

## Solid Waste Advisory Committee Meeting

12/13/23

4:30 PM

### Members:

Chair: Councilor Keith Nyhan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Councilor Karen McNamara	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Councilor Gail Matson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Councilor Brent Todd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Councilor Paula McLaughlin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Councilor Zandra Rice Hawkins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Eric Steinhauser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reagan Bissonnette	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Judith Kurtz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Carol Foss	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Guests:

Tim Thompson: City of Concord, NH Community Development Department

Alex Durfee: Foxfire Management

At 4:35pm the meeting was called to order.

Chairman Nyhan stated that the Committee would have a hard stop at 5:30 as a number of members have commitments after the meeting.

Director Chip Chesley then gave an overview of Agenda item #1. Some months ago, the Council issued a referral to SWAC on how assessments in the Downtown Solid Waste Management district are made. There was a perceived inequity in that residential properties could pay more than their "fair share" of solid waste disposal costs relative to higher volume users (restaurants for example).

By way of background, the DTSWD was established in order to limit the number of solid waste haulers and congestion within the downtown core, noted Chairman Nyhan.

Chip Chesley shared the process by which the General Services Department approached the question. First, there was a recognition that billing must remain at the parcel level, that is due to the fact that that

is the only way in which the City may lien a property in the event that someone does not pay. The City has had to do this before.

With this information, GSD had a series of meeting with the Assessing Department in an effort to see what information the City maintains as to uses that may be used to inform an alternative assessment strategy. Assessing shared that they do not maintain the granularity in data that could be used to inform such a method.

With that information then, the Department pivoted to what information the City does have that may be useful. Restaurant licenses were identified as the one possibility as the City does track this through Health Licensure.

GSD then picked two amounts to illustrate changes to both parcel owner bills and restaurant license holders' annual fees if this approach were to be employed. The two amounts represented \$75,000 and \$125,000 in revenue that could potentially be recovered from additional license fee.

Preliminary analysis done on the datasets showed, as expected, the amounts that parcel owners would be assessed decreased with increases in recovery of revenue through increased licensure fees. GSD presented the information with no recommendation.

In an effort to then ascertain to what degree this would potentially change what license fees restaurants presently pay, GSD reached out to the Community Development Department to quantify the impact.

In response, the Community Development Department put together a document on the proposal which was provided to the Committee and contained as an attachment herein. Note any figures contained therein are merely illustrative and not finalized.

Tim Thompson, Assistant Director of Community Development, then gave an overview of Community Development's work. In broad terms, such a proposal runs contrary to City and Council economic development priorities that seek to increase the numbers of restaurants in the downtown.

In their analysis there are huge increases in license fees that would need to be put in place resulting in an average increase of 238.41% in the case of \$75,000 revenue recovery and 397.35% for \$125,000 revenue recovery. In summation, such a proposal would not be endorsed by the Community Development Department

Understanding the competing interest at play, Chairman Nyhan said that he did not feel that a recommendation from this committee was appropriate and he saw the question more as one of economic development.

Reagan Bissonnette spoke about opportunities that the Center for Ecological Technology may be able to offer businesses to reduce their food waste. From looking at portions to signage for composting programs, businesses may be able to take advantage of various opportunities.

Councilor Todd spoke about how the contract is constructed. Is it per ton or do we pay fixed fees. Adam Clark replies that the contract is fixed fees but there are mechanisms by which the costs increase or decrease based on frequency of collection or number of collection changes.

Reagan Bissonnette drew the committee's attention to the potential of in-container camera systems that may be able to alert the hauler to when a container need not be dumped. Adam Clark agreed sharing that things can go south very quickly if a container is filled by one individual and people start placing materials outside which already happens with regularity. In a lot of ways, the DTSWD is difficult to manage because of its communal nature.

Pivoting back to the question at hand, Chairman Nyhan recommended that the matter be referred back to the Community Development Department for further consideration. The competing interests make that a more appropriate venue.

Councilor-elect Kurtz noted she hoped any consideration would include the idea of some sort of credits for restaurants who are composting.

With that the Committee then recognized that the previous meeting's minutes needed to be approved which they did unanimously with Chairman Nyhan noting he was not in attendance.

With that, the Committee was then introduced to Alex Durfee who represents Foxfire Management. The company owns a building near where there are containers in the DTSWD that are causing issues renting the space.

Foxfire has put together a proposal by which they would have the containers presently located on Dixon Avenue moved to be combined with those in the NH Historical Society parking lot. An enclosure would be built with new signage in hopes of eliminating some illegal dumping and creating a cleaner space. DTSWD users in that area would put their items in a truck that Foxfire would purchase who would then shuttle materials to the NHHS cans. Foxfire has been in communication with all the nearby users of those cans to explain the plan.

Chip Chesley explained that GSD acts as an agent of the DTSWD so this proposal is ok with the Department and will help in any way.

Councilor Todd thanked Mr. Durfee for the presentation, noting he didn't see any policy issues for the Committee.

Reagan Bissonnette noted she liked the ideas of fewer dumpsters, helping create a cleaner downtown and the collaboration with other property owners.

The Committee thanked Mr. Durfee.

Adam Clark then gave an overview of what the Committee can expect moving into 2024. Anticipate a regimented series of meetings where GSD will present work on the impending transition to automated collection. He anticipates the next meeting will be in February when a new Council is sat.

Councilor Todd then spoke to the accomplishments outgoing Committee Chairman Nyhan had made over the years, noting he was a disciplined, effective and true leader making positive changes for Concord over the Years. Chip Chesley followed up noting that he also found Chairman Nyhan to be a true asset to the City. Others also spoke to Chairman Nyhan's strengths.

The meeting was then adjourned with a motion from Councilor Matson and a second from Councilor Rice-Hawkins. The motion was unanimous.