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MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Town Hall Auditorium
Monday, September 25, 2017
6:00 PM

APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: 12-18-2017

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Jim Williams in the Town Hall Auditorium. Selectmen Mark Paolillo and Adam Dash were present. Interim Town Administrator Phyllis Marshall was also present.

Chair Williams reviewed the agenda.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Dan Sharfman Run will be held on Sunday, October 1; registration is currently open.
- There will be a US Flag Retirement Ceremony on Saturday, October 14 at 10:00 a.m. at Clay Pit Pond.
- Belmont received the Government Sustainability Award – Ms. Mary Beth Calnan, Recycling Coordinator, explained the award.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

[There were none.]

ACTION BY CONSENT

Prepared Presentations on Trash-Related Topics

The following individuals appeared before the Board to discuss trash services in Belmont:

- Roger Colton, Chairman of the Energy Committee
- Kim Slack, Resident
- Wesley Chin, Health Department Director
- Jay Marcotte, Public Works Director
- Mary Beth Calnan, Recycling Coordinator

Mr. Roger Colton, Chairman of the Energy Committee

Mr. Colton began by explaining the process by which the trash collection conversation emerged in Belmont. He sought to find a middle way forward and has been meeting with many town employees and with Mr. Slack. He issued a report this past summer and he highlighted the key points:

- Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) is environmentally responsible.
- PAYT and automated trash collection are not mutually exclusive.
- The above two should not be implemented simultaneously.
- PAYT is financially and environmentally beneficial to the town.
- The town should aim for a 2019 roll-out of PAYT.
- It will be necessary to create a group of people to determine best practices for *how* to implement PAYT; time will be needed to develop this “how”.

Mr. Kim Slack, Resident

Mr. Slack stated that he will explain why PAYT should be included in the RFP that will be issued soon. He highlighted his reasons for this belief:

- Climate change needs to be addressed.
- Trash impacts the climate.
- A reduction in green-house gases is appropriate.
- Trash bag revenue is returned to residents (so it is not technically a tax).
- PAYT encourages recycling.
- Belmont will save money (and it costs nothing to include it in the RFP).

He then explained how PAYT works:

- Special bags are purchased by individuals who put out trash; these bags are more expensive, but PAYT encourages recycling and drives down the trash amount (because of the increase in recycling).
- The state will provide grant money to educate residents.

Mr. Wesley Chin, Health Department Director

Mr. Chin provided information on the increase of rats in Belmont. There is an uptick in Belmont (a 40% increase). If a resident has a concern, he/she should contact the Health Department. He explained that the Health Department will assess the property (for burrows, and other indicators) if rats are suspected. He provided some tips to discourage rats from properties. He advised residents to follow up with a professional pest control company.

Mr. Jay Marcotte, Director of DPW

Mr. Marcotte stated that there is no perfect option for trash collection. He reviewed Belmont’s status quo as well as some of the new options. A key proposal in the new setup is that residents will be allowed only *one* bulky item per week, going forward.

He reviewed the Automated Collection option; this was followed by the open discussion.

Open Discussion on Recommended Trash Services

Chair Williams noted that the discussions/votes would proceed on three distinct aspects of the trash service issue separately.

1) Curbside Recycling Service

Chair Williams noted that Belmont is likely to continue with dual-stream recycling (Belmont's current scheme). He invited the audience to comment on the continuance of the current curbside recycling service. He noted that the only significant change being proposed would be to limit bulky items to one per week per household.

Mr. Julian Croanes (?), of Agassi Ave, made two suggestions to improve recycling: have the recycled material picked up weekly (rather than every other week), and provide a place to recycle electronics.

Mr. Jirair Hovsepien, Chandler Street, noted that tenants move out and often toss large bulky items on the curb. What will happen to those items? Mr. Marcotte said it will be the landlord's responsibility to have the bulky items hauled away. Ms. Calnan explained the process by which landlords will be responsible.

Mr. Brusch, Radcliffe Road, asked if there will be a charge for the one bulky item. Mr. Marcotte said a fee has not yet been determined.

A Hull Street resident raised concerns about trash and recycling being left behind on the street. He was told in such a case concerned citizens should contact the DPW.

Selectmen Dash and Paolillo also provided feedback on this proposal (e.g., keeping recycling the same and limiting bulky to one item per week).

The Board moved: To approve curbside services as currently in place with the exception of limiting the number of bulky items to one per week, free of charge.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

2) PAYT / Collection Method - Traditional versus Automated

Mr. Marcotte stated that trash collection can be automated or traditional. PAYT is a financial model that is asking residents to pay for something that they, in fact, are already paying for in their taxes. He explained why automation works better with certain size containers. He also noted that waste management companies will no longer bid on traditional trash collection, so the status quo system has become obsolete – it would cost Belmont more to continue with the status quo.

Ms. Linda Oates, TMM Pct. 6, stated that the barrels proposed for automated collection (64 gallon) are too large for senior citizens. She added that buying bags is a burden to put on residents and that, as a cost increase, this should be put on a town-wide ballot as an override issue.

