

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2004

Present: Chairman Kirsten D. Roopenian, Selectmen John C. Drobinski and Lawrence W. O'Brien.

The statutory requirement as to notice having been complied with, the meeting was convened at 7:30 p.m. in the Fairbank Community Center, 40 Fairbank Road.

Opening Remarks

Chairman Roopenian reminded residents that voter registration would be held on March 9 until 8 p.m., the last opportunity to register to vote in the March 29 Annual Town Election. She also encouraged residents to educate themselves on the issues.

Chairman Roopenian congratulated the Town Report Committee on an excellent publication, and thanked the Town Report Committee and Town staff for their hard work in putting it together.

Meeting with Senator Pam Resor

Senator Pam Resor thanked the Board for the opportunity to update Sudbury residents on various issues. She briefly updated the Board on the status of the state budget and local aid, next step in the Hop Brook/Marlborough Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant Permit, bulk purchasing of pharmaceuticals and proposed changes to the SBA. Ms. Resor also discussed the status of the Resor Amendment and senior tax issues. The Board thanked her for coming and encouraged her to attend at any time.

Curbside Rubbish Pickup – Consultant John Merritt

Present: John Merritt, President, Matthew Zettek, Associate, Merritt Communications, Inc.; I. William Place, DPW Director/Town Engineer; William Keller, Planning Board; Tom Powers, Pay Per Throw Committee; Richard Vanderslice, Earth Decade Committee; Peter Glass and Peg Whittemore, Pay Per Throw Committee and Earth Decade Committee.

Town Manager Valente briefly recounted the events bringing us to today's presentation, i.e., initial request and research from Pay Per Throw Committee and the Town retaining a consultant to analyze issues. Today's presentation is from the consultants hired by the Town Manager.

Mr. John Merritt, President, Merritt Communications, Inc., presented project objectives, key survey findings, and three service delivery alternatives.

- Survey involved 50 random households, 10 per precinct, and insuring that at least 1 of 10 was a senior citizen. 35 of the 50 surveyed are curbside users, 15 are transfer station users. Two-thirds have no problem with current services, others enjoy the transfer station's array of services, or the convenience of curbside service; however, more recycling takes place at the transfer station. Overall support for PAYT program as it was consistent with current program practices. Each phone call took approximately 15 minutes.
- Majority of respondents supported a Town run curbside service, if it was consistent with current costs and collected recyclables weekly. 50% preferred to pay a separate fee rather than put trash collection on tax base, 20% preferred the tax base and 20% had no preference.

- Based on Integrated Solid Waste Model developed by Mr. Merritt, three scenarios were presented with different combinations of services and costs:
 - Scenario A – Status Quo - Transfer station with private curbside collection: Total expenditure - \$1,665,099; average cost per ton waste - \$91, average cost per ton recyclables - \$151, average cost per ton of all materials - \$97, recycling rate- 14.5%.
 - Scenario B – Transfer Station Closed with Town Contracted Curbside Service: Estimate total cost - \$1,218,250, average cost per ton waste - \$69; average cost per ton recyclables - \$114, average cost per ton of all materials - \$75, recycling rate – 13%.
 - Scenario C – Transfer Station Open and Town Contracted Curbside Service: Estimate total cost - \$1,094,053, average cost per ton waste - \$61, average cost per ton recyclables - \$83, average cost per ton of all materials - \$64, recycling rate -- 15.9%
- Pay As You Throw (PAYT) features can be associated with all of these scenarios through the use of different size toters, bags or stickers. Theoretically, more PAYT leads to increased recycling, which should lead to reduced residential waste costs.
- Next Steps recommended by Mr. Merritt include:
 - Implementation of a public procurement process to receive proposals from waste management vendors for town wide curbside collection/disposal including recycling services
 - Change or end operations at the transfer station, including possible operations by waste management company OR
 - Leave present arrangement in place

Town Manager Valente briefly outlined the Town Meeting process that would have to take place in order to have a funding mechanism for curbside collection if cost will be paid from Enterprise Fund. There is presently an Article on this year's Town Meeting Warrant, which could be withdrawn and considered at another time.

Mr. Merritt pointed out that using a fee charged to the tax rate eliminates any equity between residents, differentiating between smaller and larger homes that may generate more waste and recyclables. Selectman O'Brien expressed concern that 50 residents may not have been enough of a sample to get viable survey results. He stated that, for all intents and purposes, perhaps the present system is adequate for Sudbury's needs, even though other options are being investigated. Mr. O'Brien opined that, years from now, a program based on the tax rate could present budgetary problems when it's time to renew contracts during times of limited spending.

There was brief discussion on residents' habits in recycling at transfer station vs. curbside. Mr. Zettek stated all survey respondents were very complimentary of the transfer station services, though expressed dissatisfaction that it was a distance from their homes. Selectman O'Brien expressed concern for having to keep some products separate at the present time. Mr. Zettek clarified that most haulers of curbside recyclables will collect all plastics numbered 1 through 7 for recycling, and they do not have to be separated.

Town Manager Valente clarified that the Enterprise Fund budget would remain within the DPW budget area. Any contract would be supervised through the DPW department, while the billing would most likely happen in the Treasurer-Collector's Office.

Chairman Roopenian stated only one of 20 homes on her street uses the transfer station, while the others utilize curbside collection. One home pays for a second container, increasing their costs.

Selectman O'Brien expressed concern for community outreach in educating residents about recycling and waste collection concerns, as changing the present system arbitrarily may cause residents to feel somewhat abandoned, if changes are made without appropriate groundwork.

Tom Powers, PAYT Committee, opined the scenarios presented by the consultant to be too passive, and expressed concern that a 15-minute phone call could not possibly cover enough information to adequately inform residents of options or present services. He stated waste management contract figures do not translate well to inform residents of the costs for which they will be responsible.

Richard Vanderslice, Earth Decade Committee, stated merely reducing the number of trucks is not enough. He opined more work needs to be done in assessing options and determining need.

Town Manager Valente stated the transfer station must be kept open until decisions are made. The DPW Director indicated a new roll-off truck (\$90,000 cost) is necessary, but he is holding off on making the purchase while some of these issues are hammered out. Ms. Valente stated the Enterprise Fund appropriation article currently does not include any allocation for a change to curbside collection. Those figures would have to be increased within the next couple of weeks.

Selectman O'Brien suggested postponing Article 5 due to lack of sufficient information at this time. He opined another year would provide time to prepare a more comprehensive presentation for Annual Town Meeting. Otherwise, he opted to Report at Town Meeting on this matter. Selectman Drobinski agreed that reporting at Town Meeting would be preferable to the Board taking a position.

Chairman Roopenian thanked Mr. Merritt and Mr. Zettek for their presentation, and encouraged the PPT Committee and Earth Decade Committee to forward any questions to the Town Manager.

Donations to Fire Department Gift Account

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To accept a donation in the amount of \$10 from Daniel Difelice, 28 Camperdown Lane and another donation in the amount of \$25 from Robert and Suzanne Shapiro, 84 Cedar Creek Road, to be deposited in the Fire Department Gift Account, and expended by the Fire Chief.

Modified Site Plan #02-367/02-367M – Willow Hill School

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To receive an application dated February 25, 2004, for further modification of Site Plan 02-367/02-367M for Willow Hill School, 98 Haynes Road, and to set the hearing for March 16, 2004 at 7:45 p.m., to be conducted as proposed by Town staff with a limited hearing process.

Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey Budget Meeting

The Board was invited to attend a meeting scheduled for March 12 with Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey and other local officials to discuss the Governor's FY05 Budget recommendations. As the Town Manager will be out of town, it was agreed that Chairman Roopenian would attend.

Annual Town Meeting Action

Board Positions -- Chairman Roopenian opined information on Article 3 (Proposed Legislation for Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief) to be ever changing and suggested changing the Board's position to Report at Town Meeting. The Board concurred.

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To REPORT AT TOWN MEETING on Article 3 (previously Oppose).

Warrant Reports -- Town Manager Valente submitted changes to the wording in the Warrant Report for the Article 25 (Cutting Open Space and Recreation Proposal), which were submitted by the Community Preservation Committee. The Board approved the changes which are in the Warrant Report now.

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve and sign the Warrant for the 2004 Annual Town Meeting.

Constable Bond – Hanover Insurance Company

It was on motion unanimously

VOTED: To approve the surety of bond #BON-1563756 for Constable Lawrence E. Hartnett, Jr., from Hanover Insurance Company in the amount of \$5,000, effective March 16, 2003 for a three-year period, for filing with the Town Clerk.

Non-Binding Ballot Question

Town Manager Valente reported the Letter to the Editor has been submitted to the newspaper as well as information posted on the Town website, both announcing this question will be on the ballot and providing supporting information.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Attest: _____
Maureen G. Valente
Town Manager-Clerk