

Approved as amended at the November 26, 2013 meeting.

Flathead County Solid Waste District
Board of Directors Meeting
October 22, 2013 – **3:00 p.m.**
Landfill Office

1. Roll Call

Board Members present: Hank Olson, Chairman; Greg Acton, Vice Chair; John Helton, Member at Large; Gary Krueger, County Commissioner; Wayne Miller, Board of Health; Susan Nicosia, City of Columbia Falls and Alan Ruby, Member at Large.

District Staff present: Operations Manager Jim Chilton and Recording Secretary Deborah Morine.

Attendees: Susan Repa, Daniel Altic, Howard Repa, Bob Keenan, Mayre Flowers, Caleb Soptelean, Dan Benesch, Paul Mutascio, Gina Jepson, Charlotte French, Lloyde Brynie, Louis Marty, Bob Krause, Lynnette Hintze, Robert Crabtree, KE Severe, Kim & Jera Schwegel and Al Johnson

2. Introductory Remarks from Chairman

Hank Olson thanked everyone for attending and noted that all Board members were present.

3. Comments from public

Bob Keenan – Bigfork: Stated he is on the committee to help Bigfork find a solution to their green box site. He appreciates the extension of time and feels they have already made progress. He noted that in all his years in legislative service, he’s never seen a strategic plan that doesn’t consider an outreach to “shareholders”. Safety and environmental considerations are also lacking in the Solid Waste Strategic plan.

Paul Mutascio – Bigfork: Stated he feels the Strategic Plan and the assumption of consolidating the container sites going forward is a foregone conclusion. The rural environment in which a lot of people reside needs more consideration. He spoke of added costs and challenges of “curb-side” garbage service in rural areas.

Dan Benesch – Lakeside: Stated he is flabbergasted to hear that the number of households affected by consolidating the sites is unknown. Cost of curbside service is going to be substantial. He stated that he understands that consolidating the Lakeside site (with Somers) would only save the District \$60 - \$70 thousand dollars. He wonders if there are more variables involved as this makes no sense.

Lloyd Brynie – Bigfork: Noted that he was in Boston last week visiting his daughter. They have mandatory recycling and curbside pick-up and it works wonderful. But, where he lives, you can’t get a truck out there and it would be impossible to have curbside service.

Calvin Severe – Lakeside: Stated he had attended the meeting with Dave and Jim in Lakeside a few months ago and felt that it was a “canned” speech and lip service. He is also concerned with the costs of curbside service. He is willing to pay a higher fee to keep the Lakeside site. He noted that the school and fire districts have different rates according to where you live; why wouldn’t that work for garbage also.

Susan Repa – Lakeside: Stated she agrees with the previous comments. Not everyone can afford private hauling. She commented that trash will be all over the forest; roads and people will burn their trash and create a hazard. She is concerned about turning into the Somers container site on highway 82; without a left turn lane, it’s a hazard. She urges the Board to stop and think what is best for the community.

Mayre Flowers – Citizens for a Better Flathead: Shared her concerns with the increased costs of providing recycling services. She stated “what’s not recycled becomes trash”. She would like the public to have a better understanding of the costs associated with transporting recycled materials to market. The District has fixed costs for hauling trash from the sites to the landfill, why not do the same for recyclables. Mayre suggests the District look into hauling recyclables directly to help defray transportation costs to the recycle facility as a cost saving measure. She would like to see a Citizens Task Force created to figure out alternatives to the current situation.

Susan Repa – Lakeside: Asked if the consolidation of the container sites could be put to a public vote.

Lou Mate – Lakeside: Stated his concerns regarding (curbside) trash cans and domestic or wild animals accessing them and creating a mess/hazard.

Paul Mutascio – Bigfork: Suggests a “fresh look” (updated) Strategic Plan. Demographics have changed since 2009.

Al Johnson – Bigfork: Suggested since the District has an excess of 9 million dollars, it should be used to offset the costs of the green box sites. Gary Krueger stated that those funds are earmarked for the closure of the landfill. Al reiterated earlier statements regarding the difficulty of rural curbside service in the Bigfork area. He continued it appears that “you” have already made a decision, but we want to continue to have (container site) what’s available to other communities.

Hank stated that the Bigfork group has had their time extended to January to come up with options. Paul Mutascio stated the group came up with two recommendations, but they have been turned down.

Al Johnson stated “it’s fine to call it a consolidation, but you’re cutting public services”.

Jera Schwegel – Kalispell: would like the Board to explore the possibility of a plastic bailer for recycling of plastics.