Mr. Steve Rosales, TMM Pct. 8, stated that charging for trash feels like “death by a thousand cuts.” This is, in fact, an underhanded override, without a vote. This town made a commitment to residents about trash collection in 1990. He expressed concern about the current containers. He said he is against PAYT, as it amounts to an override. If the town goes with PAYT, he will never vote for another override again as a trust has been broken.

Mr. Don Mercier spoke about barrel recycling labels. He said he is against PAYT.

Ms. Judith Ananian Sarno, TMM Pct. 3, stated that she favors the status quo for trash collection. Residents are angry about paying more, and angry that they have not heard more about this issue. She suggested that no votes be taken tonight and that a broader cross section of residents be sought out. Concerning automated pick-up, if a car is parked in front of a trash bin, the trash will not be collected. This will be very challenging in Belmont, as out-of-town commuters park on streets all day as people commute into Boston. Residents will be unhappy (with PAYT) yet you will be asking them to pass several debt exclusion and overrides on the future.

Mr. Jonathan Gilman, Claflin Street, said that those who are already recycling will be penalized by this. The large barrels will be difficult to fill. He said he is opposed to PAYT. This requires residents to put in extra effort.

Mr. Martin Plass, Stanley Road, discussed the environmental and convenience impacts to trash collection. He noted that this (PAYT) will save the town money. He said the times have changed since 1990. He said he favors PAYT with the smaller barrels.

Mr. Thomas Nehrkorn, Payson Road, spoke in support of PAYT to reduce trash.

Mr. Mark Davis, Emerson St., spoke in favor of PAYT for environmental reasons as well as for the reduction of trash.

Mr. Claus Becker, Poplar Street, TMM Pct. 5, stated that he is in support of PAYT for environmental reasons.

Ms. Chris Kochem, TMM Pct. 8, spoke about the Town Meeting discussion about this topic back in the spring, noting that the motion was for the Board to consider options: TM explicitly did *not* “endorse” PAYT. The 1990 vote was very hard to get passed and to repurpose that money is disrespectful to voters. She reiterated that cars parking in front of barrels was an issue. She expressed concern about enforcement around recycling. The status quo option feels the best.

Mr. Bill Wallace, Harriet Ave., stated that PAYT is a regressive tax. He noted that it hits young families and the elderly hard. He suggested making this an override, since it is charging residents. He said he is not in favor of PAYT. He stated the cheapest option is best.

Ms. Karen Sapolsky, Edgemore Street, stated that the status quo should be extended, as residents are not well informed at all about this issue or about the small study that was conducted. She stated that this change is not convenient. She said a 64-gallon barrel is too big; 48 is fine. The status quo is fine.

Ms. Calnan explained the information that was distributed on this topic. Much of this information is on the DPW website. Mr. Marcotte further explained the communications efforts.

Mr. Joel Semuels, 18 Bellevue Road, TMM Pct. 6 and COA member, said that the seniors are unaware of this change. He noted that taxes will not decrease. Therefore this is a fee/tax on residents. He noted that this is another burden in addition to several debt exclusions that are coming down the road. He noted that there will be administrative fees in executing PAYT that have not been considered.

Mr. Michael Crowley, TMM Pct. 8, stated that the 64-gallon barrels are too big. He is in favor of PAYT. This is not a tax – it is a fee.

Ms. Jenny Marusiak, 23 Chester Road, TMM, Pct. 6, stated that PAYT is not much different from what is happening now. She said this is a more fair option to the kids of Belmont.

Ms. Cabell Eames, 26 Lewis Road, said she is favor of PAYT as a mother and an environmentalist. This is an option now and it won't be an option in the future. This is best for the generations to come. This will help the planet.

Mr. Roy Epstein, TMM Pct. 6, WC Chair, read a statement, which was not in support of PAYT. TM did not endorse PAYT, he reiterated, it endorsed exploring the issue. There are many issues with concern to trash policy in town. There are many costs that are currently unknown. Residents want a convenient solution; Belmont currently has a system that works. There is a current factual void, with regard to these new options. Snow will complicate where to place barrels. There are many issues that need to be explored more thoroughly before a decision is made. He spoke to the cost of disposing trash per tonnage. The majority of the cost goes to the trucks removing trash, not to the disposal of the trash. There has not been a sustained public discourse on this topic.

Mr. Bob Singler, 53 Selwyn Road, spoke to the challenges of this because of the parking regulations and the narrow roads in town.

Mr. Geoff Lubien, WC Member, asked why this decision needs to be made now? Mr. Marcotte explained the RFP process. Chair Williams added that the decision needs to be made by mid-October and not much will change between now and then. He suggested a potential timeline going forward. Mr. Marcotte explained the benefits with automated trash pick-up, noting that there are additional costs to this method.

Ms. Kerri Klugman, Jeannette Ave., said she is favor of PAYT. Her out-of-town landlord throws his trash on her curb.

