

Dear Town Supervisor,

April 27, 2017

Hello, we (Jules Branitz and Tucker Callahan) are both 11 year old fifth graders at Lenape elementary school. We are writing this letter to help reduce the plastic waste in New Paltz. We only grow up once and we want to grow up in beauty. We want to be able to swim in the Hudson and the Wallkill rivers and have many animals to our site. Plastic waste is stopping us from getting to those goals. You must know every year there is an annual regatta. Most people come to see boats, and we do too, but when we go, boats aren't the only thing that we see. We see an abundance of garbage and we don't want to grow up that way. Also if animals have a majority of plastic waste in them and we consume animals then, we will have plastic waste in our bodies which is not healthy. We understand that plastic bags are banned in the village of New Paltz, but all of the franchised super markets are in the town of New Paltz, why don't we ban bags in the town of New Paltz where it really matters. Plastic bags cost 3 - 4 cents, paper bags cost 8 - 9 cents. Is 5 cents worth sacrificing Animal lives, Beauty, and our health?

Sincerely your wishing 5 graders,

Jules & Tucker

Tucker Callahan
TCS
Jules Branitz



Town of New Paltz

Neil Bettez, Town Supervisor

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June 7, 2017

Jules Branitz and Tucker Callahan
c/o Eric Savelson
Lenape Elementary School
196 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561

Dear Jules and Tucker:

Thank you so much for writing to me and letting me know your concerns regarding plastic bag waste in the Town of New Paltz. This is a very important matter, and one that means a lot to me as an environmental scientist and the chair of the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance science working group. I am sending a copy of your letter to the other four members of the Town Board so that they can hear your thoughts as well.

I've been doing some research on the topic and it's been something I've also thought was important, but getting your letter made me realize this needs to be a priority. I'd like the Town Board to look in to passing a law. We do need to think of meaningful ways we can encourage people to stop using plastic bags and use paper or reusable bags instead. If it's not possible to ban bags altogether, I'd at least like to see a law established where there is a fee charged for purchasing plastic bags and that fee would go into a fund that would purchase reusable bags to be given out at no charge to encourage people to use fewer plastic bags as well as fund efforts to clean up litter in the town. Anything we can do to reduce the use of plastic is a step forward.

I hope to have a proposal to the Board by August of this year and we welcome input from members of the public. If you'd like to come and talk to the Board at public comment, we meet the first and third Thursdays of every month at 7:30 pm at the Community Center. There's a public comment portion of the meeting where anyone can come and talk about their specific concerns for the community. You might also be interested in attending a meeting of the Town Environmental Conservation Board, which meets the third Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Community Center.

Thank you for your heartfelt letter and your commitment to the environment.

Sincerely,

Neil Bettez
Town Supervisor