to complete this work.

***iii. Local Solid Waste Management Plan Biennial Update***

S. Malinowski and G. Murphy had met a few times to discuss this update. They will schedule another meeting with K. Stevens to understand some of the information.

***iv. Coastal Path/Solar Field/Buffer/Bike Path***

On the Coastal path, the lawyer (Martin Finnegan) agreed to have the license signed by representatives of both the FIWMD and the HLF Museum before presenting the license to the Town. The survey was complete, so the metes and bounds could be listed in the license. D. Burnham will be contacted to sign on behalf of the FIWMD. Then, the license will be presented to the Town.

Regarding the solar field, M. Finnegan shared some bad news that battery storage might not be legal for a while in NY State, which he was concerned could delay the project, in addition to a possible moratorium on zoning changes until after the Town-wide zoning update is complete. Both K. Stevens and G. Murphy attended the zoning update meeting, at which K. Stevens spoke to one of the Town Planners to see if this solar field project could be exempt from a possible moratorium on zoning changes until after the town-wide zoning update is complete in 2025. The Planner agreed, and said it should not be a problem, citing a recent similar effort on Plum Island. Thus, it seemed clear that the Town's rezoning should not delay this solar field project. The Town Planner indicated that the battery storage issue should be cleared up within a year or two (i.e., just in time for the solar field to move from the development phase to construction). In any case, Pickett Power LLC is studying options for a solar field with and without battery back up. M. Finnegan agreed to follow-up with the Town Planners about these details, in addition to continued work with Steve Ham.

The buffer was discussed earlier in the meeting, under Station Report, regarding the Trees of Heaven. M. Doyen will follow-up with the Conservancy about developing a phased plan for the buffer. K. Stevens agreed to meet with M. Doyen to update her on previous buffer discussions and recommendations.

Following a meeting about the Rec Path, S. Malinowski said she felt assured that the FIWMD was covered for liability. However, the FIWMD does have a responsibility between the bike path entrance onto Wilderness Road and the main road. Since the bike path is using a part of the FIWMD's roadway, if there are potholes, etc., the FIWMD's insurance would be liable. So, there is an incentive for the FIWMD to maintain the road to be both good citizens and better insured. Brief discussion ensued about previous work and remaining work needed for visibility issues on the Wilderness Road section of the Rec Path. Further input was needed from D. Burnham.

**v. *Community Garden Suggestions for Compost Improvement (leaves + ash) + Areas for Collaboration***

K. Stevens was in communication with representatives of the Community Garden, who indicated that in the past, people were wary about using the FIWMD's compost because of the pesticides used in landscaping entering the compost. So, those working with organic vegetables in the Community Garden are less inclined to use the compost. Research showed that adding wood ash to the mulched material binds with these toxins, encapsulating them, so they do not leach into vegetables. Mixing in leaves is also a technique to add beneficial nutrients. So, the Community Garden recommended having a place where people can drop off wood ash and leave so the compost can be amended with it. K. Stevens agreed to invite someone from the Community Garden to J. Merner's visit on April 16.

Discussion continued about the Community Garden. K. Stevens had a conversation with them, and the representatives recommended a process called "hugelkultur beds." In this method, rotting wood is used to create raised garden beds, then covered with compost, before planting on top. This could be an ideal use for the rotting logs collected at the Compost Station. The Community Garden is willing to help the FIWMD to create a demonstration mound(s) (that the FIWMD maintains) at the Compost Station, with an educational sign and pick-your-own vegetables. Ideally, this would both promote the FIWMD's compost and encourage others to create their own raised mounds with the FIWMD's rotting logs. The Commission agreed that if the FIWMD has enough time available, this would be a good concept to establish. It would also be helpful to understand what time of year that this effort would be best.

**vi. *Signage at Both Stations***

K. Stevens contacted the school and they were happy to create the signs. E. Maggs and K. Stevens agreed to develop the signs for hours of operation with the school. Discussion turned to a post sign near the road. There was a suggestion that instead of an interactive open/closed sign along Whistler Avenue at the turn off to the Transfer Station by the theater, there could just be a smaller sign with the hours posted there near the road. If the public do not like where that sign is, it could be moved over to the Race Rock side of the road, or there could be a sandwich board. There should also be an updated larger sign mounted to the fence at the entrance to the Transfer Station.

The Commission agreed that there should be a larger sign with pricing on the attendant's shed that is visible as people drive up. The sign should specify that only credit/debit cards are accepted. Once the Commission agrees on pricing, G. Murphy said he would draft the sign details for Fast Signs to create. G. Murphy agreed to work with B. Stern and E. Maggs on pricing updates for the new sign in advance of the April 18 meeting.

**4. Policy + Insurance Waiver/Proof of Insurance for Community Use of Compost Station**

Moving forward, the FIWMD will receive a certificate of insurance annually. Altus Partners also offered to review all of the FIWMD's insurance policies (not health) for free and to tell the District whether it has the best rates. B. Stern agreed to assemble the policies and submit them to Altus. The Commission confirmed that the District has insurance policies with various companies for: Transfer Station, Compost Station, Landfill, Property and Vehicle, Equipment, and General Liability.

**5. Operations Supervisor Update**

Tabled until Executive Session.

**6. Approve 2023 Auditor's Letter of Engagement**

The letter of engagement for \$13,000 to start the 2023 Audit was available in the Google Drive. Later this year or next year, the District should put out a Request for Proposals for the next audit. G. Murphy had spoken with EFPR, which does the Ferry District's and School District's audits.

**A motion by G. Murphy to authorize \$13,000 to Cullen & Danowski, LLP to start the 2023 Audit was duly seconded by M. Doyen. On a vote of 4-0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote.

**7. Review Payables**

The Commission briefly reviewed the payables.

**A motion by G. Murphy to approve the payables in the amount of \$21,956.91 and transfer \$40,000 from the investment account to the operating account was duly seconded by M. Doyen. On a vote of 4-0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote.

**8. Edit Next Meeting Agenda (if time)**

Tabled.

**9. Executive Session**

**A motion by G. Murphy to enter Executive Session to discuss HR matters was duly seconded by M. Doyen. On a vote of 4-0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote. The Executive Session began at 11:18 AM. E. Maggs and B. Stern departed at 11:44 AM.

**A motion by G. Murphy to exit Executive Session was duly seconded by M. Doyen. On a vote of 4–0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote. The workshop reconvened at 12:24 PM.

**10. Adjourn**

The Commission scheduled a special meeting on Thursday, April 25 at the Community Center and Zoom from 10:00 AM–12:00 PM, specifically for an Executive Session.

**A motion by G. Murphy to adjourn the meeting was duly seconded by M. Doyen. On a vote of 4–0, the motion carried unanimously.** D. Burnham was not present for this vote.

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katie Kibler, Meeting Coordinator & Communications Expert  
April 9, 2024

All Commissioners were provided with the opportunity to suggest clarifying edits for accuracy.

Respectfully revised by Katie Kibler on April 16, 2024