

Town Council Considering New Method to Pay for Trash Disposal Costs

Trash thrown into the hopper at the Recycling Center on Spurwink Avenue costs about \$500,000 per year to transport and deposit at the Ecomaine trash to energy plant in Portland. This expense is entirely borne by the property tax. Many communities have adopted a “pay per bag” or “pay per throw” approach whereby the cost of the waste disposal is transferred from the property tax to user fees based on the number of bags used. The communities sell small and large bags (or tags to place on bags) through local stores with the bag/tag fees set at an amount to recover the cost of disposal.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency:

Source: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/conservation/tools/payt/tools/official.htm>

Pay Per Throw gives residents greater control over their costs. And whether they pay through taxes or with a flat fee, residents who generate less and recycle more are paying for neighbors who generate two or even three times as much waste. When a few residents generate more waste, everyone pays for it. With PAYT, residents who reduce and recycle are rewarded with a lower trash bill. As a result, households tend to generate less waste. Communities with programs in place have reported reductions in waste amounts ranging from 25 to 35 percent, on average. Recycling tends to increase significantly as well.

A recent Town estimate is that every 1% diverted from the hopper to the recycling bins saves \$3,676. The Town Council will hold a public hearing on the pay per throw concept on Monday, September 13, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Community Services Begins Online Enrollment and Credit Card Acceptance

In early September, Cape Elizabeth Community Services will begin accepting credit cards for enrolling online in Community Services programs. Also included are memberships at the pool and fitness center. A transaction fee will be assessed covering the cost of the credit card processing. The fee varies for each transaction dependent upon the amount of the credit card charge. It will be disclosed prior to your acceptance of the fee.

Town Council/School Board and Water District Election

Nomination papers for the Nov. 2, 2010 municipal election and Portland Water District trustee election are available at the town clerk's office. Two seats on the Town Council and two seats on the School Board will be up for election. Also, one five-year term on the Portland Water District Board of Trustees will be up for election. Nomination papers must be submitted by September 3rd at 4 p.m.

Odds and Ends

Customary fees are waived from October 16 to November 1 for all residents hauling their own material or heavy items to the Recycling Center. See the Town website for further information. Contractors will still be assessed the fees... The annual Engine One Company Labor Day Weekend Art Show is Sunday, September 5, 2010 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Fort Williams Park ... In the 12 months ended June 30, 2010, 8,749 motor vehicles were registered including 1,322 re-registrations completed online...An average of 10 new homes have been built in each of the last four years. This compares to 27 new homes in each of the previous four years...In the last four years, Cape Elizabeth has reduced its bonded debt by over \$6.0 million or 21%. Our fire department call personnel including the rescue devoted 10,123 hours of service this past year. 2,836 hours of volunteer service was provided by Portland Head Light gift shop and museum volunteers. Town Councilors, School Board members and all board and commission volunteers receive no pay. Thank you to all.