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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AUDITORIUM-TOWN HALL
6:00 P.M.

APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: 05-07-2018

2018 MAY 10 PM 2:09

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair James Williams in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectman Adam Dash was present. Vice Chair and Selectman Mark Paolillo was present.

Chairman James Williams motioned to move into the first executive session. Selectman Adam Dash and Mark Paolillo voted in favor of the motion. The meeting moved to executive session.

II. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Chinese New Year! Happy Lunar New Year!

This year is the year of the dog. The dog is the 11th animal in the Chinese zodiac. It's a symbol of loyalty and honesty. People who are born on the year of the dog are said to be honest, friendly, faithful, loyal, smart, straightforward, venerable, and responsible.

The Selectmen appreciated yesterday's New Year show and celebration. They were thankful for being invited.

III. QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

(Please contact the Town Administrator's office before noon on 2/12)

IV. ACTION BY CONSENT

**6:00 P.M. Solid Waste and Recycling Contract Discussion
Vote on Automated versus Manual Recycling**

The speaker was asked to introduce himself for the public.

Jay Marcotte Director of Public Works was present.

Jay Marcotte explained that the proceedings were meant to follow up on last week's amendment vote for the current hauler contract and future contracts. The town is faced with one option of single stream recycling collection.

Jay Marcotte recalled events from last year leading up to the changes which will be discussed through the meeting. China developed a national sorting program telling the rest of the world to "clean up their act." China is the largest buyer and seller of recyclables in the world. Due to high levels of contaminated recycling that ends up as trash national SWORD

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was initiated setting strict standards, communicating to the rest of the world that they cannot send China their garbage.

As a result of the aforementioned changes U.S. Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) were forced to invest in cleaning up their act. Processing fees drastically increased across the country while the value of recycling plummeted. MRFs had to invest in more line workers, better infrastructure, better equipment. More costs were created while processing was slowed down and recycling stockpiled.

A year ago MRFs had two ways to process recycling: dual stream and single stream. The majority of communities in the Boston area are single stream whether automated or manual. Most of Massachusetts is also single stream. MRFs invested in single stream equipment and phased out dual stream recycling.

Jay Marcotte began discussing the town's present circumstances. As of July 1, 2018 Belmont will be collecting single stream recycling because there are no other options. The town does have an option as to how single stream recycling is collected. Our choices are:

- **Manual single stream recycling** - clean recycling is collected from toters currently in use, separating recycling is not necessary, \$30,000 savings because new toters will not be purchased
- **Automated single stream recycling** - clean recycling is collected from newly provided 96 gallon toters, separating recycling is not necessary

The purpose of this meeting was inform that Board of Selectmen and the community of the available options. The town is definitely transitioning to single stream recycling and has the option to have recycling processed manually or automatically. Public Works recommended automated single stream recycling however the town could manage with manual collection for the first contract if manual was preferred. After the first contract the town could transition from manual collection to automated.

(Question) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: Is it the same hauler that collects the recycle and the trash?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct. The town's current vendor can do a complete package including yard waste, trash, and recycling.

(Question) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: Is it manual or automated? What happens if it's automated trash collection, but manual recycling collection by the same hauler?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: The only change for us would be how the haulers are investing in equipment for collection. If we choose automated collection then then they will invest in equipment for automated recycling collection. If we choose manual that's a completely different piece of equipment.

(Question) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: Is it two separate trucks for recycling and garbage?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Yes. Two separate trucks.

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: For single stream can the community use their current containers or the 96 gallon totes? Why does it need to be a 96 gallon container?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: A 96 gallon container is the standard. It's what works best for most communities. A 64 gallon container for trash that is picked up every week and a 96 gallon automated single stream recycling container picked up bi-weekly is what is working for most communities.

(Answer) Chair James Williams: Cardboard also goes in there. Everything goes in there.

Jay Marcotte added that he has worked out a cardboard deal with the town's current haulers where they would host cardboard recycling events which would take the good cardboard that has value out of the recycling stream and the town wouldn't have to pay for it. Cardboard recycling events would be advantageous to the town because the town wouldn't have to pay to process it.

Glass which no longer has value as a recyclable is costing the town \$23 per ton. Therefore, the town loses \$23 when glass is put in the recycling. The state of Massachusetts has banned glass from being discarded as trash.

Chair James Williams: Dual stream required paper to be separated from other recyclables in order to be processed. Single stream has everything thrown into one bin. The change to single stream is related to what the MRFs were willing to process.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: With dual stream citizens tend to make an effort to only contribute recyclable items while single stream brings contamination which costs the town more money. Single stream might encourage an increase in recycling which is a good thing, but there might be some contamination as a byproduct.

Jay Marcotte: That is absolutely correct. That is part of the MRFs formula for blended recycling pricing. Contamination is considered as part of the cost.

Chair James Williams: We have talked about doing a seasonal cardboard recycling event at the DPW, but additionally we could do a monthly cardboard recycling because the haulers will take the cardboard away for free. Would the haulers take the cardboard away monthly?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Yes, that is being discussed for the next contract. We are currently doing a seasonal event.

Chair James Williams: We could have a monthly DPW event which would reduce the tonnage, reduce the town's costs, and is environmentally responsible.

Jay Marcotte: If the cardboard is taken out of the recycling stream through cardboard collection events the haulers would take the cardboard away at no charge because it would be separated completely out of the processing.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: So at the monthly event we are paying the hauler to come down and get the cardboard even though we are using our facilities.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct. It's their container. It's their truck. It's their processor.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: Right, they don't have to pick it up. We bring it to the yard the DPW so there has to be some cost savings by my driving down with my jeep filled with cardboard on a monthly basis. They do haul it away, but I would think the cost to the processors would be less. Is that true? We would be the one's bring it to them.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: We are still in negotiations with the vendor. Bringing the cardboard to the DPW is effort on our end to keep it clean.

Selectman Adam Dash: People could still put the cardboard in the bin if they wanted to?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct.

Chair James Williams remarked that the town's recycling cost is based on tonnage therefore items removed from the recycling will reduce the tonnage and town's cost.

What is and is not recyclable for single stream recycling:

All recyclables should be rinsed or lightly cleaned before placed in recycling bins for collection

RECYCLABLE

- Cardboard - Recyclable
- Paper - Recyclable
- Milk cartons, juice cartons - Recyclable
- Glass - Recyclable
- Any glass, plastic, or metal container that has a lid and could be found in the kitchen or bathroom
 - Plastics #1 through #7 - Recyclable
 - Plastics #1 and #2 have the most recycling value
 - Plastic #5 are becoming valuable
 - Plastics #3 through and #7 have a charge

NOT RECYCLABLE

- Plastic wrap or film - Not recyclable
- Products that have a lot of grease or food on them - Not Recyclable
- Plastic bags - Not single stream recyclable, bring to plastic bags drops at local supermarket

Marybeth Calnan, Recycling Coordinator stated that whatever is recyclable currently for dual stream will continue to be recyclable with single stream recycling. We want people to

recycle and we want them to do it right. Non-recyclable items added to the recycling is contamination.

Jay Marcotte: Right now the town pays \$65 per ton for trash disposal. Recycling and processing fees are in the mid \$40s. Processing contaminated recycling material is cheaper than trash.

(Question) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: So putting glass in the recycling is contamination and it doesn't belong in the trash but putting it in the recycling costs less than having it processed through the trash?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct. Glass is banned by the state because it's a recyclable product therefore the cost to process it is \$45, but if we tell the community to throw glass away as trash then we will be paying more because trash processing is more expensive.

Selectman Adam Dash: If we did manual pickup single stream there wouldn't be any change for the residents. Considering all the changes that are being made to the trash maybe that's best.

(Question) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: It's the same thing right?

(Answer) Selectman Adam Dash: People have been complaining about the size of the 64 gallon bin and now we want to give them a 96 gallon bin?

(Answer) Chair James Williams: Last time we didn't have a 96 gallon container here, but now that we do it doesn't look all that different from the 64 gallon container. To me doesn't look too much different.

Doug Koplow of Precinct 6 wanted to make the point that there's a difference between the market value of a commodity at a point in time and what is actually recyclable. Glass is very recyclable, but with the current changes and closing of processing facilities glass isn't very marketable, presently.

