

Unapproved notes of the 3/31/14 Public Forum for discussion voting on the floor versus by Australian ballot; moving the day of the week for Town Meeting; and to talk objectives of the town for a new Host Town Agreement between Moretown Landfill and the Town once cell 4 opens.

All members of the Selectboard were present.

Attendance: Steve Magill as Facilitator, Rick Blake, Lisa Ransom, Scott Baughman, Bill Kernan, Max & Sandy Fortune, Don & Rita LaRocca, Rachel Goff, John Schmeltzer, Carl Wimble, Cheryl Brown as the boards assistant

Australian ballot and Town Meeting Day – Discussion included:

- Doing away with voting Australian ballot on money articles only.
- Changing the day/date of the week town meeting is held
- Statewide town meeting attendance is down, regardless of the day or date
- Perhaps people would feel more empowered and attend town meeting if the voting was from the floor
- Do people who show up for town meeting, when voted is from the floor, have an agenda?
- Waitsfield has 1429 voters – the result on articles voted by Australian ballot was 527 about 37%. There were 178 votes from the floor about 13%. Warren's situation was similar. So it appears voting from the floor would reduce the number of people voting.
- All votes from the floor would require verification from the Town Clerk that the people are registered to vote in Moretown.
- The amount/issues of the articles may drive the town meeting attendance.
- Perhaps we should tax people (participation tax) who don't show up for town meeting.
- Town's may have to be more flexible to have town meeting when they think more people might attend, rather than on the traditional day.
- Change the day of town meeting to see how attendance is affected before moving forward with changing from Australian ballot to a floor vote.
- Any change would require voter approval.

The selectboard is not advocating for changes, just opening the discussion for ways to increase the attendance at town meetings.

Host Town Agreement – Discussion included:

The selectboard is looking for public input before moving forward to prepare a draft host agreement. A rough draft will be available for public view.

- How much does the landfill hope to gain from cell 4? The town needs to find that out and base the tipping fees goal on a percentage of it and then negotiate the goal via the host agreement.
- The town could assess a monetary penalty should the landfill violate the town ordinance. Any violation money could go to the people affected ie: tax credits to those residing within the landfill radius.
- Cell 4 is not a done deal, so isn't the town spending time on a contract that might not be needed? It's true that State and Town permits are needed but the selectboard needs to have a host town agreement in place, which takes considerable time to prepare, so once permits are in place the facility can open. The landfill can't open without a host town agreement being in place.
- Will the town support cell 4? The landfill must solve all problems they had/have in order for town support for cell 4.
- Prompt payment schedule and minimum due per year will be in the new host agreement. All payments will be on a calendar year basis.
- Currently we are getting zero monies from the methane generating unit run by PPL. Will that be considered in the new agreement? PPL pays us considerable in property taxes, so probably not. If cell 4 gets constructed, there will be a 3rd generator added, maybe that can be revisited at the host agreement renewal.
- How will the new "solid waste district" law impact towns host town agreement? Unsure at this time.
- The selectboard will work on a draft agreement considering information gathered by the host committee, and then forward it to professionals for final preparation. The hope is to have an agreement ready by year end.
- The town plans to oversee what waste comes into the landfill, but education will be needed for that.
- Communication! Between MLI/State/Town. Stay involved in the operations and ahead of any problems.

- Some considered it worrisome that so few attended tonight's forum when such an important topic was on the agenda, a topic that has a big impact on property taxes. So the people are depending on the selectboard to get the host agreement done right and enforce it.
- Perhaps people need to see more positive feedback from the State whether or not cell 4 is going to happen before they become actively involved.
- The board has the Town of Coventry's host town agreement. What does Moretown want that is in that contract? The board isn't sure what the language is in Coventry's agreement, but they want a contract that is fair to MLI and the Town, with "teeth" that makes it enforceable if there is a problem.
- The thought is to have a person hired by the town in the scale house monitoring the landfill operations. Someone with knowledge of landfill operations. How that will be arranged though remains to be worked out.
- The Planning Commission has been asked by the Selectboard to study if it is necessary or feasible to change the Zoning Regulations so that Moretown can enact penalties for zoning violations.
- The Host Town Agreement is a contract between MLI and the Town, so at times the selectboard must meet privately to fine tune the document but not ruin the negotiating tool.
- Most of the town is concerned about the lack of revenue. The Route 2 residents are concerned about trucks, and smell etc., so the selectboard was encouraged to reach out to the Route 2 neighbors for comments as they are the ones who suffer the consequences of cell 4, ie: ask them what can you live with.
- The State hasn't done a stellar job with enforcement so, during the preparation of the host agreement thought needs to be given not only to money but clean air, water & soil as priorities too. Perhaps more testing.

The forum adjourned at 7:45 p.m.