

## Approved with changes at the April 22, 2014 meeting

Flathead County Solid Waste District  
Board of Directors Meeting  
April 1, 2014 - **3:00 p.m.**  
(Rescheduled March 25, 2014 meeting)  
Landfill Office

### 1. Roll Call

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

Staff members present: Public Works Director David Prunty, Operations Manager Jim Chilton and Recording Secretary Carol Norwood.

Members of the public: Paul Mutascio, Dan Benesch, Mayre Flowers and Joan Gotschalk.

### 2. Introductory Remarks from Chairman

Wayne noted the absence of John, Alan and Greg.

### 3. Comments from public.

Paul Mutascio – Bigfork. Addressed the letter he had submitted regarding the proposal and stated he thought there would be more public input as this is an important issue. He feels the study is a very controlled study with staff in charge, doesn't address what is the best model for solid waste collection and disposal, is biased towards the green box sites and a decision regarding closing the sites appears to have already been made. He stressed the importance of due diligence, wants ample time for the study because of liability and addressed potential problems regarding the Somers site.

Wayne stated that the Board is responsible to all county taxpayers, not just one community.

Dan Benesch – Lakeside. Stated he could not find where CH2MHill was trying to find what the public wants. He agrees Lakeside and Bigfork are not paying their fair share and that the rest of the taxpayers are subsidizing them. The engineers have not asked the citizens what they want and should do a survey of the residents and a cost analysis based on the results. Lakeside should pay their fair share and it is the Board's responsibility to provide what they want.

Mayre Flowers – Citizens for a Better Flathead. Followed up on the bioreactor workshop and distributed handouts pertaining to the bioreactor. She also had concerns about the cost; however, she feels the benefits offset the \$1,250,000 construction cost and wants this to be looked at again.

4. Program Updates from Non Profits

Mayre Flowers stated school tours have started and presentations will be given to about 1800 students. She has been working with FVCC to establish a learning center at their community garden. May and June will have outdoor presentations at the schools focusing on composting. She addressed the comment in the Flathead Beacon and stated the funding is strictly used for the Waste Not project. She addressed recyclable sorting, distributed pictures of signage on the blue recycle bins and stated the current signage is confusing. There will be a recycle mania day at FVCC on Earth Day, April 22 at FVCC highlighting local recycling.

5. Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for February 25, 2014 – **Action Required**

**Susan Nicosia moved to approve the minutes of February 25, 2014. Gary Krueger seconded. Motion passed.**

6. Action Agenda

a. Hours of Operation for Columbia Falls Container Site – **Action Required**

Last fall the Board discussed the request by the Columbia Falls City Council to modify the hours of operation for the container site. The current hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days per week. It was agreed that the District would modify the hours for the summer to see if there were any operational issues and improvement for the customers for them to dump their refuse in conjunction with their outdoor activities. At that time the discussion was to move the hours forward for an opening at 9 a.m. and closing at 6 p.m. seven days per week.

*Dave stated staff felt May 16- Sept 30 would be an adequate time period to change hours to 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.*

*Susan wants later hours but the council did not want to increase cost for the county.*

*Hank asked about leaving trash in the trucks. Dave stated that our trucks would keep the current schedule with the last pickup being at 4:00.*

**Susan Nicosia moved to modify the hours of operation of the Columbia Falls container site from May 16<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> to 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days per week. Gary Krueger seconded. Motion passed.**

b. Contract Award for Groundwater Monitoring Program – **Action Required**

Staff has completed the negotiations with Hydrometrics for the five year Groundwater Monitoring contract for the District. Included in the board packet is the cover letter and supporting information from Hydrometrics. They are requesting rates be increased to their current level for the Engineer/Scientist IV and Engineer/Scientist III who do the vast majority of the work for the District. These rates are \$108/hour and \$98/hour, respectively. Staff learned through this negotiation that the District had been receiving a sizeable reduction in the rates since 2010 when Hydrometrics ceased requesting an increase due to the economy while

many of their other clients did not receive this static rate level. For this five year contract there were discussions of utilizing the same cost of living adjustment as is provided for Flathead County employees annually, if any. The contract will terminate on March 31, 2019. The County Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the contract for form and content.

*Dave stated Hydrometrics was the only company submitting a proposal. Hank questioned the escalation rate and length of the contract. Dave said the five year term was the county standard.*

**Susan Nicosia moved to authorize the Public Works Director to execute the Professional Services Agreement with Hydrometrics, Inc. to provide groundwater monitoring and other authorized services to the District for a period of five years. Gary Kruger seconded. Motion passed.**

c. Award for Phase IV-B Groundwater Protection System Liner – **Action Required**

Bids were received from general contractors to install the next liner for the District. Seven bids were received and are shown below:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Sandry Construction	\$1,868,160.00
MT Civil Contractors	\$2,132,355.00
M.A. DeAlley	\$2,169,040.00
Pilot West	\$2,188,071.00
Knife River	\$2,348,636.25
Noble Excavating	\$2,468,132.50
LHC	\$2,914,363.90

The apparent low bidder is Sandry Construction. After discussion with the project engineer, staff is recommending award to Sandry Construction. The project is scheduled for completion no later than August 29, 2014, barring weather delays. A 60-day construction is anticipated.