(Question) Chair James Williams: Has glass ever been recyclable or do we just put glass in the recycle because it can't be burned with the trash?

(Answer) Doug Koplow: Glass used to be very recyclable. It was washed and then refilled. Some companies would take different colored glass and blend it together to make new bottles. Glass has been having trouble on the market for a long time. One of the solutions was to crush the glass and use it as a cover to landfills while calling this recycling. Similar issue are happening with plastic and metal bottles.

Doug Koplow wanted to make a statement that the markets are fluid including the markets in China. As such the town should plan for the possibility that the market could change following the town's first single-stream contract.

(Question) Doug Koplow: The cost differential for the barrels {automated single stream recycling} is lower than I was expecting {in comparison to manual single stream recycling} because the barrels cost \$50-60 each. I'm assuming that this is because there are saving and collection costs that are generating benefits for the town?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: The barrels are \$53 each. The cost between automated and manual single stream processing is similar because the driver still has to come around and put the barrel into the hopper. There's efficiency to scale which is why there is a difference in the price.

(Question) Chair James Williams: How many barrels do we have to buy?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: 10,064 and 10,096.

(Question) James Williams: Just for recycling we'd buy 10,000? So that would be \$530,000 and your advertising in this report is over five years?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct.

(Question) Doug Koplow : I was glad to hear that I can still put corrugated in curbside. I see enormous volume of cardboard at people's homes. Is that barrel big enough to hold cardboard and two weeks of recycling? What has the experience been in towns where people are using these barrels for collect?

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: For every other week recycling collection the 96 gallon totes are recommended. If you flatten your cardboard you will most likely get your cardboard in there.

(Question) Chair James Williams: If we go automated, you can't put cardboard alongside the container it has to go inside the container.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: If you did manual pickup it would be unlimited recycling basically? You wouldn't have to stuff it in the tub.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte : Correct. There's no limit to manual collection of recycling.

Marybeth Calnan stated that there are positives and negatives to both manual and automated collection. Automated collection keeps the streets clean because we get a lot of calls about littering especially about the light weight plastic. It would also keep the recycling dry. Manual collection of recycling is unlimited whereas with automated collection there is a limit of 96 gallons every two weeks.

(Question) Roy Epstein, Chair of the Warrant Committee approached Jay Marcotte with two questions: Is the price that we are quoted for the curbside pickup predicated on the expectation that there will be a certain amount of cardboard in the waste stream? If the cardboard was diverted significantly due to people bringing cardboard to the town yard would there be an adjustment upward because the recycling isn't as valuable?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte replied by saying that processing fees are determined as percentages based on averages and that average is charged to the town based on the average for the month. In the Commonwealth the average resident's recycle is made up of about 60% paper products, 19.2% cardboard, 41.6% all other paper which has been taken into consideration as part of the processing fee formula. We aren't going to get every piece of cardboard out, but that is part of the negotiations that the town would like to continue doing cardboard special collection events.

(Question) Roy Epstein clarified that he would like to know if cardboard collection events reduces the amount of cardboard being recycled via manual or automated collection, will the processor charge more because the collection was less than estimated by automated collection?

(Answer) Chair James Williams: Yes, but if that's the case then the town can stop doing the cardboard pickup at DPW monthly. If taking the cardboard to DPW is a disadvantage to the town then we won't do it.

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: This value isn't just based on Belmont. It's based on the Commonwealth and all of the trucks that use the same MRF.

(Question) Roy Epstein's second question regards the payback of transitioning to automated single stream recycling. In the first couple of years we have to recover the cost of the containers. Essentially we need seven years before we break even, but after that point we are ahead \$70,000 by going automated. Realistically, we are talking about a very long horizon because the lifecycle isn't just the seven years of the contract. Once the containers are out there the town would use them for another seven year cycle and so forth so we are talking about a gain of \$70,000 or more well into the future. It doesn't seem accurate to say that automated is a break even when it saves the town money well into the future. Over 30-50 years the automated would actually be much cheaper than the manual.

(Answer) Selectman Adam Dash: The barrels aren't necessarily going to last forever. Eventually the town will have to buy new barrels.

(Answer) Roy Epstein: Then it's a matter of how long the barrels are expected to last.

(Answer) Selectman Adam Dash: The market could also change for recyclables to the point that the circumstances change again like they are changing now.

Chair James Williams presented an opportunity for questions or comments by the community. There were no additional questions or comments.

(Question) James Williams: If we are under manual and this change hadn't taken place in recycling would the collection have been free?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Possibly. Correct.

(Question) Chair James Williams: Under our old contract we had a deal with them that they would pick up the recycling and they would keep the upside and we didn't pay for it. That was pretty much the deal right?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct. I think the way to word it would be to say that processing would be free because collecting is still pretty expensive.

(Question) Chair James Williams: Even now before we change the contract, we are paying for collection of the recyclables?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct. The prices that you saw in the estimated price line were just for collection that didn't include the processing.

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: Collection just for recycling?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct.

(Question) Chair James Williams: It costs about as much to do that now?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Yes, well it's actually less, but we are talking about much older equipment. There are a lot of dynamics as to why we are paying less now with the current contract.

(Question) Chair James Williams: How much does it cost now?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: About \$460,000.

(Question) Chair James Williams: This whole market change is resulting in \$250,000-\$300,000 on a \$1.8 million dollar cost.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Correct.

(Answer) Chair James Williams: So what is that? It's like a 15% increase on the recyclables.

(Question) Chair James Williams: We don't have any minimum recyclable tonnage to pick up right? We are doing 700 tons a year in recyclables?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: No we are doing close to 1,500 tons.

(Question) Chair James Williams: So as far as collection goes it's based on tonnage?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: No, pricing is based on the number of stops. They look at how many dwellings they need to stop at and they charge accordingly.

(Question) Chair James Williams: So the \$400,000 that we are paying now is essentially a stop charge?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: When it comes to recycling in the dual stream aspect that we had part of the marketing that Russell got/received/had the risk on part of their business plan had that offset some of the true cost of collecting. This is what I have been told. That is why there is such a shift in collection for recycling now is that there is no more value at the gate for the product. Therefore, they are charging us the full cost of the collection.

(Question) Chair James Williams: Even though we thought that the contractor was picking up the entire benefit for the price of recycling they were actually giving us a kind of break on the collection cost which resulted in the \$400,000.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: That's what we think yes.

Phil Thayer Town Meeting Member of Precinct Six stated that he was in favor of automated trash and manual recycling collection with the switch to the smaller bin. This will potentially preserve the town's options if the value in materials changes.

(Answer) Chair James Williams: The two bins stationed near the Selectmen are just examples. The 64 gallon toter is for collecting trash and is not under debate. To your point that keeping the current green recycling bins and having manual single stream recycling will save money in the long run if the market changes again back to dual stream recycling then we can continue using the same green bins in future contracts, yes that might be true.

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: It's very difficult when you have a community that is doing single stream to go back to dual stream. I don't know anyone who does that.

Chair James Williams clarified that Phil Thayer was making the point that if the commodities have value again and if the market changes and if we are still using the green bins that would give us the flexibility of going back.

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: What would be the benefit of going back to dual stream? What benefit does dual stream recycling have on Belmont?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Once the town moves to single stream collection we cannot go back. The infrastructure will be set in place. The trucks that they are buying are for single stream recycling only. So we will be committed for five years of collection as manual single stream or automated single stream.

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: Single stream collection comes with a processing fee. Dual stream never had a processing fee. Single stream processing works by delivering the recycled paper at a fiber warehouse and receiving a rebate for that material. Then recycled containers would go in with the rest of the single stream to be sorted without a charge. Marybeth Calnan made the point that there is always going to be a processing fee which will never go down. The only way to make money will be if the recycling market improves so that we can get a rebate. We have no control over this aspect.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: Do we want to spend half a million on barrels?

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: Do we think that more people will participate in single stream recycling if everything can be dumped in one barrel?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: There are challenges with single stream recycling. Where people have no more room in their trash so they throw their trash in the 96 gallon recycling container and off it goes. That's why we are in this situation across the country due to contamination of materials.

(Question) Chair James Williams: What are the other benefit of going to automated collection? Is it slightly less expensive over time and easier because there are fewer containers?

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: It cuts down on litter and keeps the recycling dry.

(Question) Chair James Williams: Wet recycling is a problem?

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: Yes, it's a contamination.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Wet cardboard is thrown away. It's trash.

Marybeth Calnan said that one of the benefits that was not mentioned and was brought to her attention by Mike Santoro. Prevention of rodents is a benefit of having automated single stream recycling because both garbage and recycling will be in totes with lids. The health department favors automated single stream collection.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: Which of these options: automated or manual single stream is more likely to incentivize people to recycle?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: It's easier to have one container to bring out to the curb. Bringing out multiple recycling carts can be a hassle.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: But is it worth half a million dollars? If we can continue the recycling that we have single stream with the existing containers that people utilize then we don't have to buy containers.

(Question) Town Administrator Patrice Garvin: Are the manual collection trucks going to be phased out and replaced by automated trucks? If we go out to bid in five years are the bids even going to have a manual option? If they do, will they be more expensive?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: Right now our dual stream is being collected by a split body truck so when a contract is signed they will invest in manual collection style truck that opens along the side with one body. When the contract is up in year five, the contractor will ask if the town wants to convert to automated or not in order to save on "x" "y" "z". Trash collection is typically a two person operation in a manual system and a one person operation for automated collection which is why we are looking at considerable saving in trash even with the containers. The return on the investment is almost immediate. For recycling it's different. The return isn't recognized until year eight. If the markets are favorable down the road we are always going to have a processing fee, but if the markets are bad we are going to have a higher processing fee. The way we can control our costs is with automation.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo stated that he is willing to go with the DPW's recommendation.

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: What considerations are made for seniors in town? Could we get them smaller recycling bins?

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: We have a list.

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: That is something that we would be looking at. We will look at it on a case by case basis.

(Answer) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: They can make a request.

Jay Marcotte made the point that the recycling barrels will be issued to the property which could change hands, be bought and sold. The barrel stays with the property which is why everyone will be issued a 64 gallon trash and on a case by case basis we will assess the need.

Phil Thayer wanted to know what will happen if a household's recycling doesn't all fit in the 96 gallon container? If the town has automated collection, then anything outside of the one recycling bin will not be picked up.

(Answer) Vice Chair Mark Paolillo: There are two trucks. Households will receive one 64 gallon container for trash and if the town choses automated recycling then households will be issued a 96 gallon recycling container. Trash and recycling will not be placed in the same container since there are two separate bins.

(Question) Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo: What happens to the current recycling toters?

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: There was a market for rigid plastics, but they aren't collecting them anymore so the current toters should be used for another purpose if the town switches to automated processing.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: How long do the bins last? Or are they a 15-20 year product?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: The warranty is for ten years. When automated processing was implemented in Nashua, New Hampshire in 2003 many of the residents are still using their original bins.

Doug Koplow wanted to know what the average amount of recycling is for other town's with automated biweekly collection.

(Answer) Marybeth Calnan: The average, as I can recall, was 48 gallons. Some will have more and some will have less.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo said that regardless of what is decided there needs to be a significant amount of education along with this change. There will be a hotline and seniors might have needs that the town will need to address.

Vice-Chair Mark Paolillo moved to proceed with the RFP single stream recycling automated pickup. Selectman Adam Dash seconded the motion. All the Selectmen voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed at (7:11pm).

Jay Marcotte: We don't have a contract to sign tonight. Once we do have a contract they will order their equipment which will be about 5 months out. They understand that the equipment

won't arrive by July 1st so they will be phased into use preferably starting at the end of the summer or beginning of the fall. We have been talking with the current vendor about having recycling events, barrels everywhere, education, PSAs, a possible commercial. We are ready for a full comprehensive outreach program.

(Question) Selectman Adam Dash: When does our current contract end?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: June 30th.

(Question) Adam Dash: What are we going to do in the meantime?

(Answer) Jay Marcotte: They are equipped to pick up exactly how we do business now.

James Williams and Mark Paolillo moved to adjourn. Adam Dash seconded. All the Selectmen voted in favor of adjourning (7:14pm).

Next Meeting: February 26, 2018 8:15 A.M. Board of Selectmen Room – Town Hall

While every effort is made to ensure that the agenda items are scheduled to the specified time as listed, some items may take more or less time than allotted.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator