

DURHAM MIDDLEFIELD INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT ADVISORY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 30, 2017

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM by Chairman Dom DelVecchio at the Middlefield Community Center.

Roll call: Members present: Ron Capozzi, Dom DelVecchio, Chris Flanagan, Jim Gibbons, Frank Petrella, Howard Weissberg and Charles Zieminski. **Staff Present:** Site Manager Bob Matuskiewicz and Recording Secretary Heather Castiglia. **Public present:** Bob Bascom, Bob Johnson, Chad Spooner

Chairman Delvecchio introduced Chad Spooner who will be joining the Board to take the open Durham seat as a board member officially in April. He will then be up for appointment in May for the next term.

Approval of Agenda: *A motion was made by Ron Capozzi and seconded by Howard Weissberg to approve the agenda as is. The motion passed unanimously.*

SITE MANAGER'S REPORT

- The grinding is done and the site is ready for brush pick-up. Middlefield starts pick-up first in May, followed by Durham.
- The old tarping station has been removed. It has been regraded, trap rock was laid, and there is now more room for parking.
- Eversource has to landscape for the power lines and may do more excavating of unwanted brush at the site near the power lines.
- One truck driver resigned and two night employees will be resigning in the near future.

Initiate Discussion on Private Hauler Transportation Fees

Chairman Delvecchio began the discussion by referring to a memo from the Town Selectmen to the Board regarding the cost of site operations. He explained that DMIAAB is a provider of a key service for both communities. The board has a responsibility to strike a balance between safety and cost.

The board/towns created the DMIAAB Task force with 12 members which met for a year and a half that collected data and reviewed transfer station operations of DMIAAB and surrounding towns. The consensus from the Task Force was to look at the Transfer Station from a cost per household per month, in comparison to other surrounding towns with similar operations. It appeared that \$15-18 a month per household cost was the average in other surrounding towns that have transfer stations. A major topic of discussion during Task Force meetings was private haulers.

The Town Selectmen retained an engineering firm to study and provide a report about site operations. One of the questions for the board is, "Should we be allowing a private hauler to use the facility or should we direct him to other options?" Chairman DelVecchio mentioned that last year in consultation with the town planner and town attorney a proposed regulation was drafted.

Currently, the transportation fee for MSW is \$13 a ton based upon a statewide bidding process overseen by MIRA. DMIAAB has typically followed the MIRA bid price. Mr. Capozzi asked how are we to get the most economic use from the site? He states the site needs to be seen as a community service, and as a town, we are a leader in recycling.

Mr. Weissberg asked how many households get private hauling. The answer is not exact but we could estimate 1000. Mr. Weissberg explained the transfer station makes money on people who use the private haulers. When people exclusively use the site and do not pay a private hauler, DMIAAB is paying the whole figure. The customer who uses the private hauler saves DMIAAB the tipping fee and a portion of hauling costs. If more people use the site as drop-ins we pay more in the end. Mr.

Weissberg also added that if we ban private haulers there could be potential political fallout if it leads to an increase in per household cost.

Chairman DelVecchio also stated that others in the past have argued that the hauler provides a service to those in the community that cannot access or get to the site, some of the elderly population in town. If we do allow the hauler to stay the \$13 transportation fee for MSW which is currently based on the statewide bid will be revisited. Research shows that surrounding towns are in line with \$13/ton transportation fee for MSW. MIRA's transporting fee for MSW from Essex and Torrington is also consistent with the \$13/ton transportation fee. Bob Bascom says the tip fee should be around \$31, and the Anchor Engineering Study estimates the tip fee at \$22.

Mr. Spooner clarified that the resident that elects to use the hauler is paying a premium.

Chairman DelVecchio argues that if we raise the tip fee to high, haulers can and most likely will haul direct for less. If this occurs DMIAAB will not realize any increase in income from private haulers as suggested by the Anchor Engineering study.

Mr. Capozzi asks regarding the per household cost of the site: "What level of pain can people tolerate without going over the edge."

Mr. Weissberg expressed his concern that the Selectman have not visited a DMIAAB meeting to discuss this and yet send letters without giving the board an opportunity to engage in a discussion or respond.

Chairman DelVecchio handed out Bob Bascom's calculated transport fee analysis and an excerpt from the Anchor Engineering Study.

Mr. Weissberg liked the total transportation costs of Mr. Bascom's analysis and stated that lighter materials are going to have a higher cost.

Chairman DelVecchio stated right now it's costing the site \$180 to \$200 per round trip to haul to Hartford. Knowing the recycling market has collapsed that price needs to apply to recycling. The site will need to pass that cost on to the private haulers. Currently DMIAAB transports private hauler MSW waste in 5 trips per month to MIRA and private hauler recyclables require 4 trips per month.

Mr. Spooner suggested getting "real data. Study this and get metrics." Track what it costs to haul round trip, then create an Initiative that would discuss this and analyze how to get costs down. A basic metric provides transparency and is not opinion. Find out what it costs to transport MSW and recycling and who are the top users of the site. Mr. Weissberg explained the transport fee analysis gives a good base number. Chairman DelVecchio, Mr. Weissberg and Mr. Spooner agreed to review the data in a technical meeting and report back to the board.

Mr. Weissberg would like to discuss Recycling Diversion mentioned in the Town Selectmens' memo at the next meeting. Knowing who the biggest users to the site are, and researching recycling diversion are two steps for the next meeting.

Chairman DelVecchio asked Mr. Weissberg and Mr. Spooner to work on collecting data for the next meeting.

Personnel staffing levels

The board discussed the personnel staffing levels at the site:

- The board agreed that 4 people during the day is adequate, 5 employees on Saturdays. These numbers include a driver that will be onsite to move containers as containers reach capacity.
- Safety has to be paramount, especially when open to the public.
- Drivers when pulling cans, must have another person as a guard.
- Site and staff activities don't stop and there are many customers per hour on Saturday.
- Board discussed an RFID system that would use transponders, alerts and possibly discontinue the use of an employee in the guard shack. An RFID system could lead to automatically renewing stickers, however there are concerns about the transponders not being permanently affixed to a vehicle for access to the site.

Public Comment

Bob Bascom expressed his concern that the site was now handling less material than 20 years ago for 33% more cost. Mr. Weissberg indicated that the waste stream has changed and recyclables such as glass and plastic are much lighter. Chairman DelVecchio stated newspaper and magazines which were

typically heavier are now obsolete at the site. Mr. Bascom suggested adding a composting bin at the hopper for those residents that want to compost their “wet” MSW.

Bob Johnson asked the Board if new bylaws have been written since the Interlocal agreement was rewritten. Chairman DeVecchio answered that new bylaws have not been written.

Mr. Johnson also asked if the Board approves bills at the meetings, and Chairman DeVecchio answered that it would be very difficult to pay vendors in a timely manner if the board had to approve bills at monthly meetings.

Budget discussion

Budget discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

A motion was made by Jim Gibbons and seconded by Chris Flanagan to approve the February 23, 2017 meeting minutes. This meeting's minutes to be approved at the next meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Castiglia

Cc: Durham Town Clerk, Middlefield Town Clerk, Board Members