

Vernon County Solid Waste/Recycling Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 10, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 9:30am by Chairman Richardson. Those present included: Brian Richardson, Ole Yttri, Dennis Brault, John Mitchell, Bill Meeks, Dan Martin, and Gene Edwards. Jerry Johnson was excused from the meeting.

Proper Public Meeting Notice was confirmed.

A motion was made by Yttri, with a second by Mitchell, to approve minutes of the August 13, 2014 meeting. Motion carried.

Fees Charged for Tires, Appliances, and E-waste

The Recycling Program has never really been profitable, but since the State Recycling Grant funding was reduced by about \$70,000. in 2010, the Program has really struggled financially. Despite the Department's efforts to reduce costs as much as practical, the Program still lost about \$19,000 last year and was expected to lose about the same amount this year. These revenue shortfalls have always been paid by landfill revenue; however, that approach has become less viable due to increasing landfill construction and operational cost. And the cost of getting many items recycled has also been on the increase (the cost to recycle a ton of waste tires, for example, has increased by \$22.50 over the last two years).

Edwards and Martin felt that fee increases on difficult to recycle items were necessary to help get the program back on track.

Following a good deal of discussion, a motion was made by Brault, with a second by Mitchell, to increase the recycling fees for waste tires from \$125 per ton to \$150 per ton and to increase the fee for appliance and electronic waste recycling to \$15 per item. Single car and pickup tires would go to \$2.00 each and truck tires to \$8.00 each. Motion approved. These fee increases would cover approximately half of the Recycling Program's anticipated shortfall for 2015.

August Material Volume/Revenue Report

The report was distributed at the meeting. MSW volume was 11% above last August and C/D waste volume was up by 28%. Year to date MSW volume is now 4% above last year and C/D waste tonnage is 4% below last year. Total year to date tipping fees are 3% above last year and Edwards expected the percentage to increase further by the end of the year.

The Department had another good month for recyclable materials receipts with nearly 100 tons of material paid for and over \$8,000 in revenue. Nevertheless, material volume continues to be down significantly (23%) and revenue generated is 1% below last year.

Leachate issues have moderated with volume managed last month down 30% from last August.

Most of the rains that have come through the area in the last few weeks have missed the landfill. Unfortunately, we are still approximately \$40,000 over budget due to the heavy rains earlier this year. But with all of the open areas now covered that can be covered, leachate should be much less of a problem the rest of this year and next year.

#### Request to Meet with Landfill Neighbors

Amy Arnold, a neighbor about two miles east of the landfill, had approached Edwards about meeting with a group of neighbors to provide them with information about the landfill. Amy hoped to get the meeting arranged later in September. Amy indicated most of the group's questions or concerns were relative to the County's plans for managing waste after the current landfill reaches capacity. Edwards would attend the meeting and report back to the Committee.

No decisions have been made regarding how waste would be managed after the landfill closes, although some Committee discussion had taken place over the last couple of years. More focused planning and discussion would need to take place within the next few years. The three basic options the County has are to: 1) build and operate another landfill; 2) operate a transfer station that ships waste to another location for management; or 3) get out of the waste management and recycling business and leave this issue up to individual businesses, residents, and/or municipalities (it may not be feasible to provide recycling services without a landfill or transfer station to help fund these services).

This meeting should provide a good opportunity to gauge landfill neighbors' attitudes and opinions about future waste management issues.

#### 2015 Department Budget

Edwards distributed copies of the proposed budget. It has already been submitted to the County Clerk's office. He indicated that only minor changes had been made from the version discussed at the last Committee meeting. The primary change had been to include the increase in waste tipping fees approved at that meeting. The additional funds expected to be generated (about \$33,000) would all go toward the fund established for landfill closure. Edwards had also updated the Actual Dollars column (adding June vouchers and revenues) to provide a more accurate picture of where the Department was at mid-year.

Several notes had also been added to the proposed budget to help explain changes in either revenue or expenditures. Total revenue and expenditures had increased by 4% from this year's budget. All of the increase in expenditures is due to the decision to begin funding landfill closure with the 2015 budget (estimated cost of \$135,000 per year). Funding this future cost also requires that the Department postpone almost all capital cost and eliminate the equipment replacement fund. Reductions in other expenditure accounts had also been necessary to fund this future responsibility. The Department's proposed operations cost for 2015 is actually lower than this year.

Following a good deal of discussion, a motion was made by Brault, with a second by Mitchell, to forward the proposed budget to the Finance Committee for consideration. Motion approved.

#### Responses to Fuel Request for Proposals

Three responses had been submitted (Premier Co-op, Chaseburg Co-op, and Midwest Fuels). The prices offered by all three vendors on propane were about the same but Chaseburg Co-op had offered a significantly lower price on diesel fuel (about \$.12 per gallon). That proposal would save the Department approximately \$1,200 over a one year period. Chaseburg had not offered an electronic monitoring feature but did offer a keep-filled program with assurances that we would not be allowed to run out of fuel. All vendors met the basic RFP requirements. In all cases, the propane price was fixed but the diesel price would fluctuate with the market. Following discussion, a motion was made by Yttri, with a second by Mitchell, to approve the Chaseburg Co-op proposal. Motion approved.

#### Review/Approve Vouchers

Vouchers totaling \$44,998.45 were presented for review. Larger bills included: \$7,440 to Accent Wire for baler wire; \$6,934 to City of Sparta for leachate treatment; \$6,891 to CWE; and \$6,437 to Southwest Sanitation for leachate hauling.

Following review, a motion was made by Mitchell, with a second by Brault, to approve paying the vouchers. Motion approved.

#### August Financial Reports

The reports were distributed at the meeting. Since Edwards had provided a review of current budget status as part of the 2015 budget discussion, the reports were only briefly reviewed. A motion was made by Mitchell, with a second by Yttri, to approve the reports. Motion carried.

#### Department Update

The Fall Clean Sweep will take place at the landfill this Friday and Saturday.

Edwards has an Asbestos Inspector recertification/training class scheduled for October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

He will also attend a Solid Waste Conference in Waupaca on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

There is an Emerald Ash Borer information seminar in Viroqua next Wednesday that Edwards plans to attend.

Viroqua continues to have issues with its WWTF—they are still not accepting leachate.

The next Solid Waste/Recycling Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, October 8 at 9:30am.

Motion by Brault, second by Mitchell, to adjourn the meeting at 10:45am. Motion carried.

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Dennis Brault, Secretary