

**MINUTES OF THE CITIZEN OUTREACH COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 29, 2018**

A Citizen Outreach Committee meeting was held on Monday, January 29, 2018 at 7:00PM, in the City Council office, Room 204.

Committee Members: Committee Chairperson Barrett, Councillors Sullivan, LePage and Jordan

Department Heads: Allison Heartquist-Chief of Staff, Mike Stankovich-Public Works Director and Franco Cordano-Recycling Coordinator

Attendees: Penny Davis, Mike Arasi, Chere Bemelmans, John Kusiak, Lynda Brown, Christine Maguire and Richard Smyth

The following items were discussed:

**1. Doc. 110-Q** - Communication from Councillor LePage requesting discussion re: economic and environmental benefits of automated trash collection and recycling programs. *Discussion by Councillor LePage and Mr. Stankovich regarding weekly recycling. The cost for weekly recycling in last trash contract would have cost \$850,000.00. This price is prohibitive. Even with an increase with recycling and a decrease in trash tipping fee it would still take 16 years to get payback. Overall recycling has increased about 20% and trash has decreased 17%. The Committee also talked about curb side composting. At this time there are no plans for city wide composting although there are private companies with which individuals could contract. If a large enough group could be organized a pilot program could be explored in future. However, Franco Cordano noted that home composting bins are available to citizens through Department of Public Works. These bins are available at a cost of \$25.00. This amount is a significant savings and work well.*

**2. Doc. 7-C** - Communication from Councillor McGonagle requesting a discussion about single-use plastic bags. *Councillor McGonagle placed item on to discuss possible ban on single use bags. Councillor noted that many other communities have instituted restriction on plastic bags. He also noted the proximity of the Merrimack River and the fact that a large amount of discarded bags end up in the river and pollute it as well as our city. Allison Heartquist related that while she was a City Councillor in Newburyport the Council voted 6-5 to ban plastic bags. At the time in 2014 it was a controversial topic and they were one of the first communities to attempt a ban. Now there are 61 other communities in Massachusetts that have similar restriction. There are many examples of bans that could be used as our template. Ms. Heartquist suggested there would be a need for community outreach and education in association with a ban. She suggested the Sierra Club as a resource for education, implementation and connection to bag donations. The impact on those who cannot afford the expense of buying bags could be mitigated by donations. A grace period of at least 6 months would give retailers time to use up bags in stock. Paper, heavier stock plastic with a multiple use capability would be allowed. In discussion Franco Cordano reminded those in attendance that plastic bags are not allowed in single stream recycling. The bags tangle in sorting machines and cannot be processed. While Councillor LePage noted that bags can be returned to super markets to be recycled and turned into Tyvek building material. Councillor McGonagle noted that there were other sources to make Tyvec. There was a motion by Councillor LePage with a second by Councillor Jordan supporting a ban on single use plastic bags in the City. Motion passed 4-0.*

**3. Doc. 7-K** - Communication from Councillor Barrett requesting a discussion regarding the use of Styrofoam. *Styrofoam is not allowed in single stream recycling. It takes up room in landfills and doesn't degrade. The State Legislature has taken up potential ban but has yet to enact any*

*legislation. While a few communities have taken up a ban it has yet to be wide spread. The Committee made a determination that the Council should send a letter in support of such state wide legislation to the local delegation urging their support of the ban on polystyrene. There was a motion by Councillor Jordan and second by Councillor Barrett. Motion passed 3-0. Council Vice President Sullivan had left.*

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda E. Barrett, Chairperson  
Citizen Outreach Committee  
Haverhill City Council

February 2, 2018