

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2017 6:30 P.M.**  
**Town Hall, 4<sup>TH</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Barbara Anderson, Chairwoman  
Audrey LaBrie, Vice-Chairwoman  
Austin Cyganiewicz  
Michael Barbaro  
Charles J. Husselbee

Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager  
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant

---

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Memo from the Town Manager to the Board of Selectmen dated Sept. 7, 2017 regarding "Outsourcing the Wastewater Operations" (attached)
- 

Executive Session was called to order at 9:30 p.m.

Hickey informed the Board that he and DPW Director, Al Gallant, have had discussions regarding the Wastewater Operations exploring privatization. They are concerned that they have two licensed operators in the wastewater plant that the Town is required to have to run the plant. Monthly documentation, submitted by licensed operators, is required of us to send to the state. They have concerns that they wouldn't be able to have a backup person to fill the required licensed position if someone had a long term illness or retired. He noted the demand for this type of position is out there but the ability to fill it is problematic.

Hickey pointed out there could be a time when both employees are out at the same time. With privatization, there would be a list of people that could replace them. An added benefit would be a better cost on outsourcing material with a larger company doing the purchasing. Veolia, the organization that could run our plant, would offer our existing employees jobs. They would negotiate with Worcester County Retirement to keep them in the retirement system. The benefits would stay the same. We have a long term employee that will be upset.

The Town Manager said he and Al wanted to come before them and see how they felt, if they were open to it. They could go out to bid and then sit as a group and decide whether or not this makes sense financially. An alternative could be to reach out to a neighboring community possibly, but they may be in the same situation. It could work in some instances, or not at all.

Anderson asked about outsourcing the Water Dept. in the past. Mr. Gallant said they went from five water employees to the DPW Director and one employee. It was \$300,000 a year to the company. It became too expensive to keep them and it was difficult to run the Department with two people.

Barbaro cautioned about informing employees unless they were sure. Gallant would reach out to Veolia himself and see what the cost would be.

Anderson was concerned about the Town's sewer rate already being high.

Hickey said they were being proactive not reactive and asked the Board for their approval to move forward and see what an outside company could do for the Town and provide us with a duplication of licenses.

Husselbee said his opinion was what would be in the best interest for the Town.

Gallant noted another option would be to put in a third person who was willing to learn this trade at the plant and be trained.

Hickey noted he could also speak to Veolia and come up with a number we are comfortable with so if worse comes to worse, we could have Veolia provide us with someone temporarily in the case that it is needed. Barbaro noted we could see if they are already under a state contract and if so the bidding process wouldn't be required.

**LaBrie moved the Board authorize Mr. Hickey and Mr. Gallant to look into the possibility of outsourcing the Wastewater Treatment plant of Winchendon; Husselbee seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

Lastly, the Town Manager reported that he and Mr. Gallant have figured out a way to make the Transfer Station more profitable. He asked if the Board would allow them to reach out to Templeton to use our Transfer Station paying a fee. Gallant said he has quarterly meetings with area DPW departments and casually they have talked about it and they are willing to go into this discussion. This would help us offset the losses. Hickey said the Indirect Costs are going up, bag revenues have gone down due to recycling being good. We have lost \$10,000 in our bag sales, added Gallant. Hickey said the bigger number won't increase our staffing needs; it's a matter of selling more stickers and bags over there. Gallant noted he has an email from the state ensuring him he would receive more grants if he allows another Town to use the Transfer Station.

Cyganiewicz asked about the long term outlook for the Transfer Station. Gallant replied he thought they would close it on Wednesdays and Thursdays because they can't sustain it. If he receives money from Templeton, he could leave it as is. Gallant explained recycling has gone crazy. When we started recycling in Winchendon, they were paying us \$500 a ton for recyclables; now we pay \$30 a ton plus \$225 to ship it there. This is the first year we have had to pay. It all came at the same time.

Cyganiewicz commented it looks like this may not last and asked about contracting with a private firm for waste management pick up for the public. Gallant thought the Town would have to subsidize it a bit but doesn't think we should ever get rid of the Transfer Station because the streets will be worse than they are now littered with junk. Cyganiewicz asked for a figure for Town wide pickup. Gallant replied it is about \$1.5 million a year. The cost would be a general operating expense but how would it be offset by revenue was the concern.

Husselbee suggested the fee be \$50 for residents and \$75 for out of town residents. Gallant said he has been told by the State to make sticker and bag prices lower; we are one of the highest in the state.

Hickey said he would approach Templeton and see if they are comfortable and can work something out and if so bring back before the Board.

LaBrie moved the Board authorize Mr. Hickey to contact Templeton to see if they are interested in sharing our Transfer Station; Barbaro seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Husselbee moved to adjourn; Barbaro seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, Executive Session adjourned into Public Session at 10:01 p.m.

Barbaro moved to adjourn; LaBrie seconded. By a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Daigle".

Linda Daigle  
Executive Assistant