Mr. John O'Connor, TMM Pct. 5, stated that he is not in favor of PAYT. This is another fee for living in Belmont. Loose trash bags will add to the rodent problem.

Mr. Glenn Herosian, TMM Pct. 2, said the status quo is working well and that residents are

recycling well. He suggested no vote be taken tonight. This needs to be vetted more carefully. Convenience is very important to people in town.

Mr. Walley Williams, Orchard Street, is against PAYT. He said he produces a very small amount of trash and the roads are very narrow. The town needs to teach residents to recycle more.

Mr. Bob Sarno, TMM Pct. 3, said he is opposed to PAYT and he is an avid recycler and supports recycling. PAYT feels like a coercive program and a regressive tax. A longer public process would have been helpful. He asked about the RFP process and its timeline. Chair Williams provided some background information on the process as well as on the work that has been done. Mr. Marcotte noted that automated trash collection has occurred in dense cities – e.g., Brookline, Nashua, NH, etc. – and that an educational process will take place.

Ms. Ellen Draper, Fieldmont Road, stated she is for PAYT. She requested that PAYT is kept as an option.

The Board then discussed issues relating to trash collection: recycling rates, size of barrels, automation, the RFP bid process, overflow bags, trash reduction, and the PAYT option.

Selectman Paolillo asked several questions of Mr. Marcotte. He said he is not prepared to make a decision tonight.

Selectman Dash noted that he has been thinking about this issue for a long time. The PAYT option does return money back to the town. It is not all that inconvenient to buy bags. The status quo is not the way of the future. This will save money and it will help the environment. He said the 35-gallon container (with an automated system) will give residents the option of overflow bags, if the 35 size is not enough. The current system is not working for Belmont.

Mr. Marcotte stated that the 35-gallon container will be challenging as it relates to the bid process. He noted that 45-gallon might be a better option. The automated system is better designed for the 64-gallon.

Ms. Calnan said that if the barrel is too small, people will misuse the recycling bin and contaminate the recycling.

Chair Williams stated that the 64-gallon barrel is what the DPW is recommending. He asked what is the accommodation for people who do not need such a large container. Mr. Marcotte said those who request a 35-gallon barrel will receive one as a special accommodation.

Trash collection issues were further discussed by the Board, e.g., recycling rates, size of barrels, automation, the RFP bid process, overflow bags, trash reduction, and the PAYT option.

The Board then prepared to vote.

The Board moved: To approve the recommendation of the DPW to prepare an RFP for

automated trash collection using 64-gallon barrels, with consideration for a 35-gallon barrel option or similar accommodation, as required.

The Board discussed the motion. Selectman Dash expressed his support for the 35-gallon barrel. Selectman Paolillo reiterated the reasons to support the 64-gallon barrel.

The motion passed (2-1).

3) PAYT

The Board discussed PAYT vis-a-vis Mr. Colton's recommendations. Selectman Dash noted that the 35-gallon barrel would have obviated the PAYT option. Selectman Paolillo stated that he is not in support of PAYT, but that the DPW can continue to explore it.

The Board took a 5-minute recess at 9:58 p.m.

Discussion related to the Opening and Closing of the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting (STM) to be held November 13, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. at Chenery Middle School

This agenda item was deferred.

Discussion Regarding Committee Appointments – Term Limits

This agenda item was deferred.

Vote to Approve Contract for Belmont Librarian's Association

Ms. Jessica Porter, HR Director, and Ms. Elaine Alligood, Library Trustees Vice Chair, appeared before the Board to discuss the contract for Belmont Librarian's Association. Ms. Porter provided a brief overview of the agreement: a 6.8% increase over three years, a 1.5% COLA increase, and a re-classification of the positions. Also, holiday time (Christmas Eve half day) and the inclement weather policy were among the re-negotiated items.

The Board moved: To approve the contract for the Belmont Librarian's Association.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Request for the MCPWG (Major Capital Projects Working Group) Warrant Article at Special Town Meeting (STM)

Ms. Anne Marie Mahoney, MCPWG Chair and Capital Budget Committee Chair, and Mr. Roy Epstein, MCPWG member and Warrant Committee Chair, appeared before the Board to discuss the MCPWG Warrant Article at STM. Ms. Mahoney stated that the MCPWG is requesting an article to appropriate funds for schematic design for short-term solutions for a Police and DPW building committee.

Ms. Marshall stated that this article will be before the Board when the warrant is voted.

Approval of a Common Victualler License for CLC Café (Robert Pelletier) at 442 Common Street, Belmont

Mr. Rob Pelletier, Owner of CLC Café, appeared before the Board to discuss the license for CLC Café.

Ms. Marshall stated that the paperwork is order and the café will open on Wednesday, September 27.

The Board moved: To approve the Common Victualler license, details noted above.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Town Administrator's Report


Ms. Marshall reported on the following items:

- **Financial Summit:** This meeting needs to be rescheduled, as the LWV briefing is currently scheduled to be held on October 30. The Board will change their meeting time to earlier.

NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Homer Building

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m.



Ms. Phyllis Marshall, Interim Town Administrator