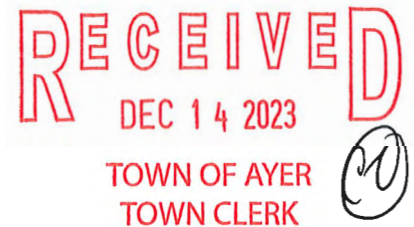


Town of Ayer
Rate Review Committee



Meeting Minutes from October 10, 2023

Attendance: Jannice Livingston, Chair; Dan Van Schalkwyk, DPW Director; Robert Pontbriand, Town Manager; Andy Loven; Kurt Fraczkowski (Representing Fin Com); Barbara Tierney, Finance Manager

Absent: Kimberly Abraham, Water & Sewer Superintendent; Pam Martin, DPW Business Manager

Call to Order: The October 10, 2023 meeting of the Rate Review Committee was called to order at 4:00pm on October 10, 2023 in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Ayer Town Hall by J. Livingston. (Note: This was an in-person meeting only.)

Review and Approval of the Meeting Minutes from September 20, 2023:

The Committee reviewed the DRAFT Meeting Minutes from September 20, 2023 and there were no edits.

Motion: A motion was made by K. Fraczkowski and seconded by A. Loven to approve the meeting minutes from September 20, 2023. **Motion Passed (6-0).**

Update on Proposal for Consultant to Review the Operations and Finances of the Transfer Station:

D. Van Schalkwyk updated the Committee on finding a professional consultant. He did receive a response proposal from Arcadis in the amount of \$16,540 as well as a response proposal from Weston and Sampson for \$21,000. He was also going to reach out to Tighe and Bond and Green Seal Environmental who also do this kind of work.

K. Fraczkowski stated that he would like to see samples of the firms' work. The Arcadis proposal seems to just have a financial model for 10 years but no analysis of the operations which is an invaluable piece to this.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that he would like to get some additional proposals and information before the Committee reviews and makes a recommendation. He also felt that the prices submitted by Arcadis and Weston and Sampson were high. He will work on getting some additional proposals and prices as well as revised proposals based on what the Committee is looking for in terms of both financial and operational analysis.

Committee Review and Discussion on the Rate Review Committee Presentation on the Calendar Year 2024 Solid Waste (Transfer Station) Rate Recommendations for the Public Hearing on October 17, 2023:

D. Van Schalkwyk presented the power point presentation for the Public Hearing on October 17, 2023. The Committee reviewed the presentation and offered input.

J. Livingston asked for clarification on Slide #15 with respect to the estimated costs provided, assuming 25 bags. She stated that others may not buy as many or may buy more.

D. Van Schalkwyk clarified that the estimated cost is an assumption based on 25 bags.

J. Livingston stated that she is concerned on this assumption with respect to Seniors who may purchase fewer bags.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that he will clarify this slide in the footnotes.

J. Livingston asked to include ARPA, UDAG, and Capital funds on Slide #19. She also recommended rephrasing Slide #18 to state "usership concerns".

R. Pontbriand recommended an initial slide that has the charge of the Committee as well as the names of the Committee Members.

K. Fraczkowski recommended that the cost impacts on Slide #15 be in bold text.

J. Livingston raised the issue of bags and their cost.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated he could get those costs.

J. Livingston stated that we should know what kind of plastic they are made from. How long do they take to break down, and could we switch to offering a bigger sticker instead of bags?

Pauline Conley (Resident) stated that she likes the idea of a bigger sticker and asked about perhaps a round sticker which would be harder to tear in half or a sticker made from plastic material that is hard to tear.

Andy Loven asked on Slide #9 what accounts for the increase.

D. Van Schalkwyk stated that increases in trash hauling contracts and recycling contracts in part impacted by the Ukrainian conflict; the Pandemic; and inflation.

Scheduling of the Next Meeting:

The Committee scheduled the next meeting for Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 4:00pm if needed.

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by D. Van Schalkwyk and seconded by B. Tierney to adjourn the meeting at 4:45pm. **Motion Passed (6-0)**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Rate Review Committee on December 12, 2023.

Signed:  Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager