

Waste Management Committee Notes
April 13, 2010
Town Council Chambers

Present

Councillor J. MacPherson, Chair
N. Haverkort, Eastern Region Solid Waste Management
D. Halfpenny, Administrative Assistant

D. Wilson, Deputy Clerk
B. Ives, Antigonish Sustainable Development, Delegate
D. Thompson, Weed Man®, Delegate

Call to Order

As there was not a quorum for the meeting; no motions will be made. The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:08 AM and round-table introductions were made.

B. Ives advised the group that as part of his role with Antigonish Sustainable Development he had suggested that the Town look toward a voluntary ban on pesticide use within the Town. He presented a manual regarding transition from pesticide use and noted that he had suggested that Council work with companies such as the Weed Man toward the use of environmentally friendlier lawn/garden products.

He provided a brief background and noted that he is a farmer and has carried out organic inspections to properties along the eastern seaboard.

D. Thompson, representative of the Weed Man thanked the Committee for the invitation to attend and share what the Weed Man is doing here and in other places. He provided a background on the services the company provides and areas it serves. He noted that the Company has been active in Provincial discussions respecting the use of pesticides. He further noted that the Company works in Halifax Regional Municipality which operates under a ban, and with the Town of Truro which has a by-law in effect respecting pesticides.

The Committee was advised that the Weed Man initially did not have many options when the ban was first implemented in the Halifax Regional Municipality, as the product line was somewhat limited at that time; however, many products are now increasing their organic base which they use in their line of work. D. Thompson spoke of one product in particular 'Sarriator' that they offer which is a naturally occurring pesticide that works on contact, attaches to weeds and rots out the plant, while not effecting grass. He further noted that this product is made in Canada, developed at McGill University, and tested at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

D. Thompson noted that as a company, the Weed Man® want to do the best job they can for their customers and encourage them to practice good lawn maintenance, and that they have always used products approved by Health Canada. He stated that there are chemicals, etc. that are approved for use and are safe if used properly. He noted that the Company does offer organic products.

B. Ives stated that integrated pest management is needed to control pests to an acceptable level, perhaps not weed-free, but healthy. He suggested companies such as the Weed Man should track and report what they use and provide the information to the government so that it could be monitored.

B. Ives noted that what the Province is contemplating is similar to what Ontario and Halifax Regional Municipality currently have in place. He noted that Antigonish Sustainable Development has submitted information requesting restrictions on use be put in place based on science. He then presented letters from various agencies who wrote in support of a ban on the use of pesticides, as well as other documents that he welcomed the delegates to review.

Brief discussion took place on the importance of healthy lawns and soils. D. Thompson noted that he is a big advocate for healthy soil and that they offer the use of compost as part of their service, along with top-dressing and education.

In response to a query from the Chair, D. Thompson advised that they do not follow the practice of Halifax Regional Municipality throughout their business as some of the products banned by the Municipality are still approved for use by Health Canada. He noted they want to offer their customers a choice and do offer alternatives, noting that there is also a cost differential.

Brief discussion took place on what is permitted to be used and how in various parts of the province. D. Thompson noted that although Sarriator is effective, it is also available in limited quantities as it has only been in use for the past three (3) years, therefore at this time their company only uses it in areas where it can be used.

D. Thompson thanked the Committee for the invitation and noted he would be pleased to meet with any other groups who would like further information.

The Chair thanked the delegates for their attendance.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.