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SETTI D. WARREN
MAYOR

To: Councilor Leonard Gentile, Chairman, Finance Committee
From: Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer *ML*
Subject: Responses to FY2017 Budget Resolutions
Date: May 18, 2016

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David A. Olson, Clerk
Newton, MA 02459

The Administration is pleased to provide the following responses to the FY2017 Budget Resolutions submitted by the Honorable Board of Aldermen.

Resolution #1 – Solid Waste and Recycling

Council Statement: The City Council respectfully requests that the Department of Public Works develop a long range plan to improve the City's recycling rate and reduce trash tonnage.

Administration Response: The Department of Public works is committed to developing a Waste Reduction plan which will identify short and long range goals aimed at reducing trash tonnage and increasing the City's diversion rate.

The plan will include strategies for increasing education and outreach to our residential, commercial, multi-unit customers along with interested student bodies within our school system. Methods to reduce solid waste will include increasing the City's recycling rate and overall solid waste reduction through waste diversion and re-use. Exploring new options for waste diversion through collaboration with the Department of Environmental Protection, MassRecycle, National Recycling Coalition and other local municipalities will be included in the plan which will be submitted by the end of this calendar year.

The city will also begin exploring the costs/benefits of expansion of recycling and waste diversion to businesses, institutions, other commercial entities along with condominium and apartment complexes throughout the City.

Proposed Resolution #2 – Trash Receptacles

Council Statement: Resolution to reinstall trash receptacles in parks, conservation areas, athletic fields and other city locations to ensure no location that previously had a trash receptacle is left without one.

Administration Response: While the Administration remains very supportive of the Bigbelly initiative launched on April 15, we recognized that there were some missteps, lessons learned, and adjustments that need to be made.

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Specifically, we should have done a better job of informing the public of the purpose of the program, advertising the changes, directing people to the newly located receptacles, and creating an avenue for feedback.

Therefore, we have spent a considerable amount of time yesterday and today creating an action plan that will ensure the success of our Bigbelly Program. Specifically, we have made the following adjustments:

- We are in the process of preparing signage that will be placed in our parks by the end of the week informing people that our plastic trash receptacles have been replaced by the Bigbelly smart waste and recycling system.
- We are working with Bigbelly to develop educational materials including applications to help park visitors locate trash receptacles.
- We have restored blue trash receptacles at the following eight locations:
 - ❖ Plymouth Road – New Cold Spring Trail
 - ❖ Houghton Garden – Suffolk Road
 - ❖ Dolan Pond – Webster Street
 - ❖ 112 Woodbine – Entrance to Norumbega
 - ❖ Islington Oval
 - ❖ Old Cold Spring Park
 - ❖ Edmands Park – Blake Street
 - ❖ Waban Hill Reservoir – Reservoir Drive
- We have worked with our IT Department to develop a web page with pertinent information, as well as a mechanism for residents to provide their comments and feedback.

We recognize that much of the need for trash barrels in the areas listed above has been the desire to dispose of dog waste. Therefore, we are working with a Pet Waste Management company and intend to replace the blue barrels with Pet Waste Receptacles very soon.

As with any new program, there are always “tweaks” that need to be made. We look forward to your feedback and will be happy to discuss any adjustments that may be required.

Cc: City Council
Shawna Sullivan
Dori Zaleznik, C.A.O.
David Wilkinson, Comptroller