

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – MAY 20, 2009
SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING INFORMATIONAL MEETING

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Ted Teichert called the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at **7:00 P.M. in the Selectmen's conference room at the Town Offices**. Present at the meeting were: Chairman Teichert and Selectmen Jerry Stabile and Mary Lyman. Also present were: DPW Director Jack Petkus and DPW Business Manager Sandy Gerraughty. The meeting was duly posted and cablecast live.

II. Solid Waste/Recycling Discussion

DPW Director Jack Petkus opened the discussion **and said the Department's goal is to achieve cost savings in trash collection and recycling without assessing a fee or using the Pay-as-you-throw or SMART programs.**

DPW Business Manager Sandy Gerraughty informed the Board that the proposed new policy, to be effective July 1, 2009, would change curbside trash collection from six bags to three bags. She said the Town has allowed six bags for a number of years. There are approximately 8,700 households in Andover and the proposed change to three bags would save the Town a significant amount of money. She indicated that during FY-2010 budget discussions, the Town Manager had asked whether the solid waste budget could be reduced by 500 tons. She said each year the Department has tried to progressively reduce trash and increase recycling. As a way to continue in this effort and save money in FY-2010, they are encouraging residents to take items from their trash and recycle them instead.

Ms. Gerraughty reviewed charts showing the cost savings with the proposed new policy change. She said the average household generates approximately 31 pounds of curbside trash each week. She showed actual household items that could be recycled instead and would save an average of five pounds of trash per week per household. She said **if each of the Town's 8,700 households were to do this, the department would realize a potential savings of \$77,512.35 in the FY-2010 solid waste budget.** She said the Department has done an analysis and felt this was an achievable goal.

She informed the Board that residents can pick up additional recycle bins or recycle stickers for barrels at the DPW Water Treatment Plant on Lowell Street. It was noted that barrels, bags or bins cannot weigh more than 50 pounds. She indicated that if residents have questions about how to increase their recycling she would be happy to assist them. Selectman Stabile also noted that residents can contact any member of the Recycling Committee with their questions or, if requested, they will go to a home and offer suggestions on how to make it work.

The Board engaged in a discussion concerning four bags of trash opposed to three bags. It was felt they should keep the allowed number **at three and address those who don't comply.** Ms. Gerraughty said there are no enforcement regulations for trash or recycling at the present time – issues are handled on an as needed basis. Selectman Lyman suggested that possibly the Board should discuss mandatory recycling and address an overage policy. Selectman Stabile said he was hesitant to go to four bags/barrels of trash as there is a substantial cost savings to

the Town with the three-bag limit. He felt the change is good for the environment, there **isn't a huge expense to comply with the proposed new policy and it doesn't have a down side.**

The Board also discussed trash and recycling at condominiums. Ms. Gerraughty said the Town only picks up at complexes with six units or less.

Robert Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street, addressed the Board and voiced his concern regarding how the change will affect his family and other large families.

John Pasquale, 47 Whittier Street, inquired about the use of enclosed barrels with wheels and also reported on **the downtown "trash crew"**.

Selectman Stabile said a representative from the Andover/North Andover League of Women Voters was unable to attend the meeting and read the following statement that they asked be entered into the record:

"The League of Women Voters was not able to send a representative to tonight's public forum about the proposed changes in Andover's trash policy because it conflicted with their Annual Meeting. The League has asked that the following statement be read into the record.

The League supports all efforts to reduce solid waste tonnage and to encourage recycling in Andover, and is pleased that efforts are being made in this direction. So that the proposed program has a good chance of success, some issues to consider include:

- *How will the Board of Selectmen measure "success?" Will you set a specific goal set at the outset of the program against which progress can be monitored? Is the goal a reduction in tonnage of 1,500 pounds per year @\$64 per ton? That reduction will result in \$100,000 savings.*
- *We recommend a monthly update from the Board of Selectmen reporting the tonnage of solid waste for the Town. The report will permit tracking to see if the potential savings and progress toward reduced tonnage is being met.*
- *Be specific about the exact size of barrels, bags, etc. so that citizens know what will be and won't be allowed under the proposed changes.*
- *Because the proposed budget savings will not be deducted from the DPW solid waste budget up front, how will residents know that any savings will end up in Free Cash at the end of the fiscal year?*
- *Andover is likely to see the importation of additional trash from neighboring towns like Tewksbury, which will institute a one barrel limit, with a \$5 charge per excess barrel, beginning July 1. Our policy continues to be more generous than most, even with the proposed changes. How will the Town address this very real likelihood?*

The League looks forward to learning more about the proposed changes and thanks the Department of Public Works and Board of Selectmen for their work on this issue."

*Stefani Traina Goldshein, President
League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover
6 Roulston Circle*

The Board discussed the LWV statement and felt all of the issues they raised have been or will be addressed.

The Board also discussed how to communicate this new information to residents. Sandy Gerraughty said **the Department's present *Recycling and Trash Collection Guide*** will no longer be printed and sent to each household. The information will be available at the Town Offices, **Department of Public Works and on the Town's website.**

Selectman Stabile suggested a report from the DPW staff be made to the Selectmen on a monthly basis. He thanked the DPW for their presentation and the League of Women Voters and Recycling Committee for their input.

III. Adjournment

A motion was made by Selectman Stabile, seconded by Selectman Lyman, and voted 3 – 0 to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Cassano
Recording Secretary