

February 22, 2018

The Town Board of the Town of Warwick held a Public Hearing on a Proposed Local Law entitled "Carry Out Bags." Said public hearing was held on Thursday, February 22, 2018 at the Town Hall, 132 Kings Highway, Town of Warwick. Supervisor opened the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Supervisor Michael Sweeton
Councilman Floyd DeAngelo
Councilman Russell Kowal
Councilman James Gerstner
Councilman Mickey Shuback

Attorney for the Town, Jay Myrow

LEGAL NOTICE: The Clerk read the legal notice, which was duly published in the Warwick Valley Dispatch on February 14, 2018.

(Copy of this legal notice is printed at the end of these minutes.)

• Supervisor Sweeton – This was several years in the making and there has been a lot of information provided to the Board regarding the issue. The issue again is how can we reduce our use of a hard to recycle item that takes a lot of energy to produce. There are several ways to try to do that, some have been tried and some are still being discussed, but this is one way to try and encourage people to use a reusable bag instead of a plastic bag. The Board has done some research on its own and has reviewed research provided to us by various individuals and groups. I met with the grocers, their New York State Association and they represent supermarkets and generally the Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc. We reviewed several pieces of legislation and they also provided them and used by their membership and we looked at all of that. I did a lot of visiting with senior clubs because obviously one of our concerns is the effect on senior citizens and people on fixed incomes. I was surprised to learn that better than half of the seniors at the clubs that I attended and there are 7 in the Town of Warwick already use reusable bags. It didn't mean they weren't concerned about fees and the affect its going to have on them but I was surprised to learn that. We've gathered that information and the next phase of that is having a public hearing. So, you are aware this hearing tonight will stay open in conclusion of peoples input and it will be reconvened on two weeks from tonight which we will take more public comment to let more time to digest the issue in the local weekly papers and we will solicit comment throughout that 2-week period and that evening and see where we go from there. We have received several pieces of correspondence already concerning the law and they will be available on the website so anyone can look at them and see the comments that were made. I would say both of them were not in favor for various reasons. I did have a half hour chat with a gentleman living in Liberty Green Senior Housing and he is on a fixed income with a disability who gets home delivery and was concerned, obviously the economic effect on him. He did understand the environmental issues but he was concerned obviously and that is an issue and a question. I also received a letter from the Food Industry Alliance of New York State that presents their testimony on this. I will read it briefly, "Thank you for the

opportunity to provide testimony regarding the proposed Local Law. My name is Jay Peltz and I am the General Counsel and Vice President of Government Relations for the Food Industry Alliance of New York State. It is a nonprofit trade association that advocates on behalf of grocery, drug and convenience stores throughout New York. They support the purpose of the proposed local law which as provided in the legislative intent section of the bill, is to promote the use of reusable bags over carryout bags, in order to reduce the negative environmental and economic impacts associated with carryout bags. The Town finds that imposing a bag fee on the customers can create a shift in consumer behavior toward the use of reusable bags and significantly reduce the amount of carryout bags within the Town. Due to the resources and energy used to manufacture reusable bags, the production of reusable totes does not help the environment. Rather, on the reuse of reusable bags will benefit the environment. That is exactly what the bill will accomplish. By requiring a minimum fee of five cents for each plastic, paper and reusable bag provided at the point of sale, customers will be fully incentivized to use reusable bags every time they shop. This will maximize the reuse of reusable bags over time. This has been the case in Long Beach Nassau County at 33,717, Long Beach's population approximates the population of the Town of Warwick. It is located on the Long Beach Barrier Island, the city's residents are environmentally conscious. In 2016, Long Beach adopted a law requiring a minimum five cent fee on plastic, paper and reusable bags. The law became effective on April 22, 2017. Two stores operated by FIA members in Long Beach have reported the following data:

At store #1, average plastic bag distribution was 71% lower between April 22, 2017 and December 31, 2017, compared to the period beginning in January 2016 and ending in March 2017. In addition, sales of reusable bags increased tenfold between April 22, 2017 and December 31, 2017, resulting in approximately 7,000 reusable bags being sold during that period. Paper bags are *not* being sold at this store. As a result, paper bag distribution declined from 1,500-2,000 bags per week to *zero*.

At store #2, plastic bag use declined approximately 75% during the January 1, 2018 - January 27, 2018 period, compared to the same period in 2017. In addition, comparing the same 2 periods, sales of reusable bags increased fivefold, resulting in approximately 8,000 reusable bags being sold during the January 2018 period. Suffolk County has also enacted a law requiring a minimum five cent fee on plastic, paper and reusable bags. The law became effective on January 1, 2018. One FIA chain member reported that plastic bag distribution declined approximately 75% in January 2018 compared to January 2017. Another FIA member noted that over *93,000 reusable bags were sold at a discount* in January, which resulted in a loss that exceeded, by far, bag fee income during the period. This FIA member incurred a substantial loss to facilitate successful implementation and public acceptance of the law.

Clearly, a fee law maximizes environmental benefits, since it maximizes the reuse of reusable bags and avoids the sharp increase in paper bag use that typically occurs when plastic bags are banned. Respectfully submitted by Jay Peltz." Those are the correspondence to date. I suspect we will get more as the issue gets play in the next two weeks. Are there any comments from the Board? We are here tonight to get public input and we did ask you to sign up and if you haven't signed up there's a pad there.

Kathleen Shannon – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I want to thank you all for having us here tonight. I just want to point out that I would be absolutely delighted if this bill went into effect and I know many, many people in the Town would. With the roadside snow melting I'm sure everyone has noticed all the trash on the side of the road and it would be nice to see plastic bags taken out of that mix to make Warwick a much more beautiful Town. Most people in Warwick and the surrounding area drive to Shop Rite, Price Chopper and to the shops downtown and it's the easiest thing in the world to leave a bag in your car or have a bag in your purse. I have a couple of props with me and I want to show you this bag I bought in October of 1997 which it has the date on it. This has been used 100's of times and has been washed dozen of times and it has served me faithfully for over 20 years and hope to get another 20 years out of it. This has served many purposes besides grocery shopping, so leave it in the car it's there it's great. I have a bag like this made out of recycled soda bottles and so it's environmentally friendly there and it balls up to nothing and be put in your pocket or carried in your purse. What do you do about cleaning up after the dog or cat, well we bring bags of all sorts home with us or have them delivered. This is from an Amazon delivery and this was from something else that we ordered and we brought it in and they can be used for multiple tasks and you don't have to bring home a Shop Rite bag. There are times when you do forget your bags and you're buying a 5-cent plastic bag you can bring it back to the store. Those Shop Rite bags can be used multiple times which leads me to a question you mentioned in your correspondence that you read about a gentleman who gets home delivery. That is a good sticking point because what do we do about people getting home delivery in a plastic bag. My question is could it be worked so that home delivery customers could return the previous weeks bag when they get their delivery and get credit for those bags? Is that something that is a possibility? That may serve to address the concerns of home delivery customers. I certainly encourage anyone to purchase them it only cost me \$4 and it serves its purpose very well. I wash it with jeans, t-shirts, towels or whatever and it is sanitary and useful. I really appreciate you hearing us out.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you for coming. Questioned that are asked tonight I have several that I've already posed to the Food Alliance who is being a conduit to the two main supermarkets that are affected. Let's be clear about something else, this has no effect on the villages. The villages have to pass their own ordinances, so this would only affect the town and that is primarily the two supermarkets are the big users but others do as well. I have several questions to them on discounting bags, promos, what they are willing to do and they have not responded yet, so hopefully by the next two weeks we will have some answers to that as well. The other one is a good one about the home delivery.

Edwin George – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I use reusable bags but typically you never bring enough reusable bags when you get to the store you bring 6 or 7 and when you get to the end you don't have enough and you still have to get plastic bags. One of the problems is when you go to check out they scan the bags in the beginning but then you're at the end paying they have to wait for you to pay until after they counted all your bags. It gets to be more of a problem making it longer to check out because you have to wait for them to be done. I also want to say that it does penalize people that don't really have money because they're not going to want to spend \$5 on a reusable bag, it's not in their budget. The other

thing is too, they really are unsanitary, so if you go to the meat department and you put it in the bag they give you or the poultry department and you can't mix it with the produce. If you do that then you would have to wash the bags every time you use them because you couldn't take a chance of mixing a produce bag with a bag you put meat in. You would have to wash them every time you use them so we don't put things like that in them we use the regular plastic bags. We use the other ones for chips, canned goods, cereal and so forth. We also use them for cat litter, but we have a lot of cat litter so the ones you can get free just isn't enough so if we didn't do that we would have to buy them so it's not really saving anything. If it's too much of a pain people are going to shop on their way home and not go to the Shop Rite here. I have my choice of shopping at 3 or 4 other stores on the way home, so if it gets to annoying I could stop in Suffern or West Milford because I pass through them on my way home and I could say forget it and not go to Warwick. They do have recycling at Shop Rite and Price Chopper but in Shop Rite you have to actually look for it and it's a small recycling bin like you would find in town that says recycle your bags here. You can't even find it and you have to know to go look for it. If they had a prominent recycle bin people would probably be much more willing to bring their bags back and put them in there. They really wouldn't need a 5-cent per bag fee people could just bring them back and put them there and even when I do find it the bin is always full and you're trying to cram your bags in it.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you for your input.

