

TOWN OF GORHAM
CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES
December 2, 2020

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board met on Wednesday December 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM at the Gorham Town Hall.

Present were; Conservation Board Chairman Brett Johnson and Councilmember Keith Eddinger.

Councilmembers Lynn Klotz and Margaret Brewin joined via video/phone conference. Also present were: Town Supervisor Fred Lightfoote, Town Board Liaison Brian S. Case and Town Clerk Darby Perrotte.

Town resident Susan Carpenter joined via video/phone conference.

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Privilege of the Floor – Chairman Johnson said Monroe Community College Environmental Information Update Meeting, will be held virtually on Tuesday December 15, 2020. Chairman Johnson will share the email pertaining to registration if any Councilmember would like to participate.

Approval of Minutes - On the motion by Councilmember Eddinger, seconded by Chairman Johnson, the 10/7/2020 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

New Business:

a. – Grant Opportunity for Organic Waste Recycling

Regina Sousa, Senior Planner with Ontario County Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management spoke to the Conservation Board about funding that is available from Ontario County. Ms. Sousa said Ontario County has funding available for municipalities to help towns continue the County's effort in implementing the Local Solid Waste Management Plan (LSWMP). In the past the County distributed funds directly to municipalities for any waste diversion programs or projects that furthered the goals and objectives of the LSWMP.

The County decided to keep the money in that department and have it available to municipalities on an application basis.

Ms. Sousa said in 2021 the County will have five thousand dollars available to municipalities to put towards their solid waste organic recycling efforts.

Councilmember Klotz asked Ms. Sousa to describe a few of the programs that have been successful with other towns in Ontario County.

Ms. Sousa said a lot of municipalities look towards organic diversion. A lot of municipalities have instituted composting programs. The Town of Canandaigua collects food waste for composting as well as the Town of Victor.

Ms. Sousa said a pilot program to increase diversion practices for food waste at the Town of Gorham Transfer Station is a great idea.

The Board discussed many options available regarding buckets and drop off ideas that are easy and manageable for residents. The Board has done a tremendous amount of research over the past two years in this department.

Councilmember Eddinger asked Ms. Sousa where the funds are sourced from for this type of grant.

Ms. Sousa said the funds come from her Department's budget but are specifically meant for municipalities. They have sectioned off a chunk of money for municipalities to apply on a first come, first serve basis. They are funded through the Casella Lease Agreement so the funds are Landfill money.

Chairman Johnson asked what is needed from the Conservation Board to apply for the grant.

Ms. Sousa said the Conservation Board will need to submit a basic outline, of the organic food waste recycling program they wish to start, with a general cost breakdown. The Board should have approximately one hundred residents interested in participating. The Board should list what kind of bins they want to provide to residents for collection and how much they cost, choose a provider to haul the organic waste. She recommended a company to haul because they keep data on how much is being diverted.

Ms. Sousa said the Town would have to initially fund the project and then they would be reimbursed by the County up to five thousand dollars.

Chairman Johnson said the Conservation Board has done a substantial amount of work and research on starting an organic recycling program in Gorham. He said the Conservation Board will gear towards getting the paperwork done and submitted to the County this coming spring.

Georganna Greenlee joined the meeting via video conference at this time. Mrs. Greenlee is interested in joining the Conservation Board.

b. Vermiculture/Organic Food Waste

Councilmember Brewin said last month she, Councilmember Klotz and two people from Geneva, who are currently doing the waste collection in Geneva, met with the owner of Vermi-Green LLC in Palmyra, NY. Vermi-Green has been in business for twelve years. They are a company that collects organic food waste product and turns it into a finished compost. They are willing to work with the Town of Gorham on a pilot program. Vermi-Green gave Councilmembers some recommendations and some figures on what the cost would be to get the Town started on a program. Vermi-Green would supply the container for residents to dump their food waste into. Vermi-Green gave details on what type of container would be supplied to the Town, how often they would pick it up and the cost. The container would be a rent of ninety dollars per month. They would pick it up approximately every ten days. It is two hundred fifty dollars per drop, which means they would pick up the full container and bring a new one. The approximate price when it is picked up is forty to fifty dollars per ton.

Councilmember Brewin said a lot depends on how clean the waste stream is. Vermi-Green explained it is extremely important to educate residents on what is, and what is not, acceptable in the waste. For example; leaves, pumpkins, veggies, seaweed from the lake are acceptable. No meat and no dairy products are accepted.

Councilmember Brewin said Vermi-Green has a lot of suggestions and ideas on how to make this program successful for the Town of Gorham and they are willing to give this Board a tour of their facility.

Councilmember Brewin said it's a place to start. The Board can get pricing from other companies as well. Verma-Green is willing to work with Municipalities because they feel everyone needs to be getting into this type of recycling.

Old Business:

a. Parcel Ranking –

Chairman Johnson said they will table the parcel ranking and discuss at the next meeting.

b. Aeration Program -

Chairman Johnson said they started this project in 2019 and wholeheartedly made an attempt. Then Covid came along. He said they lost half a year and counting. This spring they will pick up where they left off.

c. Year End Report

Councilmember Klotz is working on a written year-end report of activity and attendance of the Conservation Board to give the Town Board.

The Conservation Board will hold its next meeting on Wednesday February 3rd, 2021 at 7:00pm at the Gorham Town Hall.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte