

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

Attendance: Jan Sassaman, Remus Smith, Randy Kabrick, BJ Tipton, Linda Bowerman and Al Vickers

Staff: Gayle Wilson, Blair Pollock, Rob Taylor, Paul Spire, and Wanda McCain

1. **Adoption of Minutes from March 2 SWAB meeting** Smith moves to accept. Vickers 2nd Passes unanimously.

2. **Principles/Values for Selection of MRF to Process Orange County Recyclables and for Selection of Landfill to Receive Orange County's Transferred Waste**

Sassaman states that we have been talking about this for several months. We spent a lot of time talking about the living wage issue. We had identified a list of things and issues that we would consider in selection, including distance to the facility, access to major transportation corridors and I wrote some talking points, a three-page document (hands it out). Most of them relate to either landfill or MRF and the last two are specific to MRFs. I also used the County's spreadsheet used in evaluating recycling contractors. We could combine the two.

[Taylor explains the spreadsheet used and especially the section related to the contractor's facilities.]

Sassaman continues that Gayle has asked, from the request made by the BOCC, that we look at the selection criteria that we might apply to a MRF and to landfills that would accept waste from Orange County. We have spent a lot of time talking about the living wage.

Kabrick states that we probably have examples of landfill and recycling facility selection criteria that we've got from our clients.

Sassaman states that the reason I did this was to focus the discussion and move things forward. If someone has more concrete stuff to bring to the table that's fine. There are some other metrics like financial soundness. It's important that we make sure that they will be able to handle it.

Kabrick states that it seems to be all here.

Sassaman asks where do we want to go with this?

Wilson states that whenever you all have it ready you can attach a cover memo and move it on down the line. You could flesh it out a little more if you want.

Sassaman asks Randy [Kabrick] if there would be any value in you taking a look at this?

Kabrick replies I can do that. Is this a recommendation to the Commissioners or staff?

Wilson states that you don't have to make a recommendation. You could state that this is the result of our discussion based on your request that we examine the following. You can recommend it if you want.

- 3. Convenience Center/Drop-Off Center Operations** Pollock states that the drop-off/convenience centers are a key part of our program. The program started with three drop-off centers. Now we collect 6,000 tons from them. Highway 57 may be eliminated and Walnut Grove is inadequate. High Rock is fine but little used. Highway 57 is almost overused, but very popular. [Gives details about site operations and costs of development.] There are some issues of maintaining the sites as they are. Litter must be collected regularly.

If we add mixed paper at the curb, it may take some pressure off the current drop off sites as some users with curbside recycling use the sites to drop off mixed paper. The staffed sites would have to be maintained.

Taylor adds that other local governments help clean the sites in their jurisdictions.

There is potential to build more unstaffed dropoff sites, for example at Southern Village.

Sassaman asks what is the general relationship of the location of the unmanned sites to the population density?

Pollock replies that they are all within the corporate boundaries of the three towns. Four in Chapel Hill, one in Hillsborough and one in Carrboro.

Taylor states that with some of the new sites it is a by-product of the development. We've had the opportunity to get in as the development went through the process and stake out space. That's part of the reason for the sites being located where they are.

Pollock notes that some of the distribution is pragmatic but most people can easily reach one.

There are some issues should we reduce the number of sites: should unstaffed sites become staffed to take a broader variety of materials, should we eliminate unstaffed sites completely? For the staffed sites there is a whole separate discussion. We operate them a fair number of hours each week. You'd be hard pressed to provide that range of services if you closed the sites. A lot of our TRIP materials go to the

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

SWCCs and [the memo] goes into detail about the SWCC operations and how they might interact with a franchised waste collection program that was voluntary [and what if] the SWCCs charged for waste compared to if they didn't.

How will introduction of mixed paper at the curb next year affect drop off site use?
How about when we bring on commercial recycling?

I tried to summarize some of the questions for SWAB to consider.

- Should SWCC users be charged for disposal for MSW or other materials such as C&D, thus removing those costs from tax base and creating a personal economic incentive for recycling?
- Reduce or expand number of unstaffed or staffed sites, absent other changes in the system?
- Reduce number of unstaffed or staffed sites given anticipated expansion in recycling materials collected at curb and changed collection methodology?
- Should the nature of all current sites be changed into a smaller number of staffed "super centers" accepting a broader array of materials such as textiles?
- Should the County now begin a transition to use of compactors for MSW at SWCCs, how should it be financed? Can adding compactors be done incrementally and experimentally? They save time and hauling costs.
- Should there be a standard for future SWCC siting such as ensuring that there is a SWCC within a certain driving distance of all citizens of unincorporated areas?

Sassaman asks do we discuss these tonight? Secondly, there is one other question – what is the overall purpose of the convenience centers?

Kabrick states that it is premature to decide what to do with the convenience centers because we are in the process of trying to figure out what to do with PAYT.

Sassaman states that that is the reason I'm asking what is the conflict with it. Is it to provide a means of disposal? Is it to increase recycling?

Kabrick states that looking at this now is looking the rear view mirror. What was driving the convenience centers in the past and now is totally different. I would argue that this is an item that goes in the parking lot until we figure out [other issues].

Sassaman states that the *decision* should go in the parking lot but the issues should be discussed now.

Vickers states that the goals and the intentions of having the centers are so that if you change processing down the road you can see if you are addressing them and what modifications you'd have to make [to the centers]. It would make the decision easier

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

in the end. The convenience centers have a goal for recycling. They do encourage recycling. The word convenience is very important. It's easy so they do it.

Wilson states that its uses have evolved over time and depending on the decision we make with the recycling program and the County's decision on how to handle the garbage will determine how it will evolve in its next life. If the materials at the curb are increased to include say mixed paper, cardboard and one or two others, then for those unstaffed sites in the municipalities you could say you're duplicating services, but someone from the commercial sector could say we still need them. Or if we expand commercial sector recycling a good argument could be made we don't need them any more. Or they could be combined with staffed convenience centers so we can save money and have fewer pick up points, e.g. the two in the north end of Chapel Hill could be combined with Eubanks Road. If the County goes to universal garbage collection there is the argument in order to pay for that you could reduce or eliminate some of the staffed sites. As Blair mentioned eliminating all the staffed sites might not be feasible even if there is universal collection and if recycling collection is expanded in all sectors. There will still be specialty items to be collected – oil filters that we won't be collecting at the curb. There are going to have to be staffed sites. Also there are parts of the County where you can't get down those rural roads who will need some place to collect. If we make some changes in rural garbage and in residential and commercial recycling there will need to be some fundamental changes in dropoff operations and look to save some money but we will always need some drop off sites. It's very hard to site facilities of this type. You can't build a system built around these centers and then run away from them.

Sassaman asks is the purpose of the sites to provide options for the commercial sector or to provide options for those materials that are not usually picked up like textiles? How does pay as you throw interact with this? How does curbside sorting v. non-curbside sorting play out? Franchising?

Taylor states that as a resident of unincorporated Orange County, I live in a neighborhood of about 18 homes. About six of those homes pay for private garbage service and it is presumed the others use the convenience centers. Working around the convenience centers it appears the primary function is for garbage for those that live in the unincorporated areas and for bulky goods and unwanted garbage for Town residents and we want them to have the opportunity to get rid of that material.

Pollock states one of the staff concepts is that of a boutique site that can handle things like textiles or film that really need to be source-separated and the collection needs to be supervised. You can take this as far as you want, include white goods for example. We've never had this approach, it's another model.

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

Wilson states that Hwy 57 is a good example. You can spin it two ways, you can say “If someone is coming in every 20 seconds it must be a wonderful thing. You could also look at it as if this site is getting this much use it is ill-equipped to handle the load. If the answer is to keep the drop-off sites they will need to be reconfigured to accommodate what it’s getting.

Wilson notes that if you go to universal garbage collection and couple that with making it PAYT at convenience centers so there’s a convenient reason to go there but there’s not a monetary reason, it makes sense [to create a franchise waste collection system] but if you have collection for \$10 a month but convenience centers are free, you’re wasting your time with franchise waste collection.

Sassaman states that one thing that is a great value is the salvage shed. We have problems on how to get it to work, but the concept is very important.

Spire states that the centers that work well are the ones that have enough space and capacity for everything to flow. Squeezing that salvage shed into the middle of Highway 57 was dangerous. Smaller sites which are on leased property are problems and need to be looked at in a different way.

Sassaman states that you need to be able to accept other things in the locations where you have the salvage sheds or people won’t come.

Spire states that there are a lot of things that we are not doing at the convenience centers because there isn’t space. Blair has pressed for years for textiles, now there is a baling company in Mebane for textiles, so there is a local market for it. You could put up a rack for clean wood over four feet. There is a safety issue with nails, but as fast as it is put there it will be taken away. Without control and enough area to do it, you are asking for trouble.

Pollock states that we don’t want to piecemeal things anymore but to do to [the same thing] all centers.

Wilson states that with a new configuration the salvage sheds could be more useful. It would be hard to imagine a scenario where all the drop-offs or convenience centers did not exist.

Sassaman asks Randy how will they play with PAYT?

Kabrnick states that it is premature to discuss what to do with the convenience centers.

Sassaman states that we are not discussing what to do, but what are the issues.

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

Kabrick states that as an engineer I like to have the problem bounded. I don't like to solve unbounded problems that don't need to be solved.

Sassaman states that the reason the issues are raised these are the things we are going to be grappling with in a few weeks when we start talking about PAYT and other things. If we take PAYT how will that affect the use and diversion of materials to the convenience centers.

- 3. Fiscal 2006-07 Preliminary Budget** Wilson states that I have made a recommendation to the County manager for next year's budget. I have not met with the manager and the Commissioners have not seen any numbers. This is a preliminary, preliminary discussion and any of the numbers or recommendations may change. My recommendation is going to become the manager's recommendation and I'll get on board with his recommendation.

In next year's budget the total recommended is \$8,352,000 compared to current years' budget of \$7,952,000. Included in that are three new programs -- adding mixed paper to rural and urban curbside, expanding the small quantity generator program and putting a heater in the electronic building. Also there is a recommendation for an increase in the 3-R fee. After two years we think that it needs to be increased for adding mixed paper and the demand on the landfill disposal side of the fund is greater. Therefore the ability to subsidize recycling is less. We want to shift some of the subsidy back to fund the disposal-related issues and let recycling fund more of its own programs. Without an increase in the fee there will be no undesignated fund balance and equipment reserve will be decreased by \$125,000. The current fees are: basic \$27, rural, \$16, urban \$39, and multi-family \$14. I am proposing: basic \$34, rural \$22, urban, \$41, and multi-family \$16.

Curbside Program Expansion Taylor states that adding mixed paper to curbside has an array of impacts on all recycling programs. The impacts are the cost of operating the programs, revenue earned by the programs and amount of material we expect to divert. We currently accept mixed paper at the drop off sites. The two curbside recycling programs would divert about 1,300 tons of mixed paper during the first full year. We estimate about half of that would be shifted from the drop-off sites. Collecting mixed paper would be commingled with newspapers, magazines and phone books. This will decrease the revenue on the newspaper as a function of what percent is mixed paper, if it's between 10% and 40% mixed paper it's a downgrade in type of newspaper and if it's more than 40% mixed paper it will all be graded as mixed paper. The loss of revenue could be \$20 to \$25 per ton from the downgrade. There is little to no revenue associated with source separated mixed paper, mixing it with newspaper will result in more tons probably at a reduced newspaper rate. The multifamily newspaper value will also be dragged down by this as it's all delivered to

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

market together. We will pay Waste Industries, the contractor for urban curbside collection, and additional 15 cents per household per month to collect mixed paper.

Sassaman asks what is the effect of the decreased cost to collect?

