

**To: Freeport Town Councilors**  
**From: Freeport Sustainability Advisory Board**  
**Re: Recycling and Waste Management**  
**January 6, 2020**

**Guided by the objectives of the Freeport Solid Waste Ordinance Section 28 -101 (Addendum 1), the Freeport Sustainability Board (FSAB) recommends adopting a recycling/waste disposal system that:**

- Incentivizes reduction of solid waste generation
- Increases recycling participation rates while decreasing recycling contamination
- Promotes education that enables residents to better manage their waste and recyclables
- Efficiently manages solid waste disposal costs and adapts to changes in recycling and waste management
- Positions Freeport as a leader in municipal recycling and waste management
- Provides for future initiatives, such as compost pickup, that support the intent of the Freeport's solid waste ordinance

**FSAB recommends considering options for curbside pick up that promote equity and better environmental policy such as:**

- Haulers that specifically strive to decrease recycling contamination rates
- Haulers that use smaller trash bins or incremental sizing (thereby encouraging households to decrease their solid waste volume and increase recycling rates)
- Pay As You Throw (PAYT) models (Addendum 2)

**Curbside with PAYT is the more effective model and neighboring towns have successfully implemented PAYT programs. (Addendum 3)**

PAYT programs are also an effective tool in increasing waste separation and recycling, and in encouraging waste minimization. The result is significant energy savings from transportation, increases in material recovery from recycling, and reduction in pollution from incinerators and loads on landfills.

PAYT, in particular Pay-Per-Bag, is an approach where waste collection costs are distributed more fairly among the population and in proportion to the amount of waste each user generates. Some households tend to generate more trash than other households, but under a basic curbside system without PAYT, these households would all pay the same fixed rate. With PAYT, families producing less waste pay lower waste collection fees.

**Because the Pay-Per-Bag option of PAYT model more fairly distributes collection costs and encourages waste reduction, FSAB recommends that Freeport TC adopt curbside pick up with Pay-Per-Bag.**

Members of the Freeport Sustainability Advisory Board will be available to answer questions at the next Town Council meeting when waste and recycling management will be discussed.

Attached is a document relevant to the issue of the Freeport Town Ordinance, PAYT, neighboring town's programs, and the Freeport Town Charter that we recommend for discussion.

Thank you for attention to this issue.

Josh Olins, Chair FSAB  
as approved FSAB meeting, January 6, 2020

**Addendum**

(1) **Freeport Solid Waste Ordinance Section 28 -101 Purpose:** *The purpose of this Ordinance is to protect the health, safety and general well-being of the citizens of Freeport, to enhance and maintain the quality of the environment, to conserve natural resources and prevent water and air pollution and to reduce/stabilize solid waste disposal costs by providing for a comprehensive, rational and effective means of regulating the disposal of solid waste in Freeport in accordance with the provisions of 38 MRSA ss. 1304-B et seq.*

(2) **Pay As You Throw (PAYT)** *(Pay-Per-Bag, trash metering, unit pricing, variable rate pricing, or user-pay) is a usage-pricing model for disposing of municipal solid waste. Users are charged a rate based on how much waste they present for collection to the municipality or local authority. Waste is measured by weight or size, while units are identified using different types of bags, tags, or containers. Services for waste diversion (recycling and composting) are often provided free of charge with PAYT.*

(3)

TOWN	POPULATION	METHOD OF DISPOSAL	RECYCLING RATE	RECYCLING CONTAMINATION RATE
Cumberland	7,211	Curbside pay per bag (\$2.50 per 33 gal-bag; \$1.25 per 20 gal bag)	37.00%	10% overall
Falmouth	11,185	Curbside pay per bag (\$0.91 per 33 gal-bag; \$0.64 per 20 gal bag)	38.00%	16% drop off; 8% curbside; 11% overall
Gorham	17,450	Curbside pay per bag (\$2.50 per 33 gal-bag; \$1.25 per 15 gal-bag)	N/A	18% drop off; 2% curbside; 6% overall
Old Orchard Beach	8,855	Curbside limit by volume (one 32 gal bin and 60 lb limit per residence/week)	N/A	7% drop off; 5% curbside; 6% overall
Saco	18,482	Curbside limit by volume (one 35 or 65 gal bin/residence/week)	23.00%	16% overall
Standish	9,874	Drop off	15.00%	10% overall
Freeport	7,879	Drop off (\$0.90 per bag at transfer station)	33.00%	14% overall

*Yarmouth Town Council has adopted a PAYT Pay-Per-Bag model. No data is available yet.*

**Freeport Town Charter 2.12:** The Town Council shall not enact any ordinance transferring R.W.S. disposal costs to the people by enactment of a user fee, "Pay Per Bag" or other new tax.

**Relationship to Freeport Town Charter**

Both Curbside Pick Up and Pay-Per-Bag PAYT avoid Charter change if any "new tax" and/or "Pay-Per-Bag" fee goes towards transport and NOT disposal. Property owners in Freeport, (residential and commercial) currently pay for "disposal costs" (tipping fees) via property taxes. Transport costs are covered by the .90 per bag fee for residents who drop off garbage at the Transfer Station. For residents who contract with Pine Tree, or other haulers, their payments cover the transport of their waste and not the disposal. A change to the Town Charter would be required if the curbside with Pay-Per-Bag PAYT model were to cover "disposal costs" in addition to transport.

## COMPARATIVE TOWN RECYCLING RATES

