

**TCSWMO
MEETING
Somerville Town Office**

**April 25, 2024
6:30 pm**

The following directors were present: Tom Pitzi, Henry Hall, Dana Philippi, Don Thebeau, Jacob Tobias, Sara Bullard, Norman Casas, Charles Garrigan, Lee Shane, and Elaine Porter. Also present were David Stanley, Facility Manager, and Gail Philippi, Administrative Assistant. Visitors were Bob Kurek, Palermo Selectman; Sarah Masters, Washington; and representatives from ScrapDogs Community Compost of Washington.

Tom Pitzi, President opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: A motion was made by Norman Casas and seconded by Henry Hall to accept the minutes of the January 18, 2024, meeting. Motion carried with one abstention.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The checking account balance as of today is \$190,829.46. The Reserve Account balance is \$161,730.77. The total is \$352,560.23. This includes the first two Assessment quarterly payments which have been received from each town. We discussed interest rates and other options for bank accounts. Norman made a motion and Henry seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. No comments or questions. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT: Charles was asked by a resident about trash pickup, and he gave out a local hauler's name. TCSW doesn't do it for any town. Tom reported that the Town of Union has good recommendations for staff and crew at the Station. Norman got another request for Sunday hours. Henry reported that the Liberty selectboard is not interested in composting. There were no comments or questions at all about TCSW at the Washington and Liberty town meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BUSINESS:

FACILITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

HHW Day is the fourth Saturday in June which is June 22nd from 8:30 – 11. They charge us more per unit than we charge. The fee charged customers will probably be \$12 per unit. They handle everything: they unload it, determine the units and what some things are. We'll send flyers to all the Town Offices. This is for TCSW member towns only. Paint Care takes back paint through EPI who also doesn't charge for it on HHW.

Hard Plastic (big stuff) is open for the season as of April 15th. This has to be pliable plastic such as garbage cans, chairs, laundry totes, and kid's toys. Items must be shown to the attendants first. No building material plastic is taken there as that is demo. All items must be relatively clean.

Bags: David had a visit from Bill Priest the salesman who said with gas and oil prices going up the price of bags will too. If we order now, it will be at last year's price. David was going to wait for fall but this will save us \$8,000- \$10,000. We have room to store them.

Lee made a motion to buy green bags now, Norman seconded. Motion carried.

Speed bumps are going back in. This would have happened in April but for snow.

Apparel Impact: David has been in touch with them, and their bins are beginning to show up around the area.

Paper containers will be moving back down the hill. The area is drying up and David is hoping to get a bit more fill put in there. They will also be putting some dirt in behind the trash building. There will be many more trucks coming in now that construction season is starting again. We have talked about paving the area but need to do earthwork first.

OLD BUSINESS:

ScrapDogs:

They are a curbside composter and they run drop off stations at Transfer Stations in their area. They have been doing this for 6 years at their facility at the intersection of Routes 126 & 220. Where they lease, they can't be open to the public. Appleton and Washington residents have reached out about having a drop off station at TCSW. They use 5-gallon buckets, and customers get 20 bags of compost as part of the subscription for \$18/month. Customers order through an online portal. Buckets are picked up are on the honor system. Customers have a code to get into the container where the compost is left. ScrapDogs has customers in Thomaston, Waterville, Northport, and they are working on starting in Belfast. The buckets have sealable lids and there is no odor. The box is made out of pallets and plywood and is easy to move with pallet jacks. They typically service it once a week but could be there every day. Rockport/Camden is the busiest and they go there 3-4 times a week with 140 subscribers. They have 675 people in total. They also have a public drop off and Midcoast pays the tipping fee. Those customers use their own container and don't get any compost back. They offer weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly subscriptions. They don't have any subscribers or pickups in the TCSW region.

ScrapDogs can provide postcards to be handed out at the station. ScrapDogs takes meat and dairy as they can cook it quickly. TCSW can move ScrapDogs bins if necessary.

Subscriptions are tied to a specific facility like transfer stations as people already go there. It is an at will Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) so they can always move out. They are able to dictate days if necessary. They are working with MOFGA to become certified organic. UMaine and Midwest Labs do testing annually by DEP. They don't have many issues with people including paper or food containers. They can't accept it and MOFGA won't allow it and they don't want PFAS (forever chemicals). No pet waste is allowed.

Tom feels we don't need to attract more rodents to our facility. Adding another drop off place in TCSW only for compost doesn't help with traffic congestion.- 40-60 % of municipal solid waste is food.

David clarified that they would come in during our open hours. The pickup process depends on # of buckets, 5 - 6 buckets take about 5 minutes.

Henry suggested finding another site and wondered what makes this worthwhile. They explained that they drive by every day, so the threshold is lower. They could start in August or September as they are busy with compost deliveries now. They can provide us with a written proposal.

David would like to mull it over a little longer. Tom stated that we will table the conversation and discuss and vote on this at the next meeting in July. ScrapDogs will send their MOU to Sarah.

Bob Kurek Chair of the Town Palermo Selectboard, reviewed the process of Palermo leaving TCSW for China in 2017. They were given a rate by China of \$17,000/year which was lucrative for Palermo. TCSW was \$36000/year at the time.

Now China is being picky about Palermo. They have two different systems for China and Palermo. They consider any problem just cause to get rid of Palermo and Palermo is in a dispute with China. Bob is negotiating with the China Town Manager and trying to figure out what China wants.

Neither town wants to go into litigation. Bob asked is TCSW open to taking Palermo back? He expects a buy in plus the annual fee and bag fee. Palermo has under 1600 residents and China around three times as many. Population goes up in the summer. Many residents don't want to make the drive to TCSW. China is strict about who they let into the China facility.

Tom stated that this is a Board decision whether to accept the Town of Palermo back.

David added that it is the town's obligation by State Statute to provide a place to get rid of trash.

We were doing alright with Palermo and could take them back. It is all doable. We are on an honor system. We do take non-member trash and demo and charge more for them.

Bob is negotiating with China. And if China won't work with Palermo, then they won't stay. The China Transfer Station Committee wasn't involved in the decision to take Palermo. Bob will know after discussions with Town Manager if she's trying to stick it to China.

Tom asked are we interested, and the big question is what the buy in would be. He has had a preliminary conversation with our attorney Roger Therriault.

Lee stated that our costs would be our time and legal fees. Norman suggested having a straw vote now, are we in favor of going down this path, if so, Tom will speak with our attorney Roger Therriault and David will do some homework. The straw vote was favorable for checking into this more. We will put Palermo on the July agenda.

Sara will update the website for HHW Day and minutes.

The Quarterly Financial reports were previously emailed to all members who have email and copies mailed to those without email.

The next meeting is on July 25th at the Union Town Office.

Norman Casas made a motion and Henry Hall seconded to adjourn at 8:14 pm.

Submitted by, Gail Philippi, Administrative Assistant