MEMO

To: Finance Committee / Glenn Michalowski, Town Manager / Sarah Bennett, Assistant Town Manager

From: Samantha Bryant, Finance Director

Subject: Transfer Station

Date: March 6, 2024

Following up from the discussion at the February 26th, 2024 Finance Committee meeting I was tasked with reporting back on the following:

Given that it is more costly to dispose of plastic than trash (reported by the Transfer Station Superintendent as $136 per ton vs. $83 per ton), are municipalities in Maine required to do so?

a. A review of state law and other Maine municipalities found that we are not required to provide plastic disposal.

b. The State of Maine in July 2021 passed a law to create the "Extended Producer Responsibility Program for Packaging." These regulations would require manufacturers that use plastics to provide funding to municipalities to dispose of it. However, it is not expected that this funding will be available until fy26 at the earliest.

c. According to an NPR article from October 2022, less than 5% of plastic overall is recycled, and the remainder goes into landfills.

i. https://www.npr.org/2022/10/24/1131131088/recycling-plastic-is-practically-impossible-and-the-problem-is-getting-worse

d. Given that most plastic is not truly recycled, and that is costs much more than regular trash to dispose, I would recommend the Town suspend its recycling collection at the transfer station until the external funding for it becomes available.

The Town only charges $3,000 per year for commercial haulers to use the station, when more than 60 households of trash is deposited by each hauler each year (the Transfer Station Superintendent estimated an annual cost of $60,000 to the Town), how do other municipalities handle this?

- **a.** I reviewed municipalities in the vicinity of Lisbon, and found the following:
  - **i.** Municipalities that offer curbside pickup and do not accept any trash at transfer station: Durham, Pownal, Brunswick, Bath
  - **ii.** Municipalities that don't charge any fees to anyone for use of Transfer Station, including trash: Sabbattus
  - **iii.** Municipalities that don't provide any form of trash services for residents: Bowdoin
  - **iv.** That left me to reach out to Topsham, Freeport, and Yarmouth:
    1. Topsham
       a. Residential trash (aka Municipal Solid Waste or MSW) $110 a ton, (packer trucks),they have to go over scales at Crookers Construction and a certain amount of time to get to the Transfer Station after weighing in.
       b. Demo Lite $40 per yard (wood, vinal siding and bulky items for example).
       c. Demo Heavy $80 per yard (Sheetrock and shingles and mixed loads).
       d. Brush and tree wood from commercial $6 per yard.
    2. Yarmouth
       a. Yarmouth does not allow commercial haulers to use the transfer station. All licensed haulers are required to take Yarmouth generated waste to ecomaine where the hauler pays for disposal.
    3. Freeport
       a. The Town of Freeport does not allow commercial haulers to offload at the Transfer Station. Haulers are required to haul trash to ecomaine where the hauler pays for disposal. They do need to have a hauling license which is $250 annually for commercial and $250 annually for residential.
  - v. My recommendation would be that the Town of Lisbon no longer allow commercial haulers to use the Transfer Station.

An analysis of whether fees charged for other items at the transfer station adequately offset the disposal costs:

a. Program Overall
   vi. Total FY23 Expense: $75,447.03
   vii. Total FY23 Revenue: $100,253.77 ($65,930.50 excluding metal and cardboard)
b. Mattress, Twin and Full $10.00 / Mattress, Queen and King $15.00 / All box spring – Each $10.00 / Sofas (per section) $25.00 / Chairs $15.00 / Carpet: Max size 10' x 12' $15.00 /Water Coolers and Dehumidifier $10.00 / Windows and Doors – Each $5.00 / Shingles – With Demo Permit – Per Yard $30.00 / Shingles – w/o Demo Permit – Per Yard $55.00 / Wood – Per Yard $10.00
   viii. FY23 Revenue: $24,624.00
   ix. Total FY23 Annual Cost: $53,778.56; Town pays Grimmel Industries $88 per ton to dispose. Perhaps there are cheaper options?
c. Metal No Fee
   x. FY23 Revenue: $22,002.10
   xi. Town is not charged for disposal of Metal.
d. Brush – Under 4 inches Diam – Per Yard $5.00 / Brush – Over 4 inches Diam – Per Yard $15.00
   xii. FY23 Revenue: $38,918.50
   xiii. Bark Brothers handles disposal for the Town and there are no fees.
   xiv. These fees also subsidize the Town to pay Garbage to Garden a flat $220 per week to handle composting. Total FY23 Annual Cost: $11,440
e. Televisions, Computer Monitors – Each $5.00
   xv. FY23 Revenue: Undeterminable
   xvi. FY23 Cost: The Town pays North Coast LLC for disposal of these items. I was unable to determine the per unit cost. Total FY23 Expense: $1,554.80
   xvii. It seems likely that the fee charged is offsetting the costs. Town could consider fees for disposal of other types of electronics?
f. Refrigerators, Freezers, Air Conditioners $10.00
   xviii. FY23 Revenue: Undeterminable
   xix. Town pays Richard Thibeault dba Ozone Savers $8 per fridge/freezer and $6 per air conditioner to dispose. FY23 Cost: $3,302.00
   xx. The fee charged appears in line with the cost of disposal and overhead.
g. Propane Bottles – 20 Pound only $3.00
   xxi. Have been unable to determine how Town disposes of these or the cost.
h. Tires – 15 Inch no rim and under $3.00
   xxii. FY23 Revenue: $2,388.00
   xxiii. FY23 Expense: $2,251.96
      i. Town is charged $156 per ton by Maine Resource Recovery Association for BDS Tire Recycling to handle this disposal plus an annual fee.
i. Cardboard No Fee
   i. FY23 Revenue: $12,321.17
   ii. There is no expense to the Town for cardboard disposal.