4. Program Updates from Non-Profits

Mayre Flowers displayed a promotional advertisement that will be published in the Go Local publication. She emphasized that it takes a community to make recycling work. Wayne Miller asked her what her intentions are with the ad. She said she hopes to build awareness to recycling and improve the sorting of plastics. Mayre brought examples of different plastics that are acceptable to recycle as well as those that are not. She said there are facilities which can sort through these differing products. She suggests the next recycle contract take into consideration shipping to facilities where bails of mixed plastics can be sorted in such a manner. Mayre said Pacific Steel & Recycling is only accepting plastics “with necks” such as food beverage containers, and Valley Recycling can accept a wider range of #1 & #2 plastics which include plastic cups and other plastics.

Mayre also updated the Board regarding the WasteNot Projects partnership with FVCC. She stated the college has gone through an internal review and some responsibilities have shifted, but she is working with their finance department to draw up a service agreement so the WasteNot Project can continue their partnership.

5. Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for September 24, 2013 - **Action Required**

Greg Acton moved to adopt the minutes of September 24, 2013. Wayne Miller seconded. Motion passed.

6. Action Agenda

a. East Corridor Container Site Operating Hours – **Action Required**

With the completion of the new container site along Highway 2E near Essex, the Board needs to establish the hours and days of operation. During our meetings with the citizens in the area we had discussed the idea that the site would most likely not be open seven days per week due to the low volume of waste that is generated. Currently, the District hauls about 300 tons a year from this area and it is seasonally driven with the summer months about twice as much than the winter months. We also let the citizens know there was the possibility of a closure of the site in the winter months, after the holidays, when the volumes steeply decline.

Staff believes there is a sizeable amount of business refuse that makes up the volume in the winter months. From our discussions with some of the businesses in the area they are going to start service from Evergreen Disposal and not use the container site anymore. There are also a few we’ve heard say that they will continue to utilize the container site for their business refuse.

Greg Acton moved to establish the hours of operation of the East Corridor Container Site from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from the second Tuesday in April to the second Saturday in January and close the site thereafter and reopen it on the second Tuesday in April. John Helton seconded. Susan Nicosia added to the motion to have staff report to the Board regarding

how the new site is working after 6 months of operation. Alan Ruby seconded Susan's added motion. Motion passed.

7. Director's Report

a. Bigfork Container Site

As requested by the Solid Waste Board at the September meeting staff discussed the Margaret Conley land with the Commissioners. Staff met with Ms. Conley and discussed the possibility of purchasing five acres of her property adjacent to the current Bigfork site. Ms. Conley was not interested in selling but did offer to lease the property to the District for 20 years at \$8,000 per year.

Staff discussed with the Commissioners the requirement to have some preliminary engineering done on the site before we could proceed much further with any negotiations. All three Commissioners stated they didn't feel that the leasing of this land at the requested price was supported at this time.

There were also discussions with revisions to the Strategic Plan for the container site operations. Commissioner Krueger would like to see the District revisit the plan for consolidation to make sure we have analyzed all the facets before we continue. Staff discussed this idea with Mike Cullinane at SWT Engineers. We believe we can make some revisions to Chapter 5, Green Box Sites – Collection, Handling and Transportation, with the modifications the District has made to the plan so far and look at the operations based upon volume criteria versus the chronological criteria in the document currently. We also discussed looking at the population densities throughout the County to help validate the overall changes in the refuse transportation plan for the future. If the Board wants us to proceed with this work we can request a Scope of Work from SWT and finalize the parameters for revisiting this chapter.

There were members from the Bigfork Citizens committee at the meeting with the Commissioners. They let them know that the possible outcome of a Bigfork site would hinge on the ability to find a suitable property with acceptable access and that the committee should see what they could present to the District and the Commissioners.

Discussions included acknowledging the Bigfork Committee was given an extension until January 2014 to come up with a viable option for a site. The Board has determined that the current site isn't safe at its present location and the Commissioners prefer to purchase rather than lease land for a container site. Mrs. Conley's offer to lease a 5 acre parcel adjacent to the current site at a cost of \$8,000 per year is not acceptable to the county commission.

Wayne Miller challenges the committee to come up with a workable option.

Talks included the need to update the 2009 Strategic Plan as things have changed and the Board would appreciate public input with the new document. Alan Ruby stated he would like to see the recycling program included in the Strategic Plan update.

b. Recycling Program Request for Proposals (RFP)

Staff discussed the extension of the recycling contract for approximately one year with Tara Fugina at the County Attorney's Office. Tara stated that we can proceed with the extension by modifying the existing contract for the sites we wish to continue operating. We would draw up a new contract with all the existing conditions still utilized but modify the contract to contain the sites we choose to operate and duration. The bin configuration discussion in the contract will be modified slightly for the landfill and possibly some of the container sites depending on the number of sites that are operated.