Sarada Bernstein – Representative, Shop Rite, Warwick, NY 10990 – I am here tonight to represent Shop Rite. We want to thank Town Supervisor Michael Sweeton and the passionate residents and community leaders who reached out and allowed us to participate in the process that has lead us to tonight. Shop Rite Supermarkets is a member of the Food Industry Alliance which represents many supermarket independents and chain stores in the State of New York. Jay Peltz as we talked about before from FIA has entered into the public record for tonight a letter which outlines the members position on this issue in support of the proposal and we are in full support of the letter. Shop Rite takes great pride in serving the residents of Warwick and being a true community partner and we look forward to continuing the partnership and friendships we have made since we joined the Warwick Community.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you very much and we appreciate you being here as well.

Julia Calderon – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – Supervisor Sweeton and members of the Town Board the Bring Your Own Bag Committee from Sustainable Warwick and all the people who helped us want to thank you for writing this ordinance and having us here tonight. Four years ago, when Sustainable Warwick first started the cause of reducing plastic bag usage in Warwick it was because we had just heard that the State of Hawaii had gone totally plastic check out bag free. They didn't do it because the State Legislature passed a law, it happened because each individual town, little island and villages had passed their own ordinance. Suddenly we realized we could do something on a local level to address this global problem. Warwick is a town with a conscience and in the past, we have passed legislation for environmental causes for the sake of our town but also as part of a global

movement. When we know that an environmental problem exists and there is something we can do about it Warwick doesn't just sit around and wait for somebody else to do it. We know the plastic garbage on the earth today poses a very real and imminent threat to the survival of life as we know it and we are proud of the democratic process that has brought us to this point. In 2015 our committee circulated a petition in support of this kind of legislation and in 7 months we collected over 1,550 signatures through personal encounters and sheets left in local businesses. At the same time we were conducting an educational campaign by speaking to local organizations and business owners. Both supermarkets were very helpful to us by giving us hundreds of reusable bags to give away in order to encourage their use. They allowed us to put out signs on their property and they also put us in touch with the Food Industry Alliance which has been extremely supportive of this effort as well. We heard that Shop Rite in Warwick has more shoppers who bring their own reusable bags than any other store in the five-store chain. This is encouraging but it is still a very small percentage of shoppers. A large change through education and bag giveaways alone would never come fast enough. On the other hand, a small fee on each bag acts as a tool to help us remember what we really want to do in the first place which is to leave a living planet for the young people that we love. Is there anything that can be more important than that? We know that even if all the 11 million check out bags that Warwick puts out every year were to disappear immediately it would only be a drop in the bucket of the ocean of plastic garbage that is plaguing our planet, but it is a start and it is something that Warwick can do. We hope to be emulating by our neighboring townships too and for this reason we should all work together to have the very best ordinance possible. As it has happened before Warwick again can lead the way.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you, appreciate it.

Christina George – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I just came to listen.

Supervisor Sweeton – Ok you second his comment thank you.

Christina George – Yes.

Geoff Howard – Resident, Village of Warwick, NY 10990 – Good evening all and thank you for having us here. As you all know as everybody behind me knows Warwick is a special place. Some of that is mother nature the mountains, the lakes, the black dirt and all of these things make Warwick what it is. Some of it has to do with the collaboration that has occurred several times between the residents and the local government. I think of the way we prevented fracking and heavy industry of having the possibility of coming into the town. These were important collaborative efforts. Tonight, there is one more important effort that we have an opportunity to work together. The problem is plastic bags and its very real. You heard the figure 11 million in Warwick and that's a big number but it's a small number compared to the 100 million that are used in this country every year. It's a big problem but there is good news, the good news is many other jurisdictions have implemented an ordinance very similar to the one that is in front of you. Towns like Warwick the size and you heard the example from Jay Peltz entire counties states and countries have worked to eliminate

plastic bags or at the very least greatly reduced the plastic bags that are in circulation. We know that this can work and we know from these other jurisdictions that it can work and we also know how to make it work. We know that a fee is better than a ban. We know that rebates or incentives when you bring in a reusable bag are not as effective as a fee when you take a plastic bag. We know that the ban has to include plastic and paper. We know that we shouldn't focus on all plastic bags just primarily the bags that are being used at the checkout because the vast majority of the 11 million. We know that we have to partner with the supermarkets and as you heard we have done that. There is significant support for this from the supermarkets. Our goal is not to pay money at the checkout counter for plastic bags. We don't want these nickels to go to the supermarket. That will not happen, but what will happen after a very brief period they will not shop that way they will shop this way with a reusable plastic bag and that will become the new normal. In the same way that people first started adjusting to seatbelts at first it felt strange and now we just do it as a matter every day and we don't think about it. This is a big problem but there is a clear way forward. Warwick can't solve the global problem but with your help we can lead the way locally and we can be an important part of the solution.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you Geoff.

Rochelle Gibbons – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I'm going to applaud them for bringing this to the Board and Warwick. I think it's wonderful that we have concerned citizens that want to do something for our environment. My concern here is the fact that you're imposing a fine on something instead of creating a want. We use to have a system that I thought worked very well where we would bring back our bags and they would give us a refund on our shopping or the bags that we brought back. Unfortunately, that started to go by the wayside. What would happen is people would bring back the bags and if they didn't use them all then they wouldn't give you the discount back. Also, if you double bag they would not give you a discount back for the double bag. So, I think people started to get a little frustrated with the fees that were coming back, however in the beginning I believe that did work. I also have shopped in other areas where they use boxes, so you talk about the home shopping and what they do is instead of using items in many bags they put everything into a box. Boxes are more recyclable then the plastic bags which could help eliminate. I think there are other options besides this fee that could possibly cause issues to people shopping at the Shop Rite, could possibly cause issues to people coming into Warwick to shop at the Shop Rite who come in and go further and use the other shopping areas in the town. I have friends who eat in the restaurants and go shopping in the Shop Rite. I'm not sure that this fee is going to create the total benefit that we are looking for. I think there might be other areas that we can look at in order to come up with a plan that would give us a better environmental answer. I do see that there is an issue don't get me wrong I do know that plastic bags are an issue but I think the 5-cent fee is going to cause other repercussions on this that is not necessarily the way we want to go. I do have other ideas and I don't know if there is a committee of people who have gotten together and that might be the better option to start a committee in order to come up with ideas. We could also create a website. I know the newspaper did a good job explaining this and I think that is why everybody came here today. I do think there are a number of issues with people who have cats, I do have cats and

use these bags for that. I also have senior parents who their whole lives have used these bags as garbage bags. They don't buy garbage bags, so what you're doing is now instead of teaching people to have other methods for using these bags you're possibly causing them to not buy bags, which is a cost as well as those bags are hard to recycle to my understanding then the plastic bags in Shop Rite.

Supervisor Sweeton – Ok, so what I would ask is since there is a time period here and you said you have ideas if you could submit those ideas via email is fine that would be great. We can put you in touch with groups advocating one side or the other. Thank you for your comments I appreciate that.

Mary Makofske – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I want to thank the Board for considering this law it's really a wonderful idea and I know there's been a lot of work that's gone into it. I would like to address the main issue we are addressing tonight that recycling is not the answer to this issue. Every year roughly 102 billion plastic bags are used by American and less than 5% are recycled. Even if they are placed in those recycling bins that we have in the stores there is no market for this plastic. It's cheaper for companies to start with raw material petroleum or natural gas and make new bags rather than recycle used bags. In short recycling is not an answer. Almost all these bags end up as litter in landfills or in oceans. The answer is to reduce the use of plastic bags. Cities and whole countries have drastically reduced the number of plastic bags by putting a fee on their use. A fee simply reminds us that there is a cost to this bag. It reminds us that what we throw away doesn't go away. Why include a fee on paper bags as well? Grocery bags use only some recyclable paper most of them use virgin paper with valuable timber requiring enormous amounts of water and contaminating that water with hazardous substances. Making paper is the third largest industry of making greenhouse gases and pollutes the air with among other things lead and mercury. While paper bags can be recycled many actually end up in the landfills where they do not decompose because they are compressed and not exposed to air and sunlight. Recycling is a stop gap measure but does not really handle this waste and pollution problem. Reducing the use of disposable bags is the answer and I thank you for considering this in your proposition.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you Mary.

Leslie Noble – Business Owner, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – Tom and I are here to give our perspective as business owners here in Warwick. We love this town and we are very environmental and conscious as a business and we are in support of reducing the amount of plastic bags. We thought we would share with you what we've done as a business to use as little plastic as we can in our shop.

Tom Herman – Business Owner, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – Being we make pies in boxes we need larger bags and plastic bags would be easier on us because they will hold a box. We carry very large paper shopping bags and these cost at least twice if not three times as more than a plastic bag does. We don't want to use plastic bags at all, but because they are expensive what we actually do is ask if you want a bag or not. We actually discourage bags

as much as possible, so we don't bags things unless the order is very large. Even the smaller containers go into the paper bag because we've never had plastic bags in the pie store. The expense we've taken on our own to avoid using plastic, but more important to us we ask people not to use bags. Sitting in this meeting here I had an idea that part of this campaign even if the town created some signage that we could put up "Do You Really Need That Bag?" even though we charge a 5-cent fee each the point would be to have them think twice about getting a bag in the first place. We've tried to do that and we have customers that bring all kinds of bags back and reuse them. We make a statement each time we make a sale about the whole bag use and we try not to use them. We've gone as far as not using Styrofoam we have paper clamshell containers for takeout and all of these things cost more to use then plastic. Our goal is to try and talk people into not having any kind of bag at all or bringing there bags back even the ones we've already given them. We are trying to do our part for the environment even though it's more expensive for us it is working out fairly well. A lot of people do not take bags and that's the whole part of the campaign I think that would be good. It may cost a nickel for someone or just ask the question do you need a bag.

Supervisor Sweeton – Ok, thank you I appreciate that.

Bill Makofske – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I want to thank the Board for all their research and introducing this bill. I think it will have a very positive affect on our community and our nation. I have a suggestion for a minor change in the law. I would like to point out in section 73.2 there is a definition of reusable carryout bag and I believe it's not needed. I believe if its removed it does not change the intent or the application of the law in any way. It's current inclusion without its use in any other section of the law makes the law less clear and may confuse people reading the law or others who may try to duplicate the law in other municipalities. I would just recommend that it be eliminated because it doesn't serve any purpose. Thank you.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thanks Bill.

Shelley Clappe – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – Who is going to benefit from the 5-cent charge?

Supervisor Sweeton – The issue with that fee is that in New York State anything else imposed is considered a tax and we don't have authority to impose a tax. The fee is being collected and remains with the store. That's why it's a fee, otherwise it's unconstitutional in New York State.

Matthew Finn – Resident, Village of Warwick, NY 10990 – I'm an active member of Sustainable Warwick and I'm part of the bag committee but I'm here tonight speaking as a parent. My goal as a parent is to set my children off on the right foot and create positive habits for them to live by. This incubates a great deal of things obviously, but in regards to the plastic bag initiative my hope is to make using reusable bags a common place for them. Currently the majority of us use plastic bags out of habit. We've been given them and have adapted to them. My hope is that the bag initiative will help reinforce a reusable bag habit

for my children. My wife and I have taught our two daughters how to compose, recycle and both sustainable practices are common things for them. They actually understand the value of being environmentally conscious. We take them to the farmers market to buy food, we take them to the Hope Chest to buy clothing and toys at times, materials we like to reuse for craft time. We have a family cat and disposing of cat litter seems to be a big issue, we go through a ton of cereal in our house so we have a ton of cereal bags leftover and that's what we use to do that. So, we don't need to use the reusable bags there are other bags that come into the household that take care of that. The 3 R's reduce, reuse, recycle or not in any sort of random order they are listed in the order of importance. We are teaching our children the 2 R's reuse through composting and all of the other things that we reuse in the household. The bag initiative will allow us to address this first and really the most important R is reducing our use unnecessary materials and hopefully inspire our children to keep that in mind. My hope is that in 15 to 20 years our daughters will be going through some random boxes in our attic and come across a plastic bag and look at each other and say remember when we were kids and this is what people use to bring their groceries home in.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you.

John Stage – Resident, Village of Warwick, NY 10990 – Good evening, I just want to say as a citizen of Warwick I'm in favor of it. I've been thinking about this for the last couple of months looking at people when I shop usually on Wednesday and I want to thank you for bringing it to some kind of fruition and I think as being a good citizen of Warwick and the world. For me it's a pretty obvious progression and I think we're dealing with today and I was thinking we should take another look in 1 year to see how it's working and see if it's working. I presume that we have had some people experience it in marketing, but I think we ought to look at it again, but I'm all for it. I want to thank you for bringing it to attention and I hope the rest of the Board feels the same way.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you John.

Sherrie DeBergh – Resident, Village of Warwick, NY 10990 – Just reflecting on what I've been listening to its really great to hear that it's multigenerational from young to older citizens who feel that this will be beneficial and not only to our town but also to the planet. We do understand that there may be a hardship for some people to buy plastic bags and we want to thank you for making some exceptions and exemptions and considering people on programs like SNAP and WIC and there are also people not on these programs that it would be a hardship. We hope to see that the stores who will be making a profit from this will be able to donate bags as they have in the past to encourage using reusable bags. We've given out free bags at Shop Rite and I think at Price Chopper as well to encourage people to use reusable bags and thank you very much and I hope you pass this.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you Sherrie.

Valerie Lucznikowski – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I want to reiterate what some of the others before me have said, thank you for taking this up I read through the ordinance, law, regulations what is it?

Supervisor Sweeton – It is a proposed local law.

Valerie Lucznikowski – A proposal of a law. When I was living in Manhattan some years ago there was a similar thing to charge for plastic bags and it was turned down based on a big outcry from people who did not have very much and couldn't afford to pay for the bags. I see that you've taken care of this in this proposal by exempting people who are paying with SNAP and WIC and I really appreciate that, I think it's a really good move. I think that will also change, I think eventually people, well change is hard but I think once more people get accustomed to bringing their own bags as they do in many places of the world now. I'm old enough to remember when there were no plastic bags they just used paper bags. I think people will become accustomed to this as people have. There are countries now that have banned plastic bags, whole countries in Europe not towns or villages. When you're getting something for free its really tough to suddenly find out you have to pay for it, but paying for the plastic bag is not only paying for the bag but the harm that it does when it gets thrown away. I think if people can think of it in those terms they won't mind so much paying for the plastic bag or paying a couple of dollars for another bag a reusable bag that will be around for a long time. So, the expense factor is really a pain out to prevent pollution in our future. Thank you again.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thanks for your comments, really appreciate it.

Pat Foxx – Resident, Village of Warwick, NY 10990 – Thank you very much for having us here. When I went to live in Europe I was shocked as a young person to see there were no plastic bags, everyone walked around with a string bag. Warwick is a special place and I love Warwick and I think it can lead the county in a positive way, show other people how this can happen and do something about an issue that's plaguing our planet. Instead of thinking about what we should do and how terrible it is, but actually making a move to do something is really important. Thank you.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you very much.

Jordan Christensen – Representative, Citizens Campaign for the Environment – Thank you for holding this here today and we are in support of the bill. We work throughout New York, Connecticut and the nation to reduce plastic through local ordinances like this one. We have worked with dozens of municipalities in New York State that have successfully implemented bans or fees. I want to talk about some of the reactions since you guys are considering it now. The 5-cent fee we worked in Long Beach and we worked in Suffolk County to pass very similar legislation to what you guys have today and they've been really effective on both counts. We knew when we were going into it we were following a good ordinance, Washington DC did this in 2008 and they were the first one to do it on the East Coast. A couple of years after they did they found out they had 60-80% reduction in their bags and they surveyed businesses and residents and they had overwhelming support based on

neighborhoods, demographics, age, all of that was wide spread support. Going into it we were feeling positive about it and so far, it's been overwhelming success. We are already see a lot less litter on the roadsides and especially the supermarket parking lots. In terms of data Suffolk County one of our bigger grocery store chains has already had a 500% increase in reusable bag sales because they gave them away discounted and they brought in 80% reduction in their single use bags in the first 4 weeks and you're see more and more reusable bags as time goes on. We are sure its going to be the same thing here and we know the first couple of weeks there's a hiccup because people forget their bags and we suggest signage everywhere and doing announcements the first couple of weeks before it goes into effect so people are prepared. After the first couple of weeks people got use to it and started to bring their own bags. I wanted to highlight too and second the idea about the cardboard boxes. A bunch of the big box stores like BJ's, Aldi's and Costco had never had plastic bags and used those boxes for the bulk purchases and that's what we suggested for down state for some of the Stop and Shop's and I think that would work here too. There is already a hidden cost economically for the bags not just environmental, US retail is spending 4 billion dollars a year on plastic and paper bags. Every paper bag you get costs about 5-cents and every plastic bag you get costs about 2-cents and is filtered into the price of the groceries, so you guys are already paying to clean it up and landfill it. There are a lot of places that have actually done a little bit of this overall savings as long as people bring their own bag and don't just pay the 5-cents, which we don't believe they will. Thank you and we think it's going to be a huge success.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you very much for coming tonight.

