

Board of Health Meeting

November 20, 2017

Present: Gerald Maher, Chairman, Tyler Nims, Vice-Chairman, Mark MacDonald, Clerk, Peter Falabella, Director of Public Health.

The Board of Health Meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

7:00 Discussion re: Plastic Bags. Ms. Robinson, Ms. Ryer and Mr. Buckler attended to discuss their proposed article for a ban on thin plastic bags at retail establishments in Marshfield.

Ms. Ryer stated that the group also intended to meet with the Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen to discuss this matter. Mr. Buckler stated that in addition to the littering problem, plastic bags break down into petro polymers that eventually enter the food supply through the food chain, and that paper bags do not enter the food supply (although there may be a carbon footprint for environmental comparison purposes.) Ms. Robinson stated that approximately 59 Towns had passed such a ban already.

Mr. MacDonald was concerned with how business would be affected if a neighboring Town did not have a ban. All agreed that it did not appear that State level action on this matter would proceed in the near future. The BOH members would prefer that all Town Boards agree on an approach to this issue. Gerald Maher would like to receive additional feedback from Towns that have passed the ban, with respect to opposition points, implementation issues or other matters that came up during the process.

Pam Keith stated that she was opposed to the ban, and asked the Board to gather more scientific data on plastic and paper bags and the environment and mentioned the carbon footprint that paper bags have on the environment.

After additional discussion, the BOH members asked all parties to forward in writing any additional data or studies on this matter for review.

The meeting concluded at 8:45 p.m.