As discussed last month it is staff's recommendation, based upon the cost provided by Valley, that four sites be included in this contract. Those sites are the landfill and the Columbia Falls, Somers and Creston container sites. Staff plans on having this item on the November action agenda and ending the contract on December 31, 2014. Valley's proposed costs are included in your packet again for the hauling expense. The current processing/handling expense and bin rental will increase from the current rate by 85% of the September, 2013 Consumer Price Index as stated in the existing contract.

Staff would like direction on which sites the Board would like included in this one year contract extension for the November meeting.

Hank stated his understanding is that the Board would like to continue the recycling program status quo.

*John Helton would like to keep the recycling at the sites and Alan Ruby stated he would like to keep the recycle containers at the 7 locations pending a review of the Strategic Plan. Gary Krueger confirmed with Jim Chilton there is sufficient budget for this option. Jim stated costs will go up by 85%, a budget amendment will be necessary at some point. Wayne Miller clarified that the Bigfork site is not included in the 7 locations, Hank stated that is correct. **Amended at the November 26, 2013 meeting to include Bigfork.***

This item will be placed on the action agenda for the November meeting.

c. County Ordinance No. 8 – Litter

The Board requested staff include County Ordinance No. 8 on the October agenda. Mayre Flowers gave an update to the Board last month of the concerns of Mr. Frank Wright, who picked up the section of Highway 93 from Whitefish to the landfill for the Adopt a Highway program with Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). Mr. Wright was frustrated with the amount of litter that

continues to be found on this stretch of the highway and was upset with the landfill gate personnel for not fining a vehicle that he followed to the landfill after he saw litter come from the vehicle.

Landfill gate personnel are not authorized to levy any fines to customers. They do instruct customers that come to the landfill with an obviously unsecured load that they need to secure it and are subject to a \$200 fine if law enforcement pulls them over. It is difficult for the staff to know if a load has generated litter and they are discussing the issue with customers. We have utilized handouts in the past but believe that there was not much benefit when we did it. They typically were just thrown out when the customer dumped their refuse.

Scalehouse personnel also conducted a four day monitoring of all vehicles in to the facility in September and recorded whether they fell into the “secured, mostly secured, or unsecured” category. Those results were emailed out to the board earlier. Those results show that we have the vast majority of vehicles coming to the landfill are taking the time to secure their load. However, it only takes one vehicle to cause a significant amount of roadside litter and improvement is still needed. Staff will continue with this work once per week for the next six months to generate the data on our customer’s habits of securing their load.

Staff also learned that the transfer station in Ravalli County operated by the same company that runs Evergreen Disposal doesn’t have a formal agreement on their covered load requirement. Josh Brown, who manages both companies, stated they apply a \$10 fine to customers after a reminder/warning but that he couldn’t say the highways in Ravalli County were any cleaner than ours.

Staff did make contact with the Flathead Building Association and provided them with some information they would send out to all their members in their weekly membership email. They seemed very interested in helping any way they could with this situation.

Discussions included the need of Ordinance 8 to clarify loads be covered. The Board asked that revision of Ordinance 8 be added to the action agenda next month.

d. Highway 93 and South Boundary Tree Buffer

The District has planted thousands of trees along the eastern boundary (Highway 93) and southern boundary of the landfill to mitigate the visual impact of the South Area Landfill. The trees have been reasonably successful but as with any planting there have been some trees lost. Staff has been replacing some of them and the hedgerow at this point is self sustaining. The amount of growth each year seems to be variable throughout the system with some trees out growing others.

Staff has priced some larger trees to be installed in the immediate future. They are much more costly for a six to 10 foot tree as compared to the one to two foot trees we initially started with.

Please note that when these trees reach maturity the landfill will eventually be significantly higher in elevation than the tops of the trees and visible as vehicles travel past.

e. Refuse Operations

Operations proceeded well for the month. Tonnage/Volumes are shown below:

<u>September</u>	
Total MSW to landfill	9,518.96
Total Appliances Collected	688
Junk Vehicles Collected	6
Truck Trips to Container Sites	454
Refuse tons/trip	7.20

The District landfilled 11% more waste in September, 2013 as compared to September, 2012 and our refuse trucks hauled 7% more waste comparing the same time frame.

Gate revenue for the fiscal year 2014 was projected at \$800,000. Through September we have received \$591,436.97 or 74% of revenue through 25% of the fiscal year.

Jim reported since the last Board meeting, only one load of plastic contained needles. A sign was installed warning people not to include syringes/needles with the plastic.

f. Budget and Financials

8. Comments from Board Members

John Helton stated he had brought a load of trash into the landfill prior to the meeting and was greeted by a pleasant gatehouse attendant.

Alan Ruby appreciated the editorials from the Bigfork Eagle and Daily Interlake.

Wayne Miller asked Jera Schwegel to provide more information regarding the plastic chipper and the products it can shred.

Hank welcomed Susan Nicosia to the Board.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.