The Town’s Focus Related to Waste Has Changed

An Emphasis on Recycling is No Longer Enough

Reducing the Amount of Waste and Encouraging Reuse is the now the focus of our programming and our Budget
  • Our budget recommendations are move towards greater accountability by those who generate the waste
What Happens to Your Bag of Trash?

**BAG OF TRASH**

- **Commercial Trash Hauler Pick Up**
  - Dispose at Wilton or another Transfer Station
  - Mixed Solid Waste Hauled by town employee to
    - **City Carting-Norwalk**
      - Mixed Solid Waste Hauled to
        - **Wheelabrator – Bridgeport**
          - Waste to Energy
          - Ash hauled to
          - **Landfill – Putnam, CT**
    - Clean recyclables sold and hauled or shipped
      - **Processing Plants**
- **Resident Drop Off**
  - Dispose at Wilton or other Towns’ Transfer Station
  - Mixed recyclables hauled by town employee to
    - **City Carting-Norwalk**
    - Dirty or non recyclables hauled to
      - **Wheelabrator**
        - Waste to Energy Facility
        - Ash hauled to
      - **Landfill – Putnam, CT**
Why hasn’t the transfer station fund been self-sustaining in recent years?

- *A continuing decline in revenue that is otherwise necessary to absorb fixed operating costs*
  - Consolidation of smaller haulers, resulted in less haulers using the transfer station and a related loss in solid waste volume
    - 9 haulers in 2013
    - 5 haulers in 2020
  - Increased recycling resulted in reduced solid waste volume. Growth in recyclables revenue wasn’t sufficient to offset and absorb fixed costs
  - A 2012 increase in the tipping fee meant to offset losses in tipping fee revenue resulted in Wilton being one of the more expense transfer stations for haulers
  - The resale market for most recyclable materials collapsed and eliminated that revenue source
Why hasn’t the transfer station fund been able to be self-sustaining?

- *Increases in costs*
  - New cost to dispose of recyclables, $65 per ton or approximately $70,000 per year
  - Previous 5-year contract with City Carting expired, resulting in an increased per ton rate to dispose solid waste
  - Annual increases in labor and other fixed costs
  - Years of no pre-funding for equipment replacements
Transfer Station
FY 2021 Budget

Waste Passed Through the Wilton Transfer Station in tons

- FY13
- FY14
- FY15
- FY16
- FY17
- FY18
- FY19

- Recyclable
- MSW
- Bulk Waste
Transfer Station
FY 2021 Budget

TRANSFER STATION REVENUES AND EXPENSES

Revenue
Expenses
Without changes, losses and the resulting subsidy will increase

- **Further consolidation of haulers** is likely as costs have increased industry-wide

- The Town’s **current roll-off truck**, which is used to transport mixed solid waste to Norwalk and recyclables to Stamford, is near the **end of its useful life** and requires **replacement at a cost of over $200,000**
Options to reduce costs and the resulting subsidy

• Regionalization
  • Discussions with Weston were suspended, but have picked up
  • Awaiting WestCOG funded study of regionalized transfer stations, utilizing Wilton and Weston

• Change tipping fees
  • Commercial hauler solid waste tipping fees no longer cover the cost to dispose of solid waste
    • Subsidizing disposal is contrary to reduce reuse focus
  • Share the cost to dispose of recyclables by charging a tipping fee and a resident fee
    • Charging a fee could result in an increase in reusables as away to avoid the fee
    • Charging a fee could result in an increase of can and bottle redemption, which avoids the transfer station
    • Charging a fee raises awareness of the issues with single-use materials
    • The fee on recyclable would be significantly less than solid waste and therefore wouldn’t create a disincentive

• Charge a transfer station permit fee

• Modernize operations resulting in revenue and cost efficiencies
The proposed budget reflects the following recommendations

- **Increased and new tipping fees as follows**
  - Commercial hauler solid waste tipping fee equal to FY2021 cost to dispose
  - Commercial hauler recyclables fee of $30 per ton or 46% of our current cost to dispose
  - Resident recyclables fee of $1 per bag, an equivalent of the hauler rate

- **No change** in resident solid waste per bag fees
  - $4.50 per bag regular fee is equal to FY2021 estimated cost to dispose
  - $3.50 per bag senior fee is a 20% plus discount

- **No cost** for transfer station permits

- Efforts to modernizing operations

- Resulting **subsidy of $455,000**, $80,000 more than the FY 2020 budgeted subsidy

- **Users fund 52%** of the costs, the Town (property taxes) fund 48%
FY2020 Operating Results Forecasted to be Unfavorable to Budget

• *Higher than anticipated disposal fees*

• *Budgeted regionalization savings, not realized*

• *Additional subsidy of $70,000 required, requesting transfer from general fund savings*