Special Town Meeting
Town of Elkton
June 8, 2015
3:00 p.m.

A Special Town Meeting was held on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. to receive comments regarding the Town no longer offering curbside recycling service. The meeting was held at the Elkton Area Community Center located at 20593 Blue and Gold Drive in Elkton, Virginia. The Council Work Session immediately followed the Town meeting. Mayor Wayne E. Printz presided with the following Council members and staff present:

PRESENT	ABSENT
Wayne Printz, Mayor	
Jay Dean, Vice Mayor	
Margaretta Isom, Council Member	
Harry Armbruster, Council Member	
Jeffrey Jones, Council Member	
Joshua Gooden, Council Member (arrived at 3:40)	
Gerry Comer, Council Member	

PRESENT	ABSENT
Kevin Whitfield, Town Manager	Allison Morris, EACC Administrator
Aaron Hammer, Chief of Police	
Troy Shifflett, Public Works Director	
Clairen Sipe, Town Treasurer	
Diane Johnson, Recreation Director	
Denise Monger, Clerk of Council	

TOWN MEETING

Mayor Printz called the meeting to order and the clerk was asked to call the roll.

Mayor Printz stated that the cost to the Town to provide curbside recycling service was approximately $35,000 per year. He noted that only 280 residents used the service.

Joe Hensley, 615 Spotswood, Elkton, questioned what the Town had planned for recycling if the curbside service was discontinued. He suggested that the Town hire an independent contractor to provide the service. Mayor Printz responded that an independent contractor already provided the service for the Town. He noted that the Town was continually losing money to provide the service.

A brief discussion took place regarding the billing amount for recycling which was factored into the $12.89 monthly charge for trash.

Wake Gooden, 151 North Street, Elkton, spoke in favor of continuing the recycling service in Town. He considered the service an asset to the Town. He encouraged Council to promote recycling in order to increase the number of citizens that use the service.

Carolyn Akers, 303 Morgan Avenue, spoke in favor of keeping the recycling service. She noted that going to the Town recycling center was a hardship. She noted that you needed to climb a ladder and walk across a platform to dispose of your items. She implored Council to keep the curbside recycling service. She noted that $35,000 was not an exorbitant amount of money considering the Town spent money on rock piles and gave Council members a raise. She noted that the Town should be doing more to promote recycling.

Lou Johnson, 515 Park, inquired as to the cost per year for recycling. He thought the decision to stop the service was a bad idea. He inquired as to what other Towns paid for recycling services.

Treasurer Sipe stated that the Town paid approximately $42,000 per year for curbside recycling service. She noted that the costs for recycling and trash were calculated together.

Mr. Whitfield stated that no rate increase took place for the trash collection fee the previous year. He noted that tipping fees at the County landfill were increasing; however, the trash collection fee would not increase. He noted that another review of the service would take place in 2016/2017.

Lengthy discussions took place regarding the following:

a) formula for fees.
b) trash study.
c) cheaper to contract service out.
d) recycling company bills the Town based on the number of households in Town and not the number of households they collect recycling from.
e) 1/5 of residents use service.
f) costs Town approximately $3,500 per month.
g) citizens not participating in the recycling service and the Town are subsidizing the service.

Joe Hensley stated that approximately $3.00 per household gets billed per month through the $12.89 for trash collection service. He was confused as to how the Town was not "breaking even" since 1,100 households were being billed at $3.00 ($3,300) each and the cost for the service to the Town was $3,500.

Vice Mayor Dean stated that in order to re-coup and possibly break even, the recycle fee would need to be increased by $120 per month to each household that does participate. Mr. Hensley clarified that he was not advocating that the citizens that use the service be additionally billed for the service.

Vice Mayor Dean stated that if the Town increased the fee for the service by $3.00 per month, the Town would still not break even. Mr. Hensley disagreed with those financial figures and stated that if the monthly revenue for the Town was $3,500 per month (from a $3.00 fee) and you increased the fee to $6.00; that would increase the revenue for the Town to $6,600 per month. He noted that if 1,100 households were billed for the service (at $3.00 = $3,300) and the service cost $3,500 per month; that left a deficit of only $200.

Mr. Whitfield stated that the Town contracted out the trash collection service in order to save money. He noted that since there was a profit margin built in the fee, the Town capped the fee and there was no increase to the citizens. He noted that the Town was simply reviewing the service to see if the Town could save additional money and if the program was worth keeping.

Council member Comer stated that he understood what Mr. Hensley was trying to convey. He noted that if the Town increased the fee to possibly $3.50 per month per household that would allow the Town to break even. He noted that as financial stewards of the Town's finances, the Council must review all aspects of the Town's revenues and expenses.

Additional discussions took place regarding the administrative fees and recycling most likely to discontinue glass collection due to injury of workers.

Council member Isom stated that the review took place due to approximately 200 households participating in curbside recycling at a cost of $42,000 to the entire Town. She suggested that advertising the service to encourage citizens to participate in the program. She agreed with Mrs. Akers that a trip to the local recycling center was difficult due to the layout of the area. She noted that the Town was billed for all of the households and not just the number of households that use the service.

Mr. Hensley stated that it was pointless to negotiate with a company that would not collect glass. Council member Isom responded that the decision to pick up glass would be up to the individual contractor.

Mrs. Akers encouraged Council to promote the recycling service more in Town.

Carolyn Gooden spoke in favor of keeping the recycling service. She noted that service was very welcome and necessary on her street. She noted that her neighbors were also in support of the service.

Randell Snow, 124 North Street, Elkton, was in support of the recycling service. He noted that four or five years ago recycling was encouraged by the State or County officials. He suggested a review if the County would be affected if the Town did not provide any type of recycling service. He noted that in past years, the Town had discussed doing the recycling service in-house. He noted that the Town had bought equipment for $100,000 to lay pipe which was not currently being done. He noted the Town still had the equipment and no personnel had been cut on the work crews. He noted that work orders were supposedly being done, but he did not see many Town employees working – not every day. He noted that the Town was regressing instead of progressing. He noted that the Town had a good Town Manager and Public Works person and questioned why the Town could not perform some of the services themselves.

Mr. Snow stated that the curbside recycling service was beneficial to citizens that could not climb steps and were immobile. He noted that Council stated that the recycling service was a losing proposition and continually speaks about EACC in the same manner. He noted that the Cemetery and police department do not make a profit either but were never mentioned. He suggested that a committee discuss the matter.

Mayor Printz stated that the Town had done some pipe work last year. He noted that in his twenty years of involvement with the Town, he had never seen more get done. He noted that Town employees work all over the Town in many different areas. He noted that the Cemetery and Police Department were different, in his opinion, they were required under the Town's Code/Charter and noted that those departments did not lose $300,000 per year.

Mr. Snow stated that he had no negative intentions by his statements. He noted that the Town looked good. He was just suggesting that the Town perform some of the services in-house.

Mr. Whitfield stated that he had spoken with Linda Zirkle from County about the Town possibly discontinuing curbside recycling and the County was making considerations for any additional recyclables at their local plant. He noted that Bill Judd left some information on recycling and was in support of continuing the recycling service.

No additional business, meeting adjourned.

Mayor: _____
Wayne E. Printz

Recorder: _____
Denise R. Monger, Clerk