

**RTM Public Health and Safety Committee**  
**February 11, 2019**  
**Darien Town Hall Room 206**

**MINUTES**

Committee Members in Attendance: Sarah Baldwin, Lois Schneider, Shannon Silsby, Penelope Wilson, Jennifer Woodbury, Olive Hauser, Brian Rayhill, Laura Mosher, Sara Parent, Mac Patrick, Mia Handler, Gary Swenson

Committee Members Absent: Colin Kelly, Nina Miller, Holly Giordano, Scott Zimmerman

PH&S Chair Mac Patrick called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

The committee unanimously approved the minutes of the 1/29/19 PH&S meeting.

The committee reviewed issues raised at the RTM Public Hearing held on February 6, 2019, concerning the proposed “Ordinance for the Management of Plastic and Paper Checkout Bags in Darien” (Bag Ordinance).

The majority of the committee believes we should move forward with the bag ordinance.

Ms. Schneider asked if it was possible to see a comparison of ordinances passed in other towns. She also wanted to revisit the allowance in the ordinance for plastic dry cleaning bags.

Mr. Swenson brought up the issue of 10 cent charge. Is 10 cents enough to cover the cost to businesses or is it going to cause them a financial burden? Perhaps we should suggest raising the charge. Another issue brought up by Mr. Swenson is that it is unclear who has enforcement power. Lastly, does this ordinance deserve a sunset clause?

Ms. Parent asked about the inclusion of paper bag restrictions in the ordinance, and the difference between recyclable vs. recycled paper bags. She would like more clarity regarding paper bags, and believes the restrictions may be too strict.

Ms. Mosher mentioned comments made by the Chamber of Commerce at the public hearing and believes we should look more closely into how this would affect local Darien businesses. She does not like the idea of burdening small business owners. We need more clarification on how business owners feel about this ordinance.

Frank Kemp, chair of the TGS&A committee of the RTM, provided the PH&S committee with a draft ordinance and updated the committee on the ordinance process.

Ms. Parent asked Mr. Kemp for clarification on the compliance office mentioned in the ordinance. Mr. Kemp’s understanding is that the compliance officer will have to be a volunteer appointed by Board of Selectman.

The committee discussed ways to lessen burden on local businesses. Can we broaden the time period for businesses to get rid of existing inventory? Can we raise the fee so that it makes a more meaningful difference in people bringing their own bags, and lessens financial burden on businesses?

Mr. Patrick will summarize issues brought up by the committee at this meeting, and forward it to committee members for review. He will then forward these issues to the Public Works committee.

Mac Patrick adjourned the meeting at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Woodbury.