City of Bath
Bring Your Own Bag Program
and
Polystyrene Foam Container Ban

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

September 2017

BYOB

BRING YOUR OWN BAG

Agenda

- Introduction
- Goals
- Background
- Proposed Ordinances
- Exceptions
- Reusable bags
- Paper bags
- Other Maine examples
- How will this affect me
- Process

Introduction

- Solid Waste Advisory Committee
- Tasked with exploring ways to reduce number of single use bags and polystyrene containers in Bath
- Gather public and business community input
- Present two draft ordinances to the Bath City Council
- Create an education program for Bath
  - Impact of single use bags and polystyrene
  - Ways of adapting to the new rules
- Implementation of ordinances (if passed): Earth Day 2018

Why You are Here

- Listen to the proposals
- Evaluate how it will affect you or your business
- Offer your thoughts and feedback

Goals

- Reduce litter
- Reduce public expenses in cleaning up litter
- Reduce use of fossil fuels
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Start a shift from a throw-away society to a culture of reuse
- Support green efforts in comprehensive plan
- Educate the public about the impact of plastic in the environment

Background

- Single Use Plastic Bags
  - Create litter in trees, wetlands, and waterways
  - Clog storm drains
  - Require use of public funds for cleanup
  - Impact wildlife
  - Require the use of fossil fuels for manufacture and transportation
  - Contribute to a throw-away culture

Background (cont'd)

- Single use plastic bags are one of the most common forms of plastic, all of which contribute to a litter problem
- There are many other forms of plastic that could be added in the future - This is a first step

- Polystyrene
  - Manufacture and transportation of PS foam containers consumes fossil fuels and creates greenhouse gases
  - Creates litter around Bath and in area waterways
  - Does not break down in the environment & is a hazard to wildlife
  - Alternatives are available

Proposed Ordinances

- Ban single-use plastic bags not meeting the reusable bag standard from distribution at a cash register at all businesses in Bath
- Assess an escalating charge on the use of paper bags
  - $0.05 per bag to start
  - Rising to $0.10 after one year
  - Rising to $0.15 after two years
- Revenues from fees will be kept by the business
- All stores must post fees at register and itemize a bag purchase separately

Proposed Ordinances (cont'd)

- Ban use of polystyrene foam containers for prepared food
- Ban use of polystyrene foam containers by food packagers
- Exemption for raw/live seafood and raw meat
- Retailers may re-sell food products packaged in polystyrene foam containers outside Bath
- City departments will not use foam containers
- Stores may continue to sell polystyrene foam cups and containers

Exceptions

- Bags
  - Product bags
    - Any bag without handles used to carry
      - Produce
      - Meat
      - Seafood
      - Prescriptions
    - Within the store to the point of sale
  - Businesses
    - Fairs, festivals, craft or flea markets, or other events of an infrequent and short-term nature.
- Polystyrene foam containers
  - Raw or live seafood or raw meats
  - Foods prepackaged outside Bath

Reusable bags

- Designed and manufactured to withstand repeated uses
- Is washable or made from a material that can be cleaned and disinfected regularly
- If plastic, has a minimum thickness of 2.25 mils, has handles, and can carry at least 18 pounds
- Businesses may create and sell/give away their own bags meeting the reusable bag standards
- Public education will include creation and distribution of reusable Bath Bags

Paper Bags

- Many believe paper bags would be a good substitute for plastic bags
- Paper
  - Biodegrades in the environment
  - Is made from renewable resources

- The manufacturing of paper bags requires greater use of water and energy than plastic
- Paper is heavier and requires more fossil fuels for transportation
- No paper bags are manufactured in Maine

Other Maine Examples

- Belfast – ban on plastic bags at all retail stores
- Brunswick – ban on plastic bags
- Falmouth - $0.05 fee on plastic and paper bags at stores over 10,000 SF
- Freeport – ban on plastic bags; $0.05 fee on paper bags
- Kennebunk – ban on plastic bags at all retail stores
- Portland - $0.05 fee on plastic and paper bags
- Saco - ban on plastic bags at all retail stores
- Topsham - $0.05 fee on plastic and paper bags
- York - ban on plastic bags at all retail stores

How will this affect ME?

- All BUSINESSES in Bath:
  - Prohibited from using single use plastic bags at the cash register.
  - Offer paper bags with a fee. Business keeps the fee.
  - Could sell or give away reusable bags and/or encourage customers to bring their own bag
  - Prohibited from using polystyrene foam containers for packaging prepared food
  - Need to substitute containers made from other materials (recyclable, sustainable, etc.)

How will this affect ME?

- All CONSUMERS in Bath:
  - Will not be able to get a single use plastic bag at any Bath business.
  - Will have a choice:
    - Bring your own bag or other container
    - Buy a paper bag
    - Don't use a bag
  - Will not be able to take out prepared food in a polystyrene foam container and should expect businesses to supply containers made of alternative materials
  - Should plan to recycle that container

Process

- Gather feedback from the public and business community at these public meetings
  - Sept. 13 6 PM @ City Hall
  - Sept. 19 6 PM @ Patten Free Library
- Modify draft ordinances as necessary
- Present ordinances to Bath City Council
- Council votes on ordinances
- If passed, proposed implementation on Earth Day 2018
- Community education program between passage and implementation

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Please bring your comments:

September 19

6 PM – Patten Free Library

October 4

6 PM – City Council Meeting

Your Comments Here: