

First Selectman's Waste Management Committee (FSWMC)

Meeting Minutes, Feb 18, 2021

1. **Call to Order and Attendance:** The meeting was called to order at 3:35 PM
Committee Members Present- Cheryl Moss, Co-Chair; Mike Basham, Co-Chair; Scott Kalb, Secretary; Alison Ghiorse, RTM; Dan Ozizmir, RTM; Greg Addonizio, Aux Delices; Michael Wolpensinger, Greenwich Hospital; Tom Conelias, Hauler. Committee Members Absent- James Santaguida, Hauler; Angelo Pucci, Hauler; JR Maestro, Brunswick. Guests -
2. **FSWMC Recommendations:** The Committee deliberated on FSWMC Recommendations presented by Chairs Cheryl Moss and Mike Basham. To start, the committee expressed its appreciation to member Dan Ozizmir for suggesting that an interim set of recommendations be presented to the First Selectman and for making an early draft of the recommendations. The committee also expressed its appreciation of the hard work, collaborative efforts, and collegial spirit of all members working together on behalf of the town in the FSWMC.

The FSWMC Recommendations contained eight items and each was discussed and voted on.

- a) Item 1, **"Eliminate the sunset provision for the Tipping Ordinance..."** A motion was made and seconded to amend Item 1 to **"Extend the sunset provision for the Tipping Ordinance to the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2022..."** During discussion, Mike Basham and Dan Ozizmir argued against the amendment, stating that tipping fees had worked well and that as there was no likely alternative, the committee should recommend terminating the sunset clause immediately. Scott Kalb argued in favor of the amendment, stating that extending the sunset clause is appropriate, given that the committee is asking for an extension to complete its final report (Item 4) and that all final recommendations should be made as part of the final report. He noted that this would be consistent with Item 2, a recommendation to extend permit sales to June 30, 2022.

The committee voted 5-3-0 in favor of the amendment.

The "no" votes were based on the against arguments noted above.

- b) Item 2, **"Extend Holly Hill Access permit sales at \$25 until June 30, 2022..."** and Item 3, **"Review Holly Hill Access permit fee solutions..."** were taken up together. During discussion, Tom Conelias mentioned that when the committee came up with a new recommendation regarding permit fees, it should only take 3 months to implement the new solution. However, other committee members felt that implementing a solution in the middle of the fiscal year would be too complicated.

With no objection, Items 2 and 3 were passed by unanimous consent.

- c) Item 4, **"Request the First Selectman to extend the FSWMC until September 15, 2021..."** During discussion, members felt comfortable that the final report could be delivered by September and noted the importance of providing recommendations to the current RTM body for approval prior to the end of the year.

With no objection, Item 4 was passed by unanimous consent.

- d) Item 5, **“Explore unit-based volume and weight pricing mechanisms that reflect residential, commercial, and non-profit MSW disposal costs fairly and equitably.”** A motion was made and seconded to shorten the Item to **“Explore unit-based volume and weight pricing mechanisms.”**
With no objection, Item 5 was passed by unanimous consent.
- e) Item 6, **“Express the committee’s interest in developing economic solutions to separate organic waste from MSW and transport it efficiently...”** During discussion, the members agreed that developing economic solutions for the treatment of food waste hold the most promise for reducing waste and saving money for the town.
With no objection, Item 6 was passed by unanimous consent.
- f) Item 7, **“Create a Town website...”**
With no objection, Item 7 was passed by unanimous consent.
- g) Item 8, **“Evaluate alternatives for improving SSR.”** During discussion, members agreed that an evaluation of SSR alternatives should be included in the final report, especially given the rising trend of disposal costs for SSR, noting the increase to \$85/ton expected for the spring of 2021.
With no objection, Item 8 was passed by unanimous consent.

The FSWMC voted on the final form of the recommendations, as amended. During discussion, there was unanimous agreement on Items 2 - 8 but opinion remained divided on Item 1. A final vote was taken and the FSWMC Recommendations passed as amended 4-1-3. The “no” vote and the three abstentions expressed unease with the lack of consensus on Item 1. A copy of the FSWMC Recommendations are added to these minutes.

- 3. **“Plastic Bag” Ordinance:** Cheryl Moss proposed the committee support the First Selectman with a letter of support from the FSWMC for the removal of the sunset clause on the plastic bag ordinance. She noted that maintaining the plastic bag ordinance is consistent with the mission of the FSWMC, that the ordinance has worked well in reducing thin film plastic bags in the waste stream and from littering public parks, beaches, and parking lots in town. Moreover, merchants in town were generally supportive and have adjusted to the ordinance with little impact on business. Committee members were supportive of the idea. Cheryl suggested that she would circulate a draft of a letter to members and absent any objections, she would submit the letter to the RTM on behalf of the Committee.
- 4. **Next meeting:** The committee felt it important to present the recommendations to the First Selectman and to the Commissioner of the DPW as soon as possible, to get their input and suggestions. The next meeting was therefore set for Feb 24 at 3:30 PM with an invitation issued to the First Selectman and to the Commissioner to attend.
- 5. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:20PM

FSWMC Recommendations: As Approved

1. **Extend the Sunset Provision** of the Tipping Ordinance until the end of fiscal year 2022 (June 30, 2022), to assure fiscal certainty for the FY22 budget and operational certainty for Holly Hill and the DPW Waste Division.
2. **Extend Holly Hill Access permit sales at \$25** until June 30, 2022 to assure fiscal certainty for the FY22 budget and operational certainty for Holly Hill and the DPW Waste Division.
3. **Review** Holly Hill Access permit fee solutions with a view to offset direct drop-off (DDO) costs to the town while aligning fees with different types of DDO users. Options may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Unit-based pricing for trash or bulky waste
 - b. Tiered pricing for permits (for example: \$25 for recycling, food scrapping and EPR; \$50 to add MSW; \$100 to add MSW and bulky waste (construction debris and yard waste))
 - c. Weighing vehicles carrying construction debris and charging per ton.
 - d. No change
4. **Request** the First Selectman to extend the FSWMC until September 15, 2021 to allow time for completion of a full report with detailed recommendations.
5. **Continue to Explore** unit-based volume and weight pricing mechanisms.
6. **Express the committee's** interest in developing economic solutions to separate organic waste from MSW and transport it efficiently to digestors, composters or animal feed processors, as a promising way to reduce MSW and lower costs for the town. Such solutions include:
 - a. expanding the current voluntary residential food scrap program,
 - b. looking into ways to provide local composting opportunities at Holly Hill and elsewhere in Greenwich,
 - c. researching and coordinating large-scale food scrap programs for businesses and non-profits (restaurants, Greenwich Hospital, grocery stores, private schools),
 - d. collaborating with neighboring municipalities to find locations for local composting and animal feed operations,
 - e. Investigating residential food scrap collection methods.
7. **Create** a Town website listing licensed haulers and their contact information. Haulers may include route and pricing information voluntarily.
8. **Evaluate** alternatives for improving SSR.