

**October 6, 2009**

**PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH EVERYONE WHO USES THE TRANSFER STATIONS!**

**It is budget time in Washington County and our Transfer Stations are targeted for cuts (again!). *If we don't hold the line now, we believe that the transfer stations will soon be closed for good.***

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED.**

The County Budget Officer, Fort Ann Supervisor Gayle Hall, seems determined to close or privatize the transfer stations in order to get Washington County "out of the trash business." She is not alone in this mission, but she doesn't have an unwavering majority either.

The Board of Supervisors reduced the days that the county transfer stations are open from 4 to 3 effective Aug. 1, 2009. Now they are considering cutting another day a week from their hours. This would make for a 50% reduction in operating hours since August. At least four full-time staff would lose their jobs. (The County also has eliminated the transfer station overseer position as of 1/1/10.)

Without the transfer stations, garbage will end up being thrown into ditches and over banks.

And you will have no choice (if you don't want to illegally litter or burn your trash) but to hire a private waste hauler who likely does not recycle, at about \$30 a month -- \$360 a year! Any savings in property taxes will be more than made up for with this new expense to residents.

**WHAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS CAN DO:**

**1. Contact your town supervisor by phone or letter IMMEDIATELY.** If you have a fax machine, you can fax it to the Board of Supervisors office 746-2219 (phone 746-2210) before tomorrow's meeting etc. (Only email your supervisor if you are certain he or she checks email daily. Many supervisors rarely check.) *The supervisors are listed at the end.*

2. **Write a letter to the editor now** and send it to the Post Star and all your local papers. *The newspapers are listed at the end of this email.*

3. **Commit to attending at least one upcoming County meeting** (which unfortunately take place during working hours), if possible. Phone calls and letters are definitely not enough. We need people to speak and people to witness. Email back if you are able to attend a meeting, and we will update you.

Our presence will change the outcome. It did in February when mobilizing people to attend meetings stopped cuts. And it did again last Thursday, when we showed up and the Public Works Committee voted against any more cuts so soon.

**9:30 AM, Wednesday, October 7, County Finance and Personnel Committee meeting**

**10 AM, Friday, October 16, County Board of Supervisors meeting, Board of Supervisors' Chambers**

**1 PM, Thursday, October 29, County Budget Presentation, Board of Supervisors' Chambers**

All meetings are in County Office Building B, 2nd floor, Fort Edward. You can call the Board of Supervisors office at 746-2210 or ask in person if you have questions.

## **BACKGROUND AND MORE REASONS TO STOP THE CUTS.**

The rationale for making these cuts is to save the taxpayers money. Let's look at some arguments that refute that cutting back on transfer station hours and staff would save us money.

0. Even if the transfer stations were completely closed, the County solid waste budget would still include a huge subsidy (shortfall payment) to the Hudson Falls incinerator - \$2.1 million or more in 2009, \$2.3 million or more in 2010. It also includes \$235,000

in debt payment for the transfer stations. This does not include unemployment expenses. Cost savings?

- 0. The County collects over \$1 million in trash sticker fees plus hundreds of thousands of dollars from selling recyclables. The value of recyclables has declined with commodity markets, which are likely to go up in the future. All of this income would be lost. Cost savings?
- 0. Only about 2% of each of our County property tax bills goes to operating the transfer stations (\$780,000 a year from the County's general fund). If the stations were to close, most of us would pay way more than that to hire a private hauler – about \$30 a month, or \$360 a year. No cost savings here.
- 0. Cutting more hours means the closing of our transfer stations is imminent. The more inconvenient transfer stations hours become, the less people will use them. Cutting back hours as severely as suggested would put the stations at the point of diminishing returns. If not enough people use them anymore, the county will have a perfect excuse to close them completely.
- 0. Meanwhile in Rutland County, Vermont, more people than ever are using Rutland's transfer station. Why aren't we learning from them?
- 0. If the transfer stations close, and private haulers are our only legal option, they will certainly raise their prices. There is no cost savings to the taxpayers here.
- 0. The shortfall in the solid waste budget is reflected almost exactly in the subsidies we pay the trash incinerator for their budget shortfall every year. Supervisors need to be thinking about how to address this issue so as to maximize recycling and other alternatives to disposal when the incinerator contract expires in late 2011. Do we really want to let go of our transfer stations before this happens?

Only a few of the supervisors appear to believe in the transfer stations on principle alone. They all want to give the appearance of doing things to save taxpayer dollars and they see the transfer stations as easy targets.

It's up to us to persuade the supervisors that there will be serious

repercussions if they go ahead with these cuts. The election is around the corner and some supervisors are in contested races. Let's use this opportunity to hold the line on the transfer stations now.

## **Newspapers**

The Eagle, [EagleNews@gmail.com](mailto:EagleNews@gmail.com), 677-5158

Greenwich Journal Press, [JournalPress@verizon.net](mailto:JournalPress@verizon.net), 692-2266

The Granville Sentinel and The Whitehall Times,

[thesentinel@manchesternewspapers.com](mailto:thesentinel@manchesternewspapers.com), 642-1234

Bennington Banner, [news@benningtonbanner.com](mailto:news@benningtonbanner.com) (no attachments)  
802/447-7567 x1

Glens Falls Post Star, [letters@poststar.com](mailto:letters@poststar.com), 792-3131

## **Supervisors**

Argyle: Bob Henke, 638-6591 home, 638-8681 x12 home, 932-4162 cell, PO Box 173, Argyle, NY 12809

Cambridge: JoAnn Trinkle, 677-3324, 505 Co. Rt. 59, Buskirk, NY 12028

Dresden: Bob Banks, 499-2029 home, 449-1813 office, 218 Blue Goose Rd., Whitehall, NY 12887

Easton: John Rymph, 692-2012 home, 692-2678 office, 4 Easton Station Rd., Greenwich, NY 12834

Fort Ann: Gayle Hall, 761-4040 home, 639-8929 office, 1368 Patten Mills Rd., Fort Edward, NY 12828

Fort Edward: Mitch Suprenant, 747-6692 home, 747-6563 office, 242 Samantha Dr., Fort Edward, NY 12828

Granville: Rodger Hurley, 642-1303 home, 642-9243 office, 42 Main St.,  
Granville, NY 12832

Greenwich: Don Wilbur, 695-6697 home, 692-7137 office, 67 Anthony Rd.,  
Greenwich, NY 12834

Hampton: Donald Sady, 282-9830 office, 54 Hickey Rd., Hampton, NY  
12837

Hartford: Nancy Hall, 632-5605 home, 632-9151 office, 58 Hall Rd., Fort  
Ann, NY 12827

Hebron: Brian Campbell, 854-3110 home, 854-3636 office, 1546 Big Burch  
Hill Rd., Granville, NY 12832

Jackson: Alan Brown, 692-2066 business, 692-9208, 28 Main St.,  
Greenwich, NY 12824

Kingsbury: Jim Lindsay, 747-2188, 126 Crowley Rd., Hudson Falls, NY  
12839

Putnam: John LaPointe, 547-9591, PO Box 85, Putnam, NY 12861

Salem: Steve Alexander, 677-3470 business, 854-3277 office, 40 East  
Main St., Cambridge, NY 12816

White Creek: Bob Shay, 577-3954 home, 677-8545 office, 5 Madison Ace.,  
Cambridge, NY 12816

Whitehall: Vern Scribner, 499-0349 home, 499-1535 officem 55 Becket Rd.,  
Whitehall, NY 12887

Sent by Greenwich Citizens Committee, Inc.