

# MINUTES OF SPECIAL STRAFFORD SELECTBOARD MEETING ON SOLID WASTE

June 1, 2015

Members of the public body present: John Freitag, Steve Marx, Toni Pippy, Brent Cadwell

Members of the public body not present: Brian Johnson

Other active participants: State Representatives Jim Masland and Tim Briglin, Jennifer Brown, Herald of Randolph Reporter, Vicki Eastman, Ed Eastman, Debbie Clark owner Durkee Rubbish Removal, Chip Lewis, Bob Bushway, Judy Bowden, Martha Manheim, Michael Scanlan and Dori Wolfe of Recycling Committee, Chris Gex, Steve Gex, Marie Ricketts, Lee Vormelker, Russ Farley, Karla Bushway, Calvin Benjamin, Mel Coburn, Sue Coburn, Kerry Claffey, Bill Risso, Sharon Risso, Carolyn Wilson, Don Bartlett, Jim Toher, District Manager of Casella.

Meeting at Barrett Hall called to order 7:05 p.m.

John outlined the purpose of the meeting which was to update and solicit input from the public on the Selectboard's ongoing efforts to find the best way to deal with provisions of Act 148 which require the mandatory recycling of metal, paper, glass and some plastic and at the same time a collapsing market for recyclables.

John turned over the floor to Representative Jim Masland who explained the reasons behind and the shortfalls of the legislation that was passed in 2012.

John then asked Casella District Manager Jim Toher to speak about how this large commercial waste company was going to deal with the changes in the law. Jim basically said the law, while doable for larger towns and cities was a considerable challenge for rural towns and his company was pushing for changes in the law. He said they would be sending out letters soon to their customers in Strafford. Both Mr. Masland and Mr. Toher were asked a good number of questions. Debbie Clark also talked about the difficulties involved with this new law. Representative Tim Briglin, who was elected this past year, added to the conversation, noting that it seemed to him that Strafford was already compiling with the intent of the law if not all its provisions.

Michael Scanlan, Chair of the Recycling Committee, then gave a power point presentation prepared by Dori Wolfe, Recycling Center Coordinator that showed various options in which the Recycling Center might reduce its costs. The Recycling Center budget is projected to be \$10,000 over budget this year due to increases in hauling fees and decreases in the value of all recyclable materials. All options would require some capital outlay and there are no funds available in the current year budget. The Selectboard is not in favor of spending money that has not been approved by the voters.

The discussion then turned to the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District (GUVSWD). John outlined the many benefits the GUVSWD provides for Strafford. The GUVSWD is supported primarily by a \$23/ton waste management fee levied on trash haulers in District towns. The GUVSWD also collects a per-capita fee which goes towards paying off the bonds on the purchase of a 175 acre parcel of land in North Hartland and the cost of building a bridge to access the 40 acre landfill on the site. Strafford's per-capita cost for this is \$12,675 per year. Melvin Coburn asked whether this money for a landfill which now there are no plans to put into operation might better be used for the recycling center. John replied that the Selectboard has asked the GUVSWD to look into the option of selling the landfill site. Judy Bowden, who was involved while living in Thetford on the acquisition of the North Hartland property, noted that this is the best site for a landfill in the state and it has a great deal of value and should be kept as a public resource.

John also noted that in reviewing all aspects of waste in Strafford, the Board is also looking at how the Town handles its own waste. In response to a question from Steven Gex the Board found that the cost of having a dumpster at the Town Garage was \$1,279 in 2014 compared with \$616 in 2012 the last year the Durkee

Rubbish Removal picked up the Town trash. The Board will be reviewing this further especially in light of new costs starting July 1.

Finally John noted that the Board in both looking at how to cover the increased cost of recycling and to provide a consistent policy is considering no longer paying the waste management fee for the Durkee Rubbish Removal. Durkee Rubbish Removal has the option of recouping the loss of this subsidy by increasing their fees. Some towns have instituted permit fees for recycling or tickets for each bag of trash collected in town to help with the new costs, but there are administrative cost to consider.

The Board will be considering all that has been said and the issue will be on the agenda for the next Selectboard meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Future Meetings:

Regular Selectboard Meeting June 10 at the Town Office at 6 p.m.

Regular Selectboard Meeting June 24 at the Town Office at 6 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni M. Pippy