Deborah Young – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – Mr. Supervisor, Council Mr. Myrow I have many thoughts and it's kind of weird for me to be standing here right now, but as many of you know I'm a flaming liberal, a total tree hugger and a total environmentalist, yet I'm against this bill and that's a very bazar position for me to be taking. I thought about this and I thought about what is the result and the result is reduce our microplastics going into our water systems because of biodegrading over millions of years in our landfills. Reduce the landfills, I've thought about all these things and at the same time I drive by Greenwood Lake and I watch the shrink-wrapped boats be shrink- wrapped every year. I'm sorry I don't use that many plastic bags. I use my reusables and yes occasional plastics and they are not single use bags because like the cat litter people and the dog poop people I use them for lots of things for my house. The seniors, my mother has not bought a plastic bag in I cannot tell you how many years because she uses the other bags for her garbage bags, so there's double cost there for the consumers. I'm really concerned and wasn't even concerned until tonight coming here that the food industry is behind this and why, well we think it's the nickel they are getting and that angers many people that I talk to in this town. The bottom line is the 5-cents is not the big payoff here it's that 4 million or billion that was just sited 2 seconds ago. They are saving in expenses because they are getting money back on that. It's the sale of the reusable bags, well guess what a cotton bag you have to use 100 times before you reduce your loss of sustainable resources because your using electricity and water and who's electricity and water is it but ours here, Warwick us and most of us our on wells. I have some trouble with that and it's not only the 5-cent but it's the

whole problem this tax thing. Is it legal for us to impose a tax on people because that's basically what it is that profits only businesses and I know it's the town but it won't stay the town and there might be other businesses that aren't in the town or villages and all of a sudden I'm a WIC person and I'm going out to Pine Island and I have to buy something at a store that's not a grocery store and they have to charge me a nickel but I'm not supposed to be charged a nickel, so now I have to have that shame to say I'm on a federal program or a state program so you can't charge me just to save my 5-cents. That's wrong how should they be shamed? I want to save my environment and the only justifiable reason for this law is the litter and the ocean pollution. It's HDPE Plastics which is high density and the same stuff they wrap boats with, it's the same stuff they wrap pallets in at Kuiken's, at Wadson's everywhere that they deliver. Why aren't we attacking the big fish, why are we attacking the citizens of Warwick and why are we fining the citizens of Warwick to clean up and why aren't we using our 5-cents to put into a fund to clean up our environment here? Higher the people or get the prisoners who use to do it but they don't anymore. I walk the streets everyday with the dogs I don't know how many plastic bags are or not on the roads. I would rather incentivify people to clean up our environment then make them pay 5-cents to enrich the food industry to save them money to shame our poor and still have microplastics flooding our system, flooding our landfills. What is the real purpose of this law? Do your math guys, 11 uses of those heavy millimeter bags, the supermarkets are making a profit and are they cleaning up our environment here in Warwick? No, so I would say I love my environment, I love my trees, I cleanup all the time, I use my reusable bags a lot but this is not the way to do it. So please take care of our world here in and don't punish our citizens find a way there's got to be a way.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thanks for your comments.

Elizabeth Knight – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I contacted the County Recycling Coordinator asking who would be the best person to talk to about why are plastic bags really a problem for the whole recycling process? He suggested I get in touch with Barry Carroll who is the solid waste recycling specialist for Buffalo and this is what he wrote to me; “Many municipalities regard plastic bags as the worst contaminate in the recycle bin. Plastic bags collected at the curb get caught in the sorting equipment which cost programs money and are not recyclable. The plastic bags interfere with the automatic sorting machines because conveyor belts feed the recycling into rotating tunnels and onto spinning wheels to separate the plastic, glass, paper, aluminum and steel cans. Plastic bags cannot be sorted from other materials with the existing machinery, instead they get caught in the conveyor belts and jam spinning wheels, which can bring the entire sorting machine to a halt and sometimes it causes injuries. He also pointed out carelessly disposed of plastic bags can block sewer drains and sewer pipes causing unnecessary flooding. The problem is they are not always recycled and even when they go where they are supposed to they go outdoors. Thank you.”

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you, appreciate it.

Rachel Chaput – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I just moved here a couple of months ago and I would be tickled to live in a town that would have such a progressive bill. I'm very proud to live here and I think you should be proud to pass this bill, so I'm very much in support of it. Thank you.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you.

Lark & Fleur Kuhta – Residents, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – We are also recent homeowners in Warwick although we've been shopping in this year since living in Upper Greenwood Lake. I lived my life in Warwick, I shopped in Warwick and pay to take part in the library here. I also am very proud to now be part of the town that would be so aggressive and delighted as well. We went to The Netherlands last year in the city there is no plastic bag available in any store. You had to buy a reusable bag and everybody seemed fine with it. The supermarket was crowded and people were just fine with it, but I think it's just a matter of getting use to it. I have 9 reusable bags in my purse at all times so when I go to a boutique or some other store they are always there. Once you get used to doing that you have them with you all the time you don't have to think twice about it when going to the supermarket. I wanted to say I think produce needs to be washed when you get it home whether it was in a reusable bag or a plastic bag. There are lots of germs floating around in the supermarkets. It's very nice to hear that there are stores where people are not automatically putting food into a plastic bag. I often have to stop the person who is checking out my groceries because they automatically put my meat into a plastic bag or frozen foods into plastic bags and I always say I don't want any plastic bags. They say its out of habit, but the habit should be to not use a plastic bag and I still think it will make all the difference in that situation. As for cat litter we have cats as well. I have a can and I use 100% flat based litter and I put it into a compost heap outside and we haven't had any problem with that, it's just disintegrating. The stores charging the nickel or whatever they will be saving 3 to 5 cents on each bag and perhaps that savings could be passed onto consumers. It doesn't necessarily just go to the rich store owners. I think ultimately you will pay less if you use your reusable bags. The store will have that much more money to save you on having the price built into your grocery costs and you wouldn't have to pay to clean up the pollution afterwards, it's better to prevent it in the first place. The vendors who are supportive of this, for instance for someone like me I would be more eager to shop in the store where the spenders are supportive of the reusable bag.

