

Town of Henniker
Solid Waste Disposal Committee
Thirty-Ninth Meeting: Thursday, October 14, 2010 at 7:00 PM
At The Grange

Approved Minutes

Present: Michael C. French, Lia Houk, John V. Kjellman, Linda Patterson, Rod Pimentel and Steven White.

Absent: Don Blanchard, Amanda Gilman

Chairman John Kjellman called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

- 1) Handouts: Agenda, Draft Minutes 9/9/10 and 9/23/10 meetings, statistics from 9/28/10 informational meeting.
- 2) Chairman John Kjellman began with his introduction:

John said a decision has been made not create a new director of public works position and that the Highway Department and the Transfer Station will continue to be managed separately. The Town is advertising for a new superintendent to replace Bob Pennock. The staff at the Transfer Station will be reduced from four to three after Bob retires.
- 3) The minutes of the September 9, 2010 meeting were reviewed. **Linda Patterson made a motion to accept the minutes without change. The motion was seconded by Rod Pimentel and passed unanimously.**
- 4) The minutes of the September 23, 2010 meeting were reviewed. **Rod made a motion to accept the minutes without change. The motion was seconded by Steven White and passed unanimously.**
- 5) John thanked Lia Houk for her help in getting out the word about our 9/28 meeting, and her help to Amanda Gilman during the 9/28 meeting. He also thanked Linda for making notes of the questions and comments that people made at the end of the presentation.
- 6) John reviewed the statistics he compiled from the 43 ballots that were cast at the informational meeting, as well as a list of the comments submitted on the ballots and comments and questions made at the meeting following the presentation. (The data were shown on one of the handouts.) He noted that while more people voted for no change as first choice (42%), only 30% voted for no change as 2nd choice, and 40% voted for single stream as 2nd choice. And a majority voted for some change (versus no change) for both 1st and 2nd choice. The 1st choice votes for change were 21% Mandatory, 19% PAYT, 16% Single stream, and 2% curbside pickup. The 2nd choice votes for change were 14% Mandatory, 7% PAYT, and 40% Single stream.
- 7) John then asked committee members for their thoughts on the meeting and the resulting statistics. Rod said that single-stream was a lot like steady-as-you-go, as it would just be simplifying the existing system. It was pointed out that it would require an up-front investment. Linda asked if anybody mentioned scales, and the answer was yes. Scales would eliminate the need to “guesstimate” the weight of C&D debris. Rod pointed out that we need to be mindful of how much we charge to dispose of C&D debris, relative to other towns. If we’re low, people may bring C&D debris from other towns to Henniker. There was a discussion about people who work in Henniker bringing their trash from other towns, for convenience or to save money. But it was pointed out that people who work in other towns may be taking trash from Henniker to those other towns. Linda made the point that we should be charging enough to cover our costs, regardless of what other towns charge. Rod said we need to be competitive with other towns, regardless of our costs.

Linda asked if we know what the impact will be on our tipping rate at the Penacook incinerator as a result of Naughton taking the trash it picks up to Berlin rather than Penacook. John said we have no way of knowing. There was further discussion about the Town's power to license the commercial haulers and perhaps require them to haul Henniker's trash to Penacook. John said it is not clear exactly what the Town can and can't do in that regard. It was agreed that the impact of Naughton hauling to Berlin rather than Penacook is not going to influence our costs very much.

Steven raised the question of whether or not the 70 people at the informational meeting were representative of the whole Town. It was agreed it wasn't a random sample of opinions, but the Committee was satisfied that it was reasonably representative of the Town as a whole.

Michael French said that the problem in N.H. is there is no state law that says people have to recycle. He said Vermont has a law saying no recyclable materials can go into landfills. If we had such a law it would change the dynamics of solid waste disposal.

Michael said more education won't have a big effect – we've been educating and educating for years. Linda said she disagreed, that many people don't know what's recyclable or not, and that we need more signage at the Transfer Station showing what is recyclable.

- 8) John asked Committee members what we should tell the Board of Selectmen during our 10/19/2010 meeting with the Board. Lia said that planning for single stream made sense, as well as some facility upgrades such as the addition of scales. Rod added that if we add single-stream and tipping fees go up, that it might be easier to add something like mandatory or PAYT because of the cost advantages. Michael asked why we shouldn't go for PAYT or mandatory now. Lia suggested those things wouldn't pass at town meeting this year. There's a lot of anxiety now and people don't want changes. Rod said if Concord and Hopkinton are successful with PAYT that will help us to move that way. The consensus was that this year is not a good year to introduce changes at the town meeting. Michael said we shouldn't be too concerned about losing the first vote, that it often takes multiple attempts to get changes passed at town meeting. It's a matter of persistence. Henniker has been stuck in a rut for a long time, while surrounding towns are moving forward with PAYT and mandatory recycling. Michael said we should move forward, too. Lia said the BOS should move forward to gather more data about the cost of implementing single-stream and PAYT. The BOS should also look at getting a truck scale and expanding the Transfer Station into the gravel pit to the north of the T/S, so we can have more options. Michael said we should ask the BOS for a budget to study the issue of changes at the T/S. John pointed out that we will soon have a new superintendent and that person should have a chance to make his or her own proposals. John also noted that if Pete Fernandes gets the job, he has said he could reduce costs with a three-person staff.
- 9) There was a discussion of the future of the Committee, and the fact that several members have the feeling our task is done, and want to resign from the Committee. John mentioned that Amanda Gilman said she was going to resign, and other members indicated they were thinking of resigning, also. The consensus was that the BOS should take the ball and run with it. John asked if the Committee should remain intact, and just not meet for a while. Rod and Michael said they would rather see the Committee disband, but they would consider joining a new revived committee, depending on the task assigned to that committee.
- 10) John said he thought the Recycling Committee should be combined with the Solid Waste Disposal Committee. Rod suggested a new name, The Solid Waste Committee. Lia said that was a good idea, she thought the Recycling Committee had gotten a bad name, and that a few people don't recycle just to spite the committee.
- 11) Michael asked John what he thought the Town should do. John said he thought PAYT was an obvious choice because it can be implemented cheaply and easily, and the single-stream made

sense for the longer term. He said the problem is that there are a number of things that need to be done at the Transfer Station, and cumulatively they could be expensive, even though they would save money long-term.

- 12) Rod said he has long thought there should be an ongoing solid waste committee that would advocate for change. Michael said the task of the solid waste committee should be waste reduction and cost reduction. Linda said the committee should review and have a say (advisory only) on contracts that are issued by the Transfer Station.
- 13) **A motion to adjourn was made by Linda Patterson at 8:24 PM. It was seconded by Lia Houk. The motion passed unanimously.**

Submitted by:
John V. Kjellman
10/29/2010

Approved 11/5/2010 by E-mail by 3/5 of those attending the meeting,
with no dissentions.