

Plastic bans going to vote in Tremont

Sarah Hinckley

Mt. Desert Islander

January 13, 2019

<https://www.mdislander.com/maine-news/plastic-bans-going-to-vote-in-tremont>

TREMONT — Voters at this year’s Annual Town Meeting will get to decide if they want to ban single-use plastic bags, polystyrene (Styrofoam) to-go containers and fireworks in town.

Initial drafts of ordinances addressing all three proposed bans for the town were presented to selectmen during their meeting Monday. Selectmen voted 4-1 in favor of putting the proposed plastic bag and polystyrene ordinances before voters in May by way of secret ballot.

Residents of Southwest Harbor banned the use of single-use plastic bags and polystyrene containers — white Styrofoam — in November. Mount Desert and Bar Harbor officials are considering ordinances that would do the same in their towns.

“I’m against it myself,” said Selectman Howard ‘Howdy’ Goodwin, who was the only selectman to oppose the motion to put the ordinance before voters. “It’s mostly these tree-huggers that want to do it.”

Carey Donovan and Jill Higgins, members of A Climate to Thrive, attended the selectmen meeting to offer insight on feedback from area businesses to the possible change. Of the 13 they contacted, 10 were fully in support of the change, said Donovan.

Most are “already doing all the things we would want them to be doing,” she said.

One restaurant the group contacted did not like the idea of the ban being an ordinance, even though they are already mostly in compliance with the change, Donovan reported.

All five selectmen were in favor of putting the ordinance banning fireworks, except with a permit or on designated holidays, before voters via secret ballot.

In the consumer fireworks ordinance, the firing of fireworks in the town of Tremont is forbidden without a permit, except around the holidays of July 4th and New Year’s Eve. Permits to use fireworks in town will be available to purchase at the town office.

Copies of the proposed ordinances will be posted on the town’s website and available at the town office for viewing. Public hearings regarding the proposed ordinances will be scheduled prior to the vote at town meeting. A date has not yet been set for these.