Daughter Kuhta – I want to add onto what my mom is saying. Most of the points I wanted to make have already been made. I do want to thank the Board for putting this law in force. This is a wonderful idea and I'm in support. I think to a certain degree what this comes down to is our responsibility to protect the environment. I'm 15 as you can probably tell and I am doing all that I can every time I go shopping I have my reusable bag and I never had the necessity to take a plastic one. However, me doing all I can is not sufficient we need more people to be doing all they can to protect the environment. Yes, this will be a minor inconvenience at first. I remember when I first started using my reusable bag I kept forgetting it was in my purse and kept taking a bag but eventually I got over that stumbling block. I think that small inconvenience is nothing it pales in comparison to our responsibility

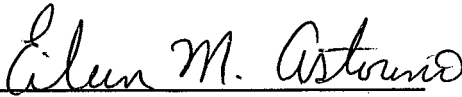
to protect the environment for future generations and this 5-cent fee will put in place a sense of urgency on people to get over that stumbling block of inconvenience and live up to their responsibility to protect the environment. Once again thank you so much.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you for your comments. We appreciate it and for your passion. I'm done with my list here so if there's anyone who hasn't been heard and would like to please come forward and give us your name for the record.

Joe Dans – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I'm a longtime citizen of Warwick and one of the reasons why I came here was the beautiful environment we have. I get concerned when we get a little crazy with things. I know we have Sustainable Warwick my concern is we continue to lose population in Warwick and other parts of New York because we are being nickeled and dimed and feed to death. I read an article the other day that said that sandwiches are creating global warming. Eating a sandwich is basically equivalent to driving an SUV 11 mile, so maybe we should tax that next. We can go crazy with these different things. I know a lot of seniors who are not here today who can't afford the bags, they can't afford the fee, it's going to be a problem for them. I think we have to take a lot of things into consideration Warwick continues to lose a lot of population and there are a lot of things we do in Warwick that are good. I think we should have free land open but we've got to consider nickel and diming people to death. New York is losing population because people are getting tired. I talked to so many people who say they are not going to retire in New York State and its because of added costs all across the board. Thank you.

Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you Joe I appreciate it. Is there anyone else who has a comment who hasn't spoken? This is probably going to hit me economically because I'm usually in the milk aisle by the time I remember I have reusable bags in my car, so it's not an easy issue and we thank you for your comments tonight. The hearing will remain open until two weeks from tonight so if you have new comments you'd like to make or you certainly want to come and be part of this we are here to open it. Written comments can be accepted right up to that meeting and perhaps beyond. We will decide then depending on what we learned. There are some questions that I would like answered on the food industry concerning some issues on promotions that perhaps help seniors on a fixed income with how this works. I have some questions on how they process because one gentleman uses food stamps and not everything is eligible for food stamps so somethings will get the food stamp exemption for the bags but other things won't. How do they handle that and I'm not sure how they know, so we are going to try and get those answers too? We will certainly talk with Shop Rite and Price Chopper. Thank you all we are going to take a five-minute recess and then we will reconvene.

ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING: Motion Councilman DeAngelo, seconded Councilman Gerstner that the public hearing be adjourned until the March 8th Town Board Meeting.
Motion Carried (5 ayes, 0 nays) 8:27 p.m.
02-22-18 CP


Eileen Astorino, Town Clerk

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Town of Warwick will be holding a Public Hearing to consider an Introductory Local Law regarding "Carry Out Bags". Said public hearing to be held on February 22, 2018 at 7:15 p.m. or soon thereafter as the matter may be heard at the Town Hall, 132 Kings Highway, Warwick, NY

All interested persons will be given the opportunity to be heard.

DATED: February 14, 2018

**BY ORDER OF THE TOWN
BOARD OF THE TOWN OF WARWICK
EILEEN ASTORINO
TOWN CLERK**