

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Agenda
February 15, 2023, 8:00am – 9:30am
Virtual Meeting Minute Taker: Tracie Gordon

Members Present: Dailey Brannin, David Demme, Lee Elliot, Debby Galef, Tracie Gordon, Martha Henry, Sakiko Isomichi, Elka Kuhlman, Emily Lee, Scott MacGrath, Audrey Ng, Laura Nichols, Richard Nurse, Dawn Quirk, Diane Roseman, Meera Singh, Helen Snively, Quinten Steenhuis Alexandra Toupal, Julia Tsang, Rob Vandenabeele, Siddharth Vedullapalli, Stephanie Wasiuk,

Members Absent: Debby Knight, Carlie Peters

Staff Present: Mike Orr

Public Present: Seth Finkelstein

1. Housekeeping

- January minutes approved.

2. About the Recycling Advisory Committee

- RAC roles, responsibilities and governance. See attached.

3. Introductions

- Members introduced themselves with their name, neighborhood, and 1-2 minutes about their interests and passions around waste or sustainability.

4. Closing

- Invite for two tours; email Mike to RSVP:
 - WM CORE facility: **Feb 22, 1:30-3pm** – Carpool from DPW @ 1:00PM – Email Mike today.
 - Covanta Haverhill waste to energy: **April 20**, Meet at DPW @ 9am-12:30pm. Incinerator tour – What Happens next.
- Upcoming optional meeting to learn about what DPW does and programs offered. Fill out doodle to schedule.
- **April 3**, 8am-9:30am. Meet & Greet with City officials, including new DPW commissioner Kathy Watkins and Deputy City Manager and previous commissioner Owen O’Riordan @ 147 Hampshire St, Cambridge, MA 02139
- April election for chair/co-chairs and secretary
- Public Comment – Seth Finkelstein: would very much like the reopening of the book exchange at the Recycling Center. Felt it not only provided books but also a sense of community.
- **Action Plan/Decisions**
- Lee asked about the renaming of RAC. Mike will send out form/poll for suggested new names.
- Discussion of Buy Nothing Cambridge Facebook groups, of which there are many. Tracie is administrator. Can we somehow connect with them?

- Meetings will continue to be held on second Wednesdays at 8 am.
- Announcements – Meera, Brooke Nash and Adam Minter speak on **April 11** from 6:30 - 8
- Committee members are appointed by the City Manager. All meetings are open to the public. Members of the public may speak during the public comment section for up to two minutes. If you wish to speak, please contact Mike Orr at 617 349-4815 or morr@cambridgema.gov by 1pm the day before the meeting. You may also email or mail written comments for inclusion in public comments in lieu of speaking during the meeting. The Committee Chair must grant permission to non-members who request to speak at the meeting.

Meeting Minutes are located online here: [CambridgeMA.Gov/Services/Recycling](https://www.cambridgeMA.Gov/Services/Recycling)

Chat

08:09:53 From Seth Finkelstein to Everyone:

My contact information sethf@sethf.com

08:10:00 From Seth Finkelstein to Everyone:

Seth Finkelstein

08:11:48 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

2 Globe articles:

1. How climate change is threatening flowers, chocolate and champagne.. and those 3 products are adding to climate change:

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/02/13/science/climate-change-is-threatening-valentines-day-we-know-it/>

2. A decade ago, Concord banned bottled water.. here's an update:

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/02/13/science/decade-after-concords-landmark-ban-bottled-water-plastic-pollution-remains-scourge/>

08:12:07 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

If those are behind the Globe paywall, I'll be happy to cut and paste them for you.

08:12:42 From rob vandenabeele to Everyone:

Thank you Helen.

08:29:08 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XN9dqr9p89689F1rVmFTg9fN6GAGcNQiqpgSCsIwYbY/edit?usp=sharing>

08:30:36 From Quinten Steenhuis to Everyone:

I'm on the train, should be off by 9!

08:33:34 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

About the can carriers: <https://ecofriendlybeer.com/massachusetts-ramped-up-reuse-recycling-rates-of-plastic-beer-can-carriers-in-2021/>

08:36:35 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

martha has written wonderful pieces for Cambridge Day!

08:37:38 From Audrey Ng to Everyone:

My friend Avery works with you!

08:39:30 From richard to Everyone:

Julia Tsang. Please share your company info. Richard

08:39:51 From Julia Tsang to Everyone:

<https://www.mori.com/>

08:40:44 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

MRF=Material Recovery Facility. better known as a recycling facility

08:42:58 From rob vandenabeele to Everyone:

Thanks for sharing Mike. Lamplighter Brewing, Pemberton Farms, and both Formaggio locations all take them back.

08:43:36 From Debby Galef to Everyone:

So sorry to hear that, Diane. I have an elderly cat and I worry about her health all the time.

08:44:06 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

Tks Rob for the info of the businesses that will take them back

08:44:25 From Scott MacGrath to Everyone:

Aeronaut takes them back, too!

08:45:10 From rob vandenabeele to Everyone:

Yes, Aeronaut and Remnant Brewing in Union Square's Bow Market.

08:51:19 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:

Could I go next? Sorry, I have to leave at 9am

08:53:15 From Siddharth's iPhone to Everyone:

I need to drop off as well at 9 am. Can I go next?

08:53:51 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

CONGRATS SAKIKO!

08:54:47 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:

Thanks, Lee!

08:59:31 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:

Look forward to seeing you all next time!

09:00:52 From Julia Tsang to Everyone:

I unfortunately need to drop for a 9am. It was so great meeting all of you so far and look forward to getting to know everyone, help out further!

09:01:14 From Scott MacGrath to Everyone:

Nice to meet you, Julia!

09:04:07 From tracie gordon to Everyone:

I meant to Speak about Buy Nothing and their concerns..

09:05:41 From tracie gordon to Everyone:

Let's start that back up!

09:06:09 From Diane to Everyone:

Ooh scrabble yes

09:06:23 From Quinten Steenhuis to Everyone:

And unfortunately have to leave, but great to get to know you all!

09:06:33 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

Reacted to "And unfortunately ha..." with 👍

09:06:42 From Quinten Steenhuis to Everyone:

Maybe next RAC social is a Scrabble one :)

09:10:53 From tracie gordon to Everyone:

Reacted to "Maybe next RAC socia..." with 👍

09:11:31 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

We're neighbors 😊

09:16:20 From Emily Lee to Everyone:

I also got 2 dining chairs from Buy Nothing :)

09:16:40 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

Reacted to "I also got 2 dining ..." with 👍

09:18:22 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

Tracie DYK about the Zero Waste Cambridge App?

09:18:38 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

tracie--I want to work with you.. and maybe Emily.. on this idea of more detail that adds to BN... Debby Knight too.. she's not on today. Lots more we can do

09:19:52 From Emily Lee to Everyone:

Replying to "tracie--I want to ..."

Absolutely!! @Tracie this is also something I've been thinking about, too. I'm happy to brainstorm.

09:20:19 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

Mike, I am interested in exploring the possibility of getting Terra Cycle bins in Cambridge for dental products, MLP bags, pens, etc. If anyone else is interested pls LMK and we can put our minds and hearts together to make it happen.

09:20:26 From Emily Lee to Everyone:

Reacted to "Mike, I am interes..." with 👍

09:21:27 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

welcome tracie.. your questions overlap with a whole lot of what people have been thinking about

09:21:30 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

Emily I will contact you separately

09:21:43 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Can we pin the Get Rid of It Right link for BNC members to reference?

09:21:51 From Emily Lee to Everyone:

Reacted to "Emily I will conta..." with 

09:22:13 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

oh, clever Lee!

09:25:15 From Debby Galef to Everyone:

Mike, Sakiko and I went to Covanta recently. The tour was great.

09:25:18 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Thanks Helen! We could pin it to the top of each group and the page with the rules

09:25:40 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

lee... maybe Mike can just DO that?

09:25:49 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

I think so!

09:26:01 From Dawn Quirk to Everyone:

mondays are great for me!

09:26:18 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Reacted to "lee... maybe Mike ca..." with 

09:26:27 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

but Lee, Tracie, Emily.. we have a lot of other work to do.. so much that's still outside of GRIR..

09:27:16 From Emily Lee to Everyone:

Reacted to "but Lee, Tracie, E..." with 

09:27:26 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

adam minter is a superstar!


09:27:43 From Dawn Quirk to Everyone:

Branch Chief


09:28:04 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

True. We could also link the spreadsheet we did last term. Let's put our heads together. We could probably get it out in a month or 2!

09:28:20 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Reacted to "but Lee, Tracie, Emi..." with 

09:28:22 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Removed a  reaction from "but Lee, Tracie, Emi..."

09:28:24 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Reacted to "but Lee, Tracie, Emi..." with 

09:29:00 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

lee--Debby K wanted to do a lot more on the spreadhseet.. but then her partner died..
She's still into it.. let's get together on this..

09:29:36 From Mike Orr to Everyone:

Apr. 11, 630-8pm

09:29:36 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Reacted to "lee--Debby K wanted ..." with 

09:31:08 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) to Everyone:

Yes, Meera! 

09:31:55 From Audrey Ng to Everyone:

maybe "waste committee" ?

09:32:26 From Audrey Ng to Everyone:

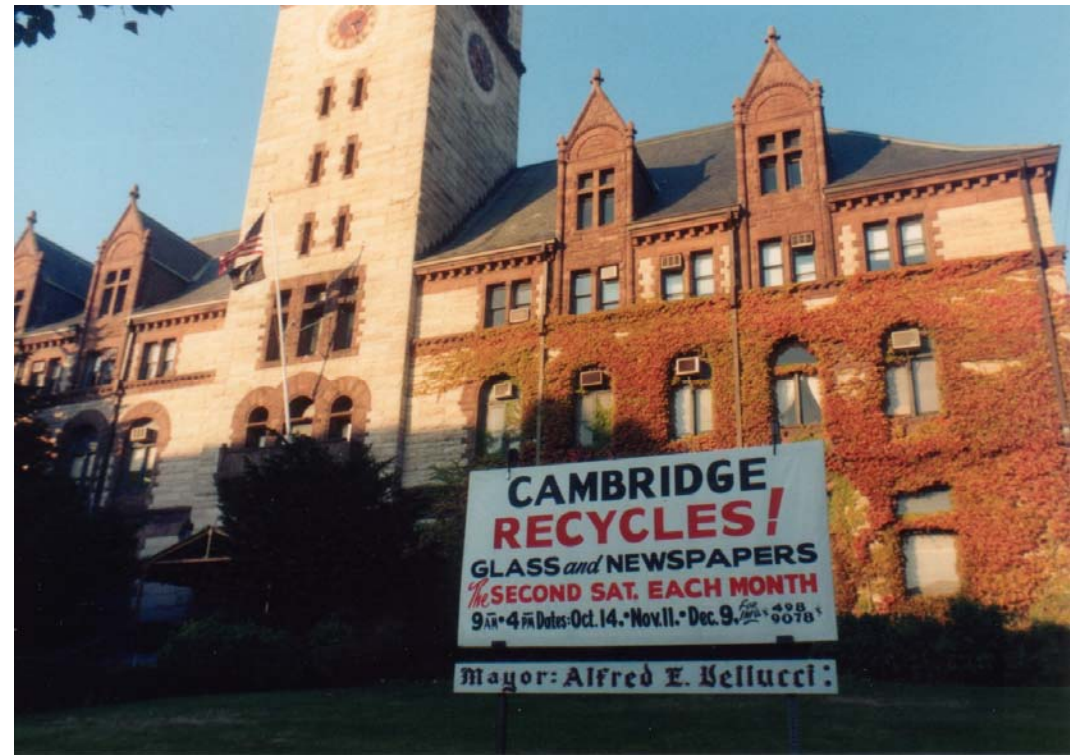
I agree with you Lee and Meera, but I think "sustainability" is too broad

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC)



RAC History

- Established in 1991, part of the [City's Refuse and Litter Ordinance](#)
- Minimum 9 members appointed by the City Manager, with a demonstrated interest in the relevant topics.
 - Members shall be appointed to terms of 3 years
 - The City seeks representatives from local businesses, property managers, CHA, nonprofit institutions, and users of the Recycling Center.



RAC Governance & Structure

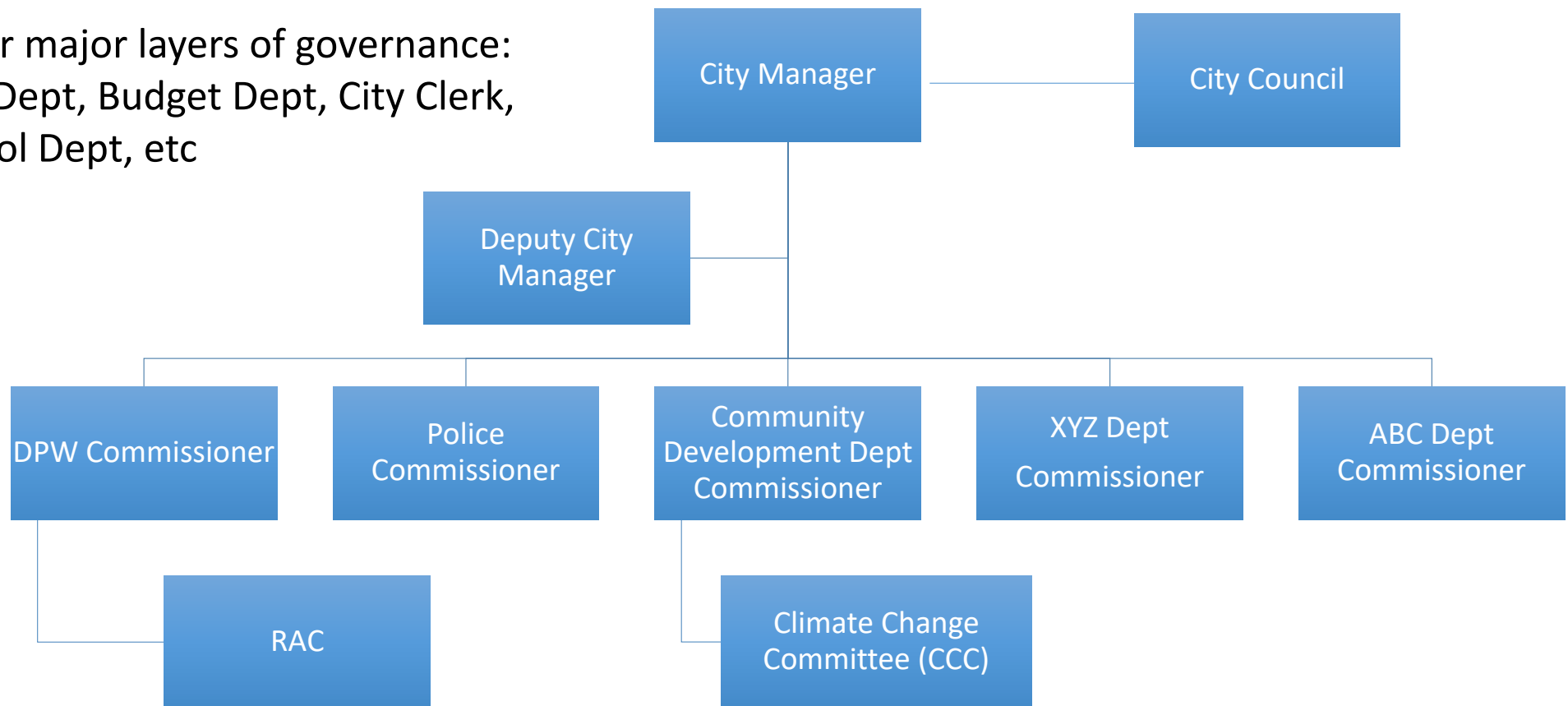
- RAC is an advisory committee to the Department of Public Works (DPW) Commissioner. The Director of Recycling is the City representative.
- The RAC does not have regulatory authority. Through education/advocacy/analysis/etc, the RAC influences City policies and community action.



Visual Aid of City governance

- NOTE: This is NOT a precise or perfect representation of City governance.
- This is an exercise to understand roughly how governance roughly for the RAC perspective.

Other major layers of governance:
Law Dept, Budget Dept, City Clerk,
School Dept, etc



RAC Governance & Structure

- Members should distinguish between personal and RAC positions on issues. The RAC may appoint member(s) to convey the RAC's views on particular matters to the wider community.
- Members are free to communicate their personal views to the public, the press, or to government. **However, they must make it clear that they are not speaking for the RAC.**
- **Open Meeting Law: RAC members may not deliberate outside of RAC meetings on RAC-related things if a quorum is present.**
 - **Email may be considered deliberation.** Emailing RAC members must be limited to non-RAC matters.

Clarifying Examples

- RAC members may speak to Councilors, comment on City Council hearings, communicate with City Manager or other City staff, but they must do so as residents, not as RAC members (unless the RAC has agreed that you may comment)
- If City Council asks RAC to comment on a topic, 51% of RAC members **may not** deliberate this topic via email.
- If RAC members want to organize an outreach event for encouraging composting, RAC members **may** deliberate over email.
- If RAC members want to organize a social, you **may** deliberate over email.
- If a sub-committee of 10 members (out of 25 total) deliberate about a RAC-related topic over email/in-person, that's **permissible**.

Open Meeting Law clause

The Open Meeting Law defines deliberation as “an oral or written communication through any medium, including electronic mail, between or among a quorum of a public body on any public business within its jurisdiction.” Distribution of a meeting agenda, scheduling or procedural information, or reports or documents that may be discussed at a meeting is often helpful to public body members when preparing for upcoming meetings. These types of communications generally will not constitute deliberation, provided that, when these materials are distributed, no member of the public body expresses an opinion on matters within the body’s jurisdiction. Additionally, certain communications that may otherwise be considered deliberation are specifically exempt by statute from the definition of deliberation ...To be a deliberation, the communication must involve a quorum of the public body. A quorum is usually a simple majority of the members of a public body. Thus, a communication among less than a quorum of the members of a public body will not be a deliberation, unless there are multiple communications among the members of the public body that together constitute communication among a quorum of members. Courts have held that the Open Meeting Law applies when members of a public body communicate in a serial manner in order to evade the application of the law. Note that the expression of an opinion on matters within the body’s jurisdiction to a quorum of a public body is a deliberation, even if no other public body member responds.

RAC Officers & Attendance

- Officers (2 chairs, and 1 secretary) will be elected from its members on an annual basis in April unless the RAC decides otherwise
- The Officers shall set the agenda in coordination with City staff.
 - The Chairs ensure that action items are making progress, sub-committees are reporting back promptly.
 - The secretary or his/her designee shall be responsible for attendance, decision minutes, & submitting a draft to the City within 5 days of the meeting.
- **RAC members are encouraged to contact Chairs and Mike about future discussion topics, speakers, etc**
- All members must attend and participate in at least 7 out of 10 monthly meetings per year.
- Each member should notify Mike if s/he will be absent from a meeting



Rules for RAC

- RAC will make decisions by consensus whenever possible; majority rules. A quorum is necessary for votes. Quorum= 51% of RAC members.

Proposed rules for meeting etiquette:

- Start and end meetings on time.
- Stick to the agenda topic, and point at hand.
- Be mindful and respectful of how much/long speaking.
- Come to closure on issues in a timely way.

Minute Taking guidance from Open Meeting Law

- Public bodies are required to create and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings. The minutes, which must be created and approved monthly, must include:
- the date, time and place of the meeting;
- the members present or absent;
- the decisions made and actions taken, including a record of all votes;
- a **brief** summary of the discussions on each subject;
- a list of all documents and exhibits used at the meeting.

While the minutes must include a summary of the discussions on each subject, a transcript is not required and is not recommended.



Proposed options for RAC member involvement

- Understand info available to the public on the City's recycling webpage: CambridgeMA.Gov/Recycle.
- Participate in creating sub-committees, and assist in setting direction for the sub-committees;
- Help promote composting in big way during 2023 (goal to give out 5000 kitchen bins in 2023);
- Research different approaches to communication, education and best practices for recycling, composting, reuse and waste reduction programs;
- Disseminate outreach materials and post flyers in the community to educate the public;
- Write articles promoting City programs and services including newspaper editorials, blog posts, social media, etc;
- Recruit additional volunteers for specific events and projects;
- Participate in at least 2-3 events, such as Danehy Park Family Day, Area 4 Community Pride Day, MayFair, Oktoberfest, Family Fun Day, RiverFest, Fresh Pond Day, Arts in the Park, Summer in the City, and other block parties or public events.

