

Approved at the April 28, 2009 meeting

Flathead County Solid Waste District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
March 24, 2009 – **5:00 p.m.**  
Landfill Office

1. Roll Call

Board Members present: Hank Olson, Chairman; Bill Shaw, Vice Chair; Greg Acton, City of Whitefish; Nancy Askew, Board of Health; John Helton, Member at Large; Dale Lauman, County Commissioner and Alan Ruby, Member at Large.

District Staff present: Public Works Director Dave Prunty, Operations Manager Jim Chilton, Recording Secretary Deborah Morine and Operator/Union Shop Steward Don Connors.

Attendees: Lee Griswold, Dan Lozar, John Stang, Matt O'Connell, Robert Morrow, Turner Askew and Mayre Flowers.

2. Introductory Remarks from Chairman

Hank Olson expressed his appreciation to Bill Shaw for taking over while he (Hank) was away last month.

3. Comments from public

Lee Griswold – Highway 2 West, Marion. Said he would like to ask a few questions regarding the consolidation.

- Which government agency will approve the plans?
- Who will sign off on the storm drainage?
- Will the road be designed to county specs?
- Will the public have the opportunity to see the engineering drawings before being built?

He also stated he doesn't believe the county should abandon the right of way going through that portion of the property.

Dan Lozar – TD&H, Kalispell. Stated he has been working with the District on the Ashley Lake Road site. He said he would answer any questions regarding the site engineering.

Mayre Flowers updated the Board

- On Pharmaceutical disposal: She stated she has also been working with the Board of Health trying to create/encourage a Take Back Program on the federal level.
- The school outreach program: classroom visits and landfill tours planned for the spring.
- The Commercial Hazardous Waste collection will be May 29, 2009

- The e-waste event will be delayed until they can find a vendor who will handle and dispose of the electronic products in an environmentally safe manner.

Alan Ruby asked if it was possible to build a pharmaceutical incinerator at the landfill.

Nancy Askew stated while in Palo Alto California, she had observed a pharmaceutical disposal program the fire department had sponsored. She stated they had special containers in which to dispose of the medications.

Dave stated with incinerators there are air quality issues as well as they are extremely expensive to operate. He noted that there is a medical incinerator in Oakland, California that was difficult to operate and never profitable. He stated you would have to draw from a wide area in order to make it cost effective.

Mayre Flowers also stated she submitted the WasteNot budget to Dave and it would be discussed during the preliminary budget portion of the meeting.

4. Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for February 24, 2009

**Greg Acton moved to adopt the February 24, 2009 meeting minutes. Bill Shaw seconded. Motion passed.**

5. Action Agenda

- a. Container Site Consolidation for Kila and Marion

The second public meeting regarding the consolidation project for the west corridor container sites (Kila and Marion) occurred on February 18<sup>th</sup> at the community college. The Board has been working on this first phase of the consolidation project since early 2008. Staff has worked with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the design engineer to mitigate as best as possible the concerns that we have heard from all interested parties. The DNRC staff has indicated they will make a favorable recommendation to the State Land Board to authorize the use of six acres at the intersection of Ashley Lake Road and Highway 2 West in an easement to the District for 30 years for a container site.

Staff has also worked with the landfill engineer who is currently preparing the District's Solid Waste Strategic Plan. In this work the engineer is also evaluating the container site program. They have helped craft the consolidation project and have also looked at the financial improvement to the District and it's ratepayers to move forward with consolidation. It is estimated that the District can improve the financial efficiency of the western corridor by approximately \$30,000 to \$60,000 per year by combining the Kila and Marion sites into one site at the proposed location. Other financial savings will be realized if consolidation continues throughout the District container sites. Staff has included the financial spreadsheets for this consolidation in your packet.

A preliminary site layout from the design engineer is included in your packet. Also we have included some information that was provided at the Public Hearing on February 18<sup>th</sup> regarding the mitigations that the District has performed in the planning phase of this new site.

*Hank reminded the Board that this issue started with dumpster divers and the liability to the county. He stated we need to gate, light and man the sites. Some sites are not cost effective and consolidation entered the picture as it makes good business sense. Hank made a suggestion that the District could leave the Marion site open until the lease is up.*

*Dale Lauman commented that the District came into existence as a county wide agreement to eliminate all the little dump sites around the county and have a central location. He stated the collection boxes were originally placed at or near many of these dump sites. He stated this was a temporary solution.*

*Dale also stated that many of the folks in Kila and Marion complained about having to drive miles to dump their garbage. He noted that there are others within the county who drive equal if not further distances to dump their trash as well. We have a large population base that already has to drive to a site and it is not always in a convenient direction. The subject of consolidating container sites has been an issue since he was on the Board in the 1980's.*

*Nancy Askew agreed with Hank Olson's idea of perhaps leaving the Marion site open until the lease runs out.*

*Alan Ruby also liked the idea of waiting to close the Marion site to give people more time.*

*Greg Action stated that this issue came about because something has to be done with the Kila site. It needs attention now. He appreciates the effort to soften the impact to the Marion site, but something needs to be done with Kila. The consolidation is a good option.*

*John Helton stated we have done a good job and made every effort to solve the issues that people raised about the Ashley Lake Road site. A lot of time has been spent on this and it is the best possible option. The highway (Hwy 2) is not a 70 m.p.h. highway; it's a 60 m.p.h. highway or less. We don't need to wait any longer.*

*Hank Olson stated that perhaps the Marion community could come up with a plan and contract with Evergreen Disposal to haul their trash from a common/central location for the community.*

*Bill Shaw stated we have addressed all the concerns and at a considerable expense.*

*Hank asked Dave what his thought's are about the comments of the Board.*

*Dave Prunty stated that he appreciates what Greg said. Kila is the worst site out there. The first step is taking care of the Kila site. He stated they have worked with the DNRC to*

*lease the Ashley Lake Road site, the gears are in motion. If we don't lease the site, someone else could come in and beat us to the land. With all the work we have put into this, we couldn't come up with a better site. Dave agrees that we are not going to hear anything different from the public. Dave acknowledged that our system is very convenient.*

*Jim Chilton agreed with Dave's statement. He said we have addressed the safety issues on the highway with MDT. The Ashley Lake Road site is a very desirable location.*

*Hank noted that the next time we go through this process, the communities involved should form a committee to represent their views so they can feel more included.*

*Alan stated if there was an alternate solution, someone in Marion would have come up with something.*

*Dave stated that MDT would lease the (current Marion) site to anyone, but the rental rates would definitely go up.*

*John stated that the citizens of Marion could work something out with Evergreen Disposal if they want more convenient hauling. The west corridor is Evergreen's licensed area.*

*Greg asked how long would it be before the new site is serviceable once we give the notice to proceed. Dave stated that by the end of the construction season, it could be operational.*

*Bill clarified that tonight we are authorizing the drawing of the new site and the bid. The site should be open well before frost and snow so people have time to get used to the new site.*

*Dave stated we still have to go through the Land Board in Helena and the abandonment of the right of way. There are still some hoops to jump through.*

*Alan stated he has had 3 phone calls and asked what the savings per year was. Dave stated it will be around \$60,000 savings per year to the District, so the payback period would be around 6 years.*

*Greg stated he isn't looking at the payback, but the fact that the Kila site needs something done.*

*John asked if the new site will be adequate for years to come. Dave stated that he is comfortable with the forethought that has been put into the design.*

*Bill Shaw asked Dave how confident is he that the Land Board will approve the lease. Dave responded he is very confident and sees no reason why they wouldn't approve based upon the information the DNRC staff has provided to the District.*

**Hank Olson asked for a motion. Greg Acton moved to authorize the Public Works Director to finalize and execute the easement between the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the District for an easement on**

**approximately six acres of state owned land between Ashley Lake Road and Highway 2 West for use as a solid waste container site and to also authorize the Public Works Director to issue a notice to proceed to the engineer to begin final design of the new facility. Alan Ruby seconded. All responded in the affirmative. Motion passed.**

6. Director's Report

b. Union Negotiations with Operating Engineers

The labor agreement between Flathead County and the Operating Engineers, Local 400 for the landfill expired on June 30, 2008. The two parties have been bargaining in good faith since March, 2008. The employees ratified a new contract on March 11, 2009.

*Dave stated that the contract will be signed by the Commissioners tomorrow.*

c. Fiscal Year 2009/2010 Budget Preparation

Included, is a draft of the proposed fiscal year 2009/2010 budget for the District. Staff met with the County Administrator on March 23<sup>rd</sup> for the initial review. We are still waiting on final personnel service costs totals from the County Finance Department. Staff has forecast a significant reduction in our operating revenues due to the economic recession. With the reduction in tonnage, we have removed another 1.0 FTE (two summer labor/spotters) from the budget. Coupled with the layoff of one FTE in February we have tried to control payroll expense. The gate revenue forecast has been reduced from \$1,200,000 to \$850,000 for the coming fiscal year. We also have decided to delay the replacement of one of the refuse trucks as was planned for in the capital improvement plan.

*Dave reviewed the budget with the Board.*

*Mayre Flowers stated she is asking for more funding in order to proceed with working on the Pharmaceutical program.*

*Bill noted that he didn't see the Site Educator in the budget. There were general discussions on the importance of the Site educator. It was decided by the Board to keep a Site Educator for the next fiscal year.*

d. Purchase of Somers Container Site

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has completed an in-house appraisal from one of their certified appraisers of the Somers container site. This site was expanded a couple of years ago to our current operating parameters with fencing, gated entry and night security lighting. The old site was extremely undersized and unsightly off Highway 82. MDT would not sell it to us when we approached them until the highway was improved. That project was completed three to four years ago.

The appraisal values the land at \$175,000 for 3.2 acres. We have budgeted \$100,000 for this purchase in the current fiscal year. There is also \$50,000 budgeted for the purchase of the Olney container site this year but that project will not be completed in the current budget.

The District has been interested in obtaining ownership in our container sites for many years. Five of our current sites are leases with MDT and many are nearing their termination date. Successfully negotiating extensions to these leases is a potential but to secure continuation of our container site program into the immediate future we will be better served in ownership. This parcel also may be used in the future as a transfer station for the north shore area if a different hauling option is implemented in the County.

Jonathan Smith with the County Attorney's office was consulted on the use of the "in-house" appraiser from MDT. Jon reviewed the laws governing the ability of the County to purchase land and at this point it seems clear that we will need to utilize a disinterested, third party appraiser. Staff forwarded this information to MDT and we are awaiting their response.

*The Board directed Dave to procure a certified appraiser to obtain a value of the Somers Site.*

e. Refuse Operations

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

	<u>February</u>
Total MSW to landfill	5,532.32
Total Appliances Collected	368
Junk Vehicles Collected	4
Truck Trips to Landfill	381
Refuse tons/trip	6.13

The District landfilled 23% less waste in February, 2009 as compared to February, 2008 and our refuse trucks hauled 15% less waste comparing the same time frame.

Staff is also closely monitoring the revenue stream for the District. Our assessment system is relatively secure funding but the gate revenue is very dependent on the economy. So far we are under projections through eight months of fiscal year 2008/2009. We budgeted \$1.2 million in gate revenue and through February (67% of the fiscal year) we have invoiced \$604,622.77, or 50.4% of the projected revenue.

With the reduction in tonnage at the container sites staff has revised our hauling routes to reduce the number of trips to the sites. At this point there has been one truck working the south route (Creston, Bigfork, Somers and Lakeside) and one truck on the north route (Columbia Falls, Olney, Coram and the Canyon sites). Kila and Marion have been serviced by the south route driver in the morning and a second truck goes to Kila in the afternoon. There have been other occasions when a third truck as been added when necessary due to volume at the sites. The average tons per trip have increased over last month's number due

to this routing change. As spring cleaning starts we will again assess our needs with the refuse hauling work.

f. District Financial Statements

Dave reviewed the Financial Statements with the Board.

7. Comments from Board Members

There were no comments from the Board.

Hank Olson stated that the District is in a good financial position and we don't want to compromise that.

8. Adjournment

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.**