*Hank questioned the gap between the highest and lowest bids. Dave stated Sandry is satisfied with their bid.*

*Susan stated this type of bid discrepancy is common.*

**Susan Nicosia moved to award the bid for the Phase IVB Groundwater Protection System Liner to Sandry Construction and authorize the Public Works Director to execute the contract. Gary Krueger seconded. Motion passed.**

7. Director's Report

a. Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Budget for Solid Waste District and Junk Vehicle Program

Staff has prepared the preliminary budgets for Solid Waste and Junk Vehicle Departments. Please note these numbers may be modified before and after the board meeting as the County continues the budget process.

The Solid Waste budget is anticipating \$9,155,633 in revenue. The majority of revenue (\$4.9 million) is generated from the assessment system paid by the residents and businesses. The gate revenue projection will be \$900,000 (up from \$850,000 from the current year) and recycling/miscellaneous revenue is forecast at \$160,000, mainly from the metals program. There is also a transfer in from the trusts totaling \$3,085,000, the majority of this is from the liner trust for the project this summer.

Expenses for the coming fiscal year are anticipated to be \$9,254,711 after transfers from the equipment replacement fund for purchases in the fiscal year. The District is requesting a 4.0 increase in FTE to cover the staffing of the Somers and Creston container site along with a floater to roam between Bigfork and Lakeside. This person will also be used to cover sick and vacation time at the sites and to reduce overtime as a fill-in operator at the landfill and truck driver. Staff is recommending a transfer to the lined cell lateral expansion trust of \$600,000, which includes approximately \$500,000 from depreciation and \$100,000 direct cash deposit. The land purchase trust is planned at \$700,000 for future land acquisitions for the landfill and for a container site land purchase if necessary. The LFGTE improvement trust is fully funded at this point so the \$30,000 funded from the last five years is not needed. The closure/post-closure trust will receive \$600,000 as has been done in the past and the \$4,000 grant to the Health Department for the sharps container program is also requested to be funded.

The Junk Vehicle budget is anticipating \$179,963 in revenue. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provides funding for this department through a grant. Monies are generated through the licensing of motor vehicles in Flathead County. DEQ will reduce the revenue given to the District for the next fiscal year by the amount remaining in the District program at the end of the current fiscal year.

Expenses are estimated at \$179,963 for the program. There has been a significant reduction in the volume of work for this program the last few years. In years past the District would haul 300 to 400 vehicles in a year. Currently, with the increase in scrap metal value the vehicles are now worth hauling for the revenue generated on the scrap so we are down to 20 to 30 vehicles in a year as the vehicle owners and salvage companies take advantage of this value. In previous years the District kept any remaining unspent money and transferred it to the CIP budget line item but DEQ recently changed that decision. Now any remaining money at the end of the year will adjust the revenue received for the next fiscal year up to the total of the grant. We have reduced the program to 0.5 FTE from 1.0 FTE which includes time for office personnel also.

*Dave reviewed both draft budgets.*

*Wayne asked what happened to residual money in the solid waste fund at the end of the fiscal year. Dave explained the District retains the funding.*

b. Revisions to the Strategic Report for the Flathead County Landfill

The Scope of Work for the revisions to the container site section in the District's Strategic Plan was emailed to the Board on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Staff and the consultant revised the scope multiple times until staff felt we had accomplished what we believe to be the direction the Commissioners wanted to head. We hope to get significant public input during the stakeholders meeting and through the questionnaire so we can assess the concerns we have heard from the Bigfork and Lakeside citizens.

There are two major tasks in the scope. The first is to have a kickoff meeting with staff and the consultants and then the stakeholder/public meeting. This information will be used during task 2 when the consultants will determine the current container site service capacities, compare our current costs and possible savings to other communities in our area and then implement a Multi-Objective Decision Analysis Process (MODA) that will quantitatively rank different possible service options decision for the future. This analysis not only analyzes costs but also assess other operational issues such as environmental and social impacts including siting, population density, diversion rate, site capacity, proximity from population centers to sites, land requirements, road/infrastructure safety, groundwater quality, customer convenience etc.

We hope to be completed with this work in late summer or early fall.