Taylor states that in the programs the County operates we expect it to be a wash. We will shift the efforts from drop-off site collection to curbside collection. The roll off mixed paper load is inefficiently collected as it's not very dense.

Sassaman asks what about Waste Industries?

Taylor states that they have a two-stream collection system – paper and containers. As part of the proposed program we are considering adding a second bin to each household to facilitate that sort. Right now, they are collecting two-stream in their new trucks under a new five-year contract.

Bowerman clarifies that the materials at the curb are owned by Waste Industries whereas the County owns what's delivered to dropoff sites.

Vickers asks if did Waste Industries want to know if they could do dual stream or did you ask them to do that?

Taylor states that we enabled those that bid on the program to do so in any way except single-stream.

Bowerman asks if we continue to contract out to Waste Industries will we ever need a MRF?

Taylor states that that is one way to do it. Staff has examined that we are able to provide the service cheaper most times and the quality of service is often times greater.

Wilson states I have no doubt we could operate urban curbside cheaper, but it also depends if you want to get waist deep or neck deep. It is sometimes difficult to manage all programs. We are not a business. Also having a five-year contract allows the contractor to reap the risk and/or benefits from the materials markets.

Taylor clarifies that the net revenue impact on the County is negative \$21,000 but there are other costs such as bins, contract collection cost increases.

Wilson states that hopefully at the next meeting I can tell you the exact recommended budget. This is what I'm recommending to the manager.

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

3-R Fee Increase Wilson states that we have already talked about this. I'm sure something will change on that.

Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program Taylor states that this is a piggyback program on our current hazardous waste program. Our current conditionally exempt small quantity generator program requires them to pay our contractor directly for the service. We have found that over the past couple of years the program has been limited in use, requiring user pay has been an obstacle to participate in the program. We anticipate that the disposal will cost about \$42,000 a year.

Other Key Budgetary Issues Wilson states that these are the "add" items mentioned earlier. Everything else is a continuation of different services and a couple pieces of landfill equipment that are on the replacement schedule.

5. Programs/Services Update

March 30 Assembly of Government's Meeting Wilson states that the meeting went fairly well. There were questions about the transfer station, the work group and keeping the boards informed about what the work group's doing, convenience centers, scavenging, landfill gas and what landfills are likely to bid on our waste when we transfer. The BOCC has not made a decision on where the transfer station will go.

Kabrick asks what about the discussion Jim Ward had about the new landfill?

Wilson states that there wasn't much discussion about that. He questioned about having a new landfill and whether it's the right thing to do to handle our own waste. I informed him of the County's policy that there would not be new landfill.

Sassman states that what I recall was that the Commissioners stated that they had voted and passed a resolution that there would be no municipal waste landfill sited in Orange County. Then there was a comment made that that resolution could be overturned by a future board.

Landfill Gas Preliminary Report (discussed after item 1) Tipton states that other than what was in the newspaper I don't know a lot about what is going on. I just wanted to get the update.

Wilson states that a presentation was given at the Assembly of Government's meeting March 30 regarding this. Back in 1997-98 an EPA representative, myself and another staff member met with UNC Energy Services officials who were in the process of designing a fourth boiler (at UNC) and that was when they decided to look at modifying the boiler to use landfill gas. The University never formally responded. Over the years the use of landfill gas at Chapel Hill North has come up. Phil Barner

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

of UNC facility services called at the end of October early November and stated as they were talking about Carolina North they wanted to know about using landfill gas. I explained that we had a consultant do a report and would be glad to send it to him. After the report was sent in February, I didn't hear anymore about it until a couple of weeks ago. Then we got a letter from Carolyn Efland at UNC about landfill gas.

Now there appears to be competing interest in landfill gas. Some of the Commissioners are interested, if it's feasible, in powering the new Animal Shelter, a new elementary school to be developed on Eubanks Road, our Operations Center and possibly the transfer station. The University has some interest as well. We are in the process of discussing further work with our consultants to do an additional evaluation regarding each of those potential uses. We know that we have gas, but if Carolina North isn't coming on line for another six or seven