Hopkinton/Webster Solid Waste Disposal Committee

Minutes of the meeting on Sept. 4th @ 6:30 pm
Webster Town Hall

Attendance: Ellen Cilley (W), Sally Embley (W), Mike Greenwood (W),
Arthur Cunningham (H), Frank Davis (H),
Rich Houston (H), Steve Clough, Ex-Officio
Absent: Harold Janeway

Rich brought the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. The August minutes were reviewed. Mike accepted the minutes as written, seconded by Ellen and the August minutes were approved (6-0) by the members in attendance.

Steve reported that he meets with the finance director on Nov. 3 for the TS budget. By our Oct. 2 meeting, Steve should have most of the budget set for us to review. Some costs such as personnel costs, employee benefits, etc., are subject to change and won't be known exactly until November. After the Nov. 3 meeting, Webster will be contacted to review the budget. Steve expects no surprises.

Steve's overview to date: (1) Expenses are on target, (2) Revenues are within 2% of expected, (3) Recyclables are steady, (4) Trash tonnage is within 25 tons of last year, (5) demolition waste is picking up with the economy, and (6) CIP for 2014 has no major changes, just a downward adjustment of $25,000 as we chose to repair rather then replace a trash trailer.

Arthur reported a unanimous vote to go to automatic curbside pickup by the new committee on solid waste.

A final report will be sent to the Selectmen by Nov 3. There will be no test run of the program, it was decided. Steve said if approved by the Selectmen, it will go to a town meeting for a vote. Arthur said the new committee voted in favor of curbside pickup because they felt it would increase recycling, be more convienent, have harder numbers on expenses due to 10 year contracts, and costs would not be a negative when compared to the service provided.

Steve felt closing the TS would be expensive and take from 2 to 10 years to accomplish, depending on how cooperative Webster would be. The State will not allow the TS to close until a plan is submitted as to where discarded items will go. When asked by Rich, all the Webster reps. said they don't want to close the station. ~~Sally said this feels like a broken record,~~ for the last 7 years Hopkinton has been talking about closing the station, but cannot do that without Websters' approval. Mike didn't feel curbside would work in Webster on its class 6 roads. Sally felt Webster is too spread out and would be too expensive. Ellen asked Arthur if Webster would save any money, from a contract standpoint, if it were to join with Hopkinton in one big contract. Arthur responded Webster should look at this as a business proposition. Rich asked Steve how much our taxes would go up to pay for this. Neils preliminary figures show the Towns' portion of taxes would go up 12%. Ellen asked Arthur what would happen to septage. Arthur responded septage would be eliminated, but the Town would provide somewhere else for it to be sent. Frank said he felt the new committee seems focused on shutting down the station. Mike made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ellen, and at 7:50 meeting over.