



AMESBURY

**Amesbury Energy, Environment, and Sustainability Committee
Municipal Solid Waste Working Group
Meeting Minutes for March 17, 2026
Municipal Development Center
39 South Hunt Road
Amesbury, MA 01913
6:00 PM**

Call to Order at 6:10 by Chairperson Bill Messner.

Attendance: Bill Messner, Nancy Maynes, Michael Hogg, Pam Gilday, Barbara Lorenc, Dave (DJ) Johnson – City Energy Manager

The **Municipal Solid Waste Working Group** met on Tuesday March 17 and discussed the following subjects - all of which are at very early days and will be continued in subsequent meetings:

Note that the discussion was led primarily by City staff member Dave Johnson who is the City's very integrated Energy/Environment/Sustainability point person.

- the 2 big points – 1) **cost** of trash pickup and the need to get it out of the City's levy burden and into a resident fee model and 2) **volume** and how to move tonnage (especially food waste) out of the trash system and into something more sustainable
- percentage of categories such as food waste and compostable paper in the current trash (not recycling/compost) stream
- cost of trash expected to rise for Amesbury by 3% in FY27 over FY26 - trash/recycling together anticipated to be over \$2million in FY27.
- existing 65 gallon size vs 35 gallon and Mello vehicle automated arm pickup
- benefits of staying with Mello vs another carrier
- our existing contract is through FY2028
- State mandate to reduce solid waste by 2050
- Landfills are essentially full in the state of MA and trash is being trucked out of state – this practice will get more expensive as time goes by
- types of pay-as-you-throw options – various models - *definitely* to be continued
- frequency of trash pickup - every week/every other week
- anticipated municipal timeframe to switch from pickup fee within the City levy vs a resident fee system
- what would a resident fee system look like

- City is trying to work with Mello to determine the number of homes, condos, and multi-family etc that are being picked up weekly now in Amesbury
 - how recycling fees to the City are calculated - note that trash and recycling are 2 separate line items in the budget. Trash is the big-ticket item. Recycling is a fee charged to the City that is based on a sort of percentage structure of recycled materials that entities will buy.
 - MASS DEP Reporting via Re-TRAC reporting site completed for FY23, FY24, FY25 – *Dave Johnson updated the committee*
- MASS DEP Grant Opportunities FY26 <https://www.mass.gov/doc/smrp-minimum-eligibility-criteria/download> – *Dave Johnson updated the commit*

The *Municipal Solid Waste Working Group* decided on a monthly meeting cadence of the 3rd Tuesday of each month. The *Amesbury Energy, Environment, and Sustainability Committee* meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month now as shown on [its page on the City website](#).

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.