

Town of Thompson
Transfer Station Advisory Committee
Minutes, Regular Meeting
January 26, 2023 7 PM Second Floor Conference Room

In attendance: Members: Linda Carli, Karen Durlach, Steve Houghton, David Ostrowski, Paul Horanzy, Al Landry, Lynn Landry, Kevin Racine, First Selectman Amy St. Onge, Director of public Works, Joe Tkacik

1. Meeting Moderator and Secretary: Steve volunteered to moderate the meeting and Lynn volunteered to record the minutes. The meeting began at 7:03 PM in the Second Floor Conference Room, Thompson Town Hall.

2. Approve Minutes

*Regular Meeting August 25, 2022 Motion to approve by Karen Durlach, seconded by Linda Carli. All in favor, motion carries.

*Special Meeting October 11, 2022 Motion to approve by Karen Durlach, seconded by Al Landry. All in favor, motion carries.

3. Changes to Agenda: Added a discussion of the UCONN Student Survey at the Transfer Station:

The students will be observing traffic patterns on Saturday January 28, 2023. Linda will meet them at the start of the day and Karen and David will meet them at 10 AM.

4. Correspondence

*Board of Selectmen - request to review information from Sally White

We reviewed the request from the Board of Selectmen regarding an article in The American Thinker. Copies of the American Thinker article and the Greenpeace study cited within that article were provided to the Committee prior to the meeting. We reviewed the information, finding that The American Thinker based their conclusion on a misinterpretation of the Greenpeace study. Linda brought in information on plastics recycling in the European Union, showing a 33% recycling rate compared to the US rate of 6%. Factors affecting these numbers include having appropriate infrastructure to reclaim plastics, the lack of the option of landfills in Europe, and national policies regarding how plastics are identified, utilized and reclaimed. We also discussed the Greenpeace study's recommendation for reducing plastic use, noting that glass is more appropriate for many uses, is an inert material, and does not emit chemicals that affect human health.

In summary, our reply to the Board of Selectmen is that

1. Recycling is mandated by the State of Connecticut so it would be illegal for Thompson to cease collecting recyclable materials
2. Although the market for recyclables fluctuates, there is less cost to separate materials than to dispose of everything as MSW.

*UCONN Students Presentation: We reviewed their PowerPoint presentation and will give feedback after they complete the traffic analysis.

*Town Planner – Waste Crisis presentation, Naugatuck Valley COG: Al Landry made a motion, seconded by Karen Durlach, to ask Tyra to be present at a future meeting to discuss this report. All in favor. Motion carries.

5. Financial Report: Lynn had obtained and distributed Year to Date and Prior Fiscal Year numbers. Factors involved with the net loss were discussed, including the fluctuation of the recycling market and compliance with proper sorting of materials.

6. Information from First Selectman

*Compliance: Compliance forms will be used to identify violators. Joe will enforce all violations.

*Discussion of Permit Fees for October 2023:

We discussed the need to increase the permit fee and future options of handling fees including scanners or a transponder, as well as a weight-based system. We discussed the cost difference between Regular households and Senior Households, and the issue of out of state plates. Lynn had created a chart of estimated revenues based on several levels of fee increases.

Motion by Al Landry, seconded by Linda Carli, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Permit Fees increase to Regular Household \$150.00 and Senior Household \$75.00 for Permit Year starting November 1, 2023. All in favor, motion carries.

Motion by Steve Houghton, seconded by Linda Carli, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that there be a higher fee for permits that use out of state plates. In favor: Linda Carli, Karen Durlach, David Ostrowski, Kevin Racine, Steve Houghton and Al Landry. Opposed: Paul Horanzy and Lynn Landry. Motion carries.

7. Information from DPW Director: Joe outlined future plans for the Transfer Station, including installing an office trailer with electricity, changing the open top containers to the necessary permanent covers, several innovative ideas for the layout of the Swap shack and several small sheds being replaced, adding cameras at appropriate locations, traffic flow arrows on pavement, and evaluating QR readers or electronic chips to read plates. He plans to improve drainage and continue with cleaning, repairs and painting. David asked about installing solar panels for electricity at the Transfer Station. Joe stated that there is sufficient electricity at the Transfer Station and structures cannot be built on the capped landfill area.

Motion made by Al Landry, seconded by Linda Carli, that funds received from NIPS money be used for improvements at the Transfer Station, such as cameras, transponders, QR and Chip readers, as recommended by the Director of Public Works. All in favor, motion carries.

8. Recycling, Education and Trash Reduction Effort

We discussed several ways to increase education, including distributing pamphlets at the Transfer Station, enforcing covered loads, and warning/fines.

9. Citizens' Comments: None.

10. Comments from Committee Members: No further comments.

11. Other Business: None.

12. Set next meeting date and agenda: We will have a special Meeting at a date to be determined to review the UCONN Project.

13. Adjournment: Motion made by Al Landry, seconded by Karen Durlach, to adjourn the meeting at 9:12.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Landry

The Thompson Transfer Station Advisory Committee is a committee of volunteer residents formed to improve the waste disposal system for the Town of Thompson which will be cost effective, equitable for users of the Transfer Station and environmentally sound. This committee addresses issues facing the Thompson Transfer Station regarding cost, regulation, recycling, recycling education, and options of efficient operations and enforcement. By acting as a forum for Transfer Station issues, we hope to increase awareness of Thompson residents to recycle, to care for the environment and to be responsible citizens for the beautification of our town.