

Minutes
Cleaner Greener Hingham Committee Meeting
April 9, 2026
In person at Town Hall and remote via Zoom

Present: Janice McPhillips, Michael Poling, Mark Engel, Maria Zade, Peter Swanson

Guests: Ashley Broyer, Patricia Burke, Elaine Cusker, Kevin Scannell, Kathleen Scannell

Co-chair Janice McPhillips called the meeting to order at 7:08pm and read the opening meeting law statement.

1. Updates from the Transfer Station / DPW :

Ashley Broyer reported that 189 households are currently enrolled in Black Earth; up 28 households since the initiative was started. **Janice** contributed that many of the newly enrolled households reported that they are transfer station users (as opposed to using private haulers) so there will be reduced tonnage to SEMASS from the program (Source: Sara Gordon).

Ashley also reported that the Transfer Station is doing its annual clean up of the yard & leaf waste area. Once that is done, the road up to that area will be regraded and smoothed out. The HDPE #2 ("frosted plastic") program continues to be successful with about one bale per week being sent. HDPE #2 continues to be the only plastic that earns money for the Town since it can be remade into the same product it originally was. In 2025, 9 bales of frosted plastic earned \$1500 for the Town. So far in 2026, 6 bales have been sent for recycling. Scrap metal is an additional money maker.

Ashley is applying for a new 20-yard container for glass, in addition to the regular funding that is sought, that will help to update the glass collection area at the transfer station. Just this week, the TS started hauling its own glass so that will be a cost savings for 2026, even considering labor costs and vehicle depreciation.

Ashley will send a list of local groups benefitting from redeemable cans for **Maria** to promote on social media. Ashley will also follow up on a new sign to encourage more deposits of redeemable cans in the special collection area. Ashley is also open to an educational standout by CGHC members at the Transfer Station. She would like for us to have safety vests or similar so that we are identifiable. **Maria** will write an article for the Anchor about redeemable can recycling.

Ashley asked if we could help with education around proper disposal of mattresses. They are throwing them in the construction dumpsters. When that happens, the TS is fined \$100. So far this year, the TS has already been fined \$1,000 by SEMASS. **Maria** to write an article/newsflash.

2. Follow up from Hingham Winter Farmers Market / discussion about Black Earth Compost pilot curbside pickup program:

Janice, Maria, and Kevin were at the Winter Farmers Market on March 21, 2026. Maria and Janice felt that it was a positive experience and that residents were happy to hear about Household Hazardous Waste, NSRWA rain barrel sales, and the Town's partnership with Black Earth. Janice applied for CGHC to have the community table at the spring/summer market.

Peter asked Patricia to look into grants for composting infrastructure at transfer station.

At the "All Schools Recycling Committee Meeting" on 3/3/26 we discussed the fact that it seems like haulers are collecting trash and recycling in the same trucks. It is possible that the schools' hauler has a truck with segregated trash and recycling bays. Patricia is getting info to Matt Meehan, HPS Director of Facilities. Patricia has sample language for a new contract, if needed. She will share with Matt.

Patricia says she and Ashley are working to identify stakeholders, so that in 2030 when food waste is a "waste ban item" we can have a conversation about options. Don't know what the path forward is. They are working on it now.

Kathleen asks where residents can get compost bin. Mike Poling asks if he can help with business plan for a composting program where residents drop off food waste at the Transfer Station. Janice has info to share from a previous iteration of a proposal.

Future HFM Community Table Dates - May 16 and either 10/3 or 10/10. We discussed having one of those Big blowup guys at the TS and at the Farmers Market with QR code to sign up for the Black Earth Compost curbside pilot program.

We also discussed using the town's electronic billboard signs to advertise Black Earth Compost pilot program. Patricia said she will do that. Someone should ask existing Black Earth customers to recruit friends to the new program.

3. Town wide cleanup on April 11, 2026.

Michael is bringing bagels and coffee. Lots of girl scouts are signed up. DPW is providing bags.

4. Next steps for school recycling / composting at Hingham High School.

Jacqueline Beaupre at HHS is organizing a kickoff of the program after April vacation. We offered to help but so far, no request for help from the schools. The decision is to just let the kids handle it. As of now, Black Earth Compost is picking up four 64 gallon totes of food waste and trays per week from HHS which is being paid for by HHS Green Team funds. **DPW is paying for pickup of food waste from cafeteria food prep - IS THIS TRUE?** Patricia reports that they have signed a contract for the rest of this year and all of next school year.

5. CGHC Education goals for 2026 - articles in the Anchor (Maria Compost, Janice write an article about can recycling program, other outreach via email and social media, update

Maria will write an article about the redeemable can recycling program

May 16 repeat all social media posts about Black Earth Compost, comment

Find out about putting in a supplement into HMLP bill insert with links to articles we have written. Janice put some flyers on the bulletin board at Town Hall (HHW Day, Black Earth Compost, NSRWA Compost Bin sale. Discussed other ideas for getting the word out such as other tabling opportunities? DPW said they would pay for a Cleaner Greener Hingham Committee table skirt or banner. Janice will look into this.

6. New committee members beyond June, 2026.

Kathleen and Kevin have filled out talent bank forms. Janice's term is up at the end of this fiscal year, June 2026 might renew.

7. DEP Grant: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/massdep-reduce-reuse-repair-micro-grant>

Black Earth compost has on its website that they have done pilot programs in some towns. Patricia will look at peer communities to see who is doing that.

Unrelated to any agenda item - we discussed how many cities / towns in MA have banned plastic bags. Hanover is not one of them. Mark will look into this. Kathleen found an article about this - statewide ban. CBS news.com

8. Minutes from 3/12/26 are approved

9. Items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

10. Adjourn at 8:59

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Zade