

Minutes of the TGS&A meeting - March 6, 2012

Eleven of thirteen members of the committee were present at this meeting.

Present were: Chairman Sarah Seelye, Vice Chair Spencer McIlmurray, Patti Bumgardner, John Boulton, Michael Burke, Eugene Coyle, Frank Huck, Frank Kemp, Seth Morton, Cecelia Mundt and Lloyd Plehaty.

Absent were: Deepika Saksena and Sam Schoonmaker

Members of the public included: Nina Miller (RTM, District 2), Katie Keith, Representatives of Choose To Reuse.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by Chairman Seelye.

Chairman Seelye reviewed the agenda for the meeting, according to the following topics:

Approve minutes

The minutes of the February 7, 2012 meeting were reviewed, with the addition of a written statement from Cecelia Mundt, on behalf of our TGS&A committee, to add more clarity around our committee's February discussion on the plastic bag ordinance. The addition to the February minutes should state that the TGS&A committee discussed at length the intent and wording of section 22.92 ("Restriction on Checkout Bag"). There was confusion as to the specifics of the desired restriction. Choose To Reuse (CTR) was asked to introduce themselves and provide clarification of their desired restriction. After much discussion between CTR and TGS&A, the committee asked CTR to review the wording of the ordinance and prepare another draft for discussion at the March 6th meeting. The minutes of the February 7, 2012 meeting were then approved (unanimous with 11 approving the motion).

Tom Dunn - Voter Registration

Tom Dunn, Head of Voter Registration for Darien reviewed the Redistricting Plan for Darien. Our official population in Darien is 20,732, which is an approximate increase of 800 over the last 10 year period. Mr. Dunn will be presenting the plan to the RTM on March 19th. There will be no appeal. The new Redistricting Plan must be done by March 27th as Darien will use it for the Primary this year. The town is planning on putting all the streets in Darien on the town web site, with the new voting district lines highlighted, so the public will know where to vote. District 3 will have the most voters. For RTM members, District 1 and 4 will have 16 elected RTM members and District 2, 3, 5 and 6 will have 17 elected RTM members.

Approvals for Commissions

Dirk Leasure was approved by the Board of Selectman for the Five Mile River Commission.

Review status of pending items

Darien Social Services is the only commission in Darien with term limits. There was a discussion in the Rules committee about reverting the Darien Social Services Commission back to no term limits. It would require a Charter change and then a public hearing. This is a work in progress and we are waiting for a recommendation from that commission. Olive Hauser runs Darien Social Services for the town of Darien.

Proposed Plastic Bag Ordinance

Chairman Seelye asked Nina Miller from Choose To Reuse to clarify which plastic bags they want included in a proposed plastic bag ordinance for Darien. Nina showed samples and said any plastic bag under the size of 28 x 36 inches would be included in the plastic bag ordinance. The exceptions are the flimsy plastic bag used to carry meats and vegetables to the check out, and a bag that is 2.25 mills thick and created to be a reusable bag. This new information should be included under E in Section 22.91 under Definition of Reusable Bag. We also discussed whether doctors and dentists are included since medical offices do not fall under the definition of retail.

TGS&A also discussed the paper bag alternative. There was a recommendation to take out the word recyclable in the ordinance and just leave the words paper bag. Mike Burke said he followed up on an action item from last month and there was no industry standard for a paper bag. Nina Miller from CTR said standard is 40% post consumer waste and it is what Palmer's uses. There was a discussion again this month on whether to include the Purpose in the ordinance, and if so, how much of the original definition of the Purpose should be included.

Action Items

Spencer McIlmurray recommended leaving the first sentence of the Purpose in the proposed plastic bag ordinance and Mr. Burke seconded it. There were six votes for it so the motion carries.

Seth Morton suggested we hear from the Darien Health Department since he thought David Knauf might be the enforcer of the ordinance, but it was not confirmed. Nina Miller said the town of Westport does not have a compliance officer. Instead they wait to hear about a violator of the ordinance.

Lloyd Plehaty asked what the appeals process was and Mr. Burke thinks it is the appellate court in Stamford. This is an action item CGS1. Katie Keith from CTR will follow up and get back to TGS&A on it.

Adjournment and the next meeting

There was no further business so the meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm. The next meeting of the TGS&A committee is scheduled for 7:30pm on April 3rd in room 213.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia F. Bumgardner
Assistant Clerk

