

## January 3 2024 Waste Advisory Meeting

Attendance: Richard Coates (Chair), Vicki Davis (Vice-chair), Christine Aberg, Mary Connolly, John Kildahl, Lesa Peters (Acting Secretary), Steve Tranguch, Marge Warner, David Sniekus, Barbara Perkinson (First Selectman), Tory McBrien (Waste Zero), Christine O'Neill (NVCOG), Mark Dancy (Waste Zero, Chelsea Hahn (DEEP), Kristen Brown (Waste Zero)

- I. Meeting called to order by the Chair, Richard Coates, at 2:05 pm.
- II. Approval of the Minutes:
  - Minutes of the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting: motion made by Lesa Peters, seconded by Mary Connolly; approved unanimously.
  - Minutes of the December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting: motion made by Mary Connolly, seconded by Lesa Peters; approved unanimously.
- III. Report on January 3<sup>rd</sup> visit by Mary, Richard, Vicki to the Portland CT Transfer station.

Vicki reported the following, with additional info from Mary and Richard:

- Population of Portland, 9500.
- Began voluntary recycling program in 1990.
- 2023 participation is half of the population.
- Acceptance was easy, due to the cost of private trash pickup, and is mandatory.
- Transfer station sticker cost is \$30 annually.
- Users purchase bags; bag revenue covers the tipping fees, plus a small amount of revenue.
- Trash bag prices: \$2 for 15 gallon, \$4 for 30 gallon, \$5 for 45 gallon.
- Trash bags are available at Town Hall, Transfer Station, Adams Grocery store-Adams gets bags from Transfer Station.
- Food scrap program has just been started; the food scraps will go to Quantum's anaerobic digester, same as Woodbury's food scraps; food scrap recycling will be open to all town residents-outside where stickers are needed.
- Portland does their own hauling using town trucks.
- Transfer Station is open 5 days/week, Tuesday:Saturday, has 2 employees; employees check stickers randomly, and check to make sure trash vs recycling goes into the correct bins.
- Recycling is graded based on how clean it is; Portland has a 90% clean rating; recycling haulers can drop the town if recycling is not clean.
- Acceptance of the program is high:
  - Explained on town website
  - Flyer explaining program (See sample Portland flyer.)
  - Complaints from individuals are handled by town employees; e.g. complaint about cost of bag ended up with a pleased user when he learned ½ of what was in the bag was recyclable.

Questions about Portland:

- Did they lower taxes? No, the purpose of their UBP (Unit Based Pricing) is to fund the expected increase in tipping fees going forward, as they know these fees will be increasing over time.
- How does the Portland experience apply to Woodbury's goal? Woodbury uses private haulers.

Richard has spoken to the two Selectmen, and Woodbury's goal is to cover the expected increase in hauling and tipping fees, not as a revenue stream.

IV. Design of the full Unit-Based Pricing plan

See the Woodbury Proforma – Optional Pathways, especially the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> columns from the right, for proposed bag pricing that will come closest to covering the tipping fees, while being revenue neutral. Tipping fees are estimated to be \$75,906 for 2023-2024. The closest to revenue neutral bag pricing is column 4 (from the right).

-Bag sizes, costs

Mary Connolly made a motion that the annual sticker fee be set at \$25, and UBP trash bag prices be set at:

\$1.65 for large, \$1.00 for medium, \$.75 for small garbage bags, with food scrap bags sold at cost: .25 for 8 gallon and .15 for 4 gallon bags. Use of food scrap bags is also optional (for Quantum), and that the same color bags be used as for the pilot: orange for trash, green for food scraps.

Steve Tranguch seconded the motion.

There was extensive discussion of dropping the sticker fee, and only charging for bags, and discussion of charging for the sticker and including some number of free bags (52), with size to be determined, and a discussion about mailing free stickers to all residents, although some residents do not use the transfer station.

The motion as stated and seconded passed unanimously.

-Bag availability

-Marge asked about bag storage: Mark said that Waste Zero can store some amount of bags in their warehouse. There is a Waste Zero employee (Luke) who was visiting local merchants (New Morning, LaBonne's, other?) on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> regarding having the bags available in their stores; more info will be available at the Jan 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

-Enforcement

Portland Enforcement:

-Random checking on varying days and at varying times; not a big issue after 30+ years. Unsure how this applies to Woodbury, given Portland has town employees, and Woodbury has contractors, although Bill does a good job of monitoring.

-Steve reported on United Alarm info:

\$1000 for equipment and set up of an 'Ezpass' type installation to read license plates, and compare to registered Woodbury license plates.

\$480-500 annually for monitoring.

Violators could be fined, stickers could be revoked; per First Selectman Perkinson, an ordinance would be needed, requiring legal advice and a public hearing and a vote.

United Alarm currently does security for Woodbury; Selectman Perkinson will contact them.

Several people suggested that enforcement needs could be prevented through educating the public about the UBP program, and why it is being implemented. See Portland website and flyer that was distributed at the meeting.

Per Tory, Woodbury has a very low contamination rate (1.5%) for the food scrap pilot.

Tory's Inspection of ½ ton of food scraps found one bag of contaminated food scraps.

Chelsea said that approval of the bridge funding includes a month of monitoring at the Woodbury transfer station.

V. Other Business

Regarding recommendations to the BOS:

Tory: avoid a 'no' vote (really not an option here) by providing WHY the Ad Hoc Committee has decided on the recommendation, and what alternative options were considered.

Christine: the pilot grant does not obligate the town to have a plan for permanence.

Chelsea: the bridge fund requires a decision from the town regarding a plan for permanence prior to the end of the pilot program.

Suggestion from Conservation Commission: move recycling (and possibly food scrap) bins outside transfer station permit area to encourage recycling (required by the state).

Response from First Selectman Perkinson: there is insufficient space to do so and transfer station is near wetlands and cannot be easily expanded.

Suggestion: Funds from \$25 sticker fee should become part of the Transfer Station budget, and used for capital projects; would need to be determined by Board of Finance.

Question from John: What is current sticker revenue used for? Answer from First Selectman Perkinson: it goes into the general fund. Q from John: Could the sticker revenue be earmarked for a town improvement; e.g Hollow Park? Q from David: Could excess funds be used to purchase a composter for the transfer station? A from Steve: earmarked funds for a specific purchase must be spent on that earmarked purpose. A from Richard: there may be grants available to purchase a composter.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM. Next meeting: Wednesday, January 10, 2PM, Shove Conference Room.

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
Filed 8th day of Jan 2024  
at 1:00 o'clock PM  
Maria B. Mancini  
TOWN CLERK