



# Lowell City Council

## *Environment & Flood SC*

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** April 10, 2018  
**Time:** 5:35 PM  
**Location:** City Council Chamber  
Lowell City Hall, Lowell, Ma.

### **PRESENT:**

Present on Roll Call were Chairperson, C. Cirillo, C. Kennedy and C. Elliott who arrived at 5:38 PM. Also present were C. Conway, C. Leahy and Gunther Wellenstein, Recycling Coordinator.

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Cirillo called the meeting to order at 5:35PM in the Council Chamber. Chairperson Cirillo said the meeting had been called to discuss the banning of plastic bags in the City of Lowell.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

Chairperson Cirillo said 65 cities and towns in Massachusetts have banned plastic bags. Chairperson Cirillo said the Town of Westford just banned plastic bags. Chairperson Cirillo said that plastic bags are everywhere in our environment because they are convenient and negatively affects our human health. These bags pollute our water and our lands. Plastic bags are made from non-renewable sources. Chairperson Cirillo said if we ban plastic bags there will be fewer landfills. Chairperson Cirillo then opened the meeting up to speakers in the audience. Speaking in favor was Greg Paige. Chairperson Cirillo then asked Gunther to address the sub/committee and audience with respect to recycling. Gunther went over and handed out literature that the City has on their website regarding recycling. Gunther went over the top ten contaminants in curbside recycling to which most include plastic bags. Gunther explained common mistakes customers make when recycling which are placing recyclables in plastic bags and loose plastic bags in recycling. Gunther asked the committee to consider sufficient lead time through outreach to use up current inventory and get new inventory for what would be acceptable. Chairperson Cirillo asked Gunther where the handouts are available and Gunther said they are on [Lowellrecycle.org](http://Lowellrecycle.org). C. Kennedy asked what other boards besides City that Gunther serves on and Gunther said for 3 years he served on the Northeast Recycling Council and he also serves on Mass Recycle. C. Kennedy also asked Gunther if he was familiar with the



other cities and towns that have banned plastic bags. Gunther said yes it is discussed at their quarterly and other meetings he has attended. Gunther explained that they discuss how it was implemented as well as feed-back. C. Kennedy then asked Gunther about the time frame for the transition when a community votes to ban plastic bags Gunther explained it takes between 6 and 9 months and that the City of Lowell is in the perfect window to do this for January 1, 2019. Also speaking in favor was Kevin Goscilla. C. Elliott explained that he understands the issue, however he does not agree with his colleagues, he thinks it's a regional issue, and he is concerned about the economic impact and it has to be statewide and applied across the board. Another speaker Michael Vin Chief Operating Officer for GXT Green, handed out packet for biodegradable bags. Other speakers Jonathan Richmond and Jane Calvin, Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust, and Charles Arnold also spoke. C. Kennedy moved, seconded by C. Cirillo "To request that this sub/committee recommend to the full City Council at their next City Council Meeting that the City Manager and the Law Department be instructed to prepare an Ordinance that would ban plastic bags in the City of Lowell as of January 1, 2019". So voted on roll call vote 2 yeas, 1 nay (C. Elliott). C. Elliott moved, seconded by C. Kennedy "To have the City Solicitor's Office prepare a Resolution to send to Legislature to support House Bill 2121". So voted on roll call vote 3 yeas. More speakers Nancy Pitkin, Jay Mason addressed the sub/committee. Chairperson Cirillo noted that the committee received written communication from Stephen Malagodi.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion** to adjourn by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Cirillo. So Voted.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20PM

Angela Gitschier, Acting City Clerk