*Wayne asked if the Board still intended to meet with individuals to obtain their opinions regarding the future of the green box sites. He takes exception to criticism that the Board has already made up their minds.*

*Gary stated that there have not been any decisions made and that after reviewing and assessing the data, there will be ongoing strategic planning and there will not be a time line established. The District as a whole must be looked at.*

*Jim stated the containers have evolved during his employment at the landfill.*

*Susan stated that nothing in the study limits the Board and they will always listen to the public. She suggested using the program "Survey Monkey" to provide access to the survey electronically.*

Paul Mutascio spoke again regarding his written response to the Board. He didn't see any specific mention in the study of the stakeholders being also the haulers. Due diligence is required to explain to people what is going on. Public safety is an issue and tripling the load is a concern.

c. Bioreactor Landfill Workshop

The workshop was held on February 25<sup>th</sup> and was well attended by interested parties including the Solid Waste Board, the Commissioner's Office, the Health Board and staff, septic pumpers and other interested parties. The information provided by the staff for Smiths Creek Landfill in St. Clair County, Michigan was fascinating. This technology is a direction the solid waste industry has been studying for the last 20 years or so.

The introduction of liquids to the waste prism is occurring at our landfill but in a much lower volume. We reintroduce the leachate from the landfill and condensate from the gas system through horizontal pipes installed by Flathead Electric Cooperative (FEC). They in turn use them as gas wells to help feed the energy facility. This work, approved by the DEQ, has proven effective to help the District control leachate disposal costs and helped FEC produce more gas to create electricity. However, the volume is small in perspective and there is much less handling issues with the leachate as compared to septic wastes.

It is staff's opinion and that of our landfill engineers that a bioreactor system is quite expensive and would increase operational costs to a high level for our landfill. There are other system available to handle these liquid wastes such as the public owned treatment plants or anaerobic digester which are more in-line with the waste stream of concern.

*Wayne stated that the Health Board recognizes there is a lack of land application sites and an alternative needs to be found; however, they feel Flathead Electric should take the lead.*

*Dave asked if the Health Department has considered an anaerobic digester.*

*Gary stated the commissioners have been looking for a system to process sewage from septic but they are not willing to implement a system that would charge a fee for pumping septic tanks as that could encourage people to pump less and result in more septic system failures. They are looking for grants to assist in putting in a facility.*

*Susan agreed that there is a problem and said that Columbia Falls has had problems with the portable potty providers.*

*Wayne said there is a lack of land application sites and an alternative needs to be found.*

d. Acceptance of Brush and Limbs at Landfill

Staff met with representatives from Stoltze Land and Lumber in March. The tour of the landfill was for them to understand our operation with accepting their ash from the co-gen plant for alternative daily cover and show our brush/limb material to them for acceptance. Green material used in a co-gen plant needs to be very clean with minimal dirt and rocks. Kevin Jump, who grinds our material, was on

site to participate in the discussion and inform Stoltze representatives as to what to expect from our material. We will also have a de minimus amount of refuse in our material but they didn't expect that to cause much, if any, issues. We hope to have our material ground up so their ash delivery trucks can back haul material in the winter months when they are in need of feedstock the most.

After the meeting Chuck Roady agreed to accept our material on a trial basis. We also asked if they could provide funding assistance to us for the grinding done by Jump. In the past, we have spent \$20k to \$25k per year when this material was shipped to Stone Container. Stoltze will analyze their financial information and let us know what, if any, help they can provide. Our costs to process the ash increased from our original intentions when DEQ requested we mix the ash with green waste to help in minimizing any pH issues with the ash.

We have started to accept this woody material again for diversion to the Stoltze co-gen plant.

e. Refuse Operations

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

<u>February</u>	
Total MSW to landfill	5,217.11
Total Appliances Collected	252
Junk Vehicles Collected	0
Truck Trips to Container Sites	337
Refuse tons/trip	5.84

The District landfilled 11.2% less waste in February, 2014 compared to February, 2013 and our refuse trucks hauled 11.3% less waste comparing the same time frame.

Gate revenue for fiscal year 2014 was projected at \$800,000. Through February we have received \$1,178,647.25 or 147% of revenue through 67% of the fiscal year. This increase in gate revenue is attributable to the Montana Department of Transportation project in Whitefish which generated a sizeable volume of contaminated soils brought to the landfill.

*Jim will go to the new Essex this week to determine if the snow can be removed from the site in hopes of determining a potential opening date.*

f. Budget and Financials

Dave reviewed the Budget and Financials with the Board.

8. Comments Board Members

Hank asked about cat trapping. Dave stated that we are still trapping. Hank stated that Paul Mutascio said 35% of the public is urban and 65% is rural and he disputes that figure as Evergreen and Village Greens are both not included within city limits but are not rural. Is Paul the only person in the county that cannot get private service?

Wayne commented he would like to know if he could get private service and what it would cost.

Gary stated that hauling distance is a reason that we have green box sites and they are an attempt to equalize the driving distance.

Susan feels it would be beneficial to have a letter from the County Commissioners or the County Attorney sent to the County Superintendent of Schools explaining the landfill tour situation which could be distributed to schools.

Wayne clarified the difference between a public meeting and a meeting held in public.

9. Adjournment

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm**