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**M. Renée Cahoon**  
Commissioner

**J. Webb Fuller**  
Commissioner

**Kevin Brinkley**  
Commissioner

To: Board of Commissioners  
From: Andy Garman, Interim Town Manager  
Date: August 26, 2021  
Re: Waste Reduction Task Force Additional Discussion/Recommendations

As the board is aware, the Waste Reduction Task Force concluded its discussions earlier this year. The Waste Reduction Task Force's charge included the following items:

- Waste reduction initiatives – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot
- Efforts to reduce the waste stream and/or handle the waste stream cost effectively
- Responsible disposal practices
- Education
- Review of Town programs and services
- Recommendations to the Board on revised or new services

As a result of the task force's efforts, the board has implemented a new subscription based curbside recycling service. The town is subsidizing the cost of the subscription at a rate of \$5 per household per month. This reduces the cost from \$14 to \$9 per month. The material is being collected and processed by TFC Recycling of Chesapeake. To date the town has 826 subscribers. The program has been a success; the initial goal to initiate the service was 440 subscribers.

The rollout of the recycling program has presented numerous challenges for the town including collecting and reissuing recycling carts, coordinating with and monitoring TFC's activities to ensure compliance with the contract, working with TFC to educate residents, and issuing additional trash carts for residences. Now that many of these initial efforts have subsided, staff remains focused on refinements to its sanitation services and community appearance.

The task force's discussions were broad and touched on many areas beyond residential recycling. For the board's information, the following is a list of other initiatives the task force would recommend for town consideration. Some of these items have already been initiated.

- Commercial cardboard recycling program – the task force discussed a cardboard collection program for businesses. Cardboard can be taken to Dare County for free since the county has a market to sell the material. This reduces the town’s overall tipping fees. This was considered a low cost/high return activity since there is a handful of sites that generate a significant volume of material. Staff has initiated this effort and continues to conduct outreach to encourage participation.
- Commercial glass recycling program – similar to cardboard, the task force discussed a glass collection program at commercial sites. This material can also be taken to the county free of charge. The county crushes the material and uses it for various purposes. Restaurants are required by law to recycle ABC glass. Staff has initiated this effort and continues to conduct outreach to encourage participation.
- Commercial single-stream recycling – the task force recommended in future years that the town consider a more formal recycling program for commercial businesses to reduce the town’s tipping fee costs and reduce the town’s overall disposal footprint.
- Residential composting – the task force discussed a number of programs related to composting, recognizing that food waste represents a substantial portion of the waste stream and cost due to its weight. The task force discussed education programs, distribution of composting bins to residents for home use, and establishing a composting site at the town’s bulk yard where material could be processed.
- Education – the task force noted that education represents an essential element to the success of any of these initiatives. The town has engaged in a campaign with TFC recycling to educate residents on the benefits of recycling and the town’s program. The campaign also focuses on proper recycling practices.
- Yard waste – the task force acknowledged to benefits and the high level of service provided to residents as part of the yard waste collection program. This material has historically been processed into mulch and offered back to residents. The yard waste collection program continues, however; due to site constraints at the town’s bulk yard related to permitting and our ability to stockpile material, the mulch program has been temporarily suspended. As the town works through the public works master plan, we are evaluating alternative sites to deliver and process the town’s yard waste material.
- Education on source reduction – the task force was interested in educational efforts focused on waste source reduction as an overall community value.
- Collaborative efforts with other local governments/county/other entities – the task force noted that, as the town considers future initiatives/services, we should continue to explore partnerships with other agencies to reduce costs and improve the regional capacity related to waste reduction.
- Development of waste reduction plan – the task force expressed interest in a more formal planning effort related to waste reduction which would establish goals, objectives, and action items for waste reduction over a specified time horizon.

Recently, members of the waste reduction task force contacted me and expressed continued interest in assisting the town with its waste reduction efforts. This summary is being provided as information for the board. No action is requested at this time. Board members are welcome to provide thoughts/feedback either during the meeting or directly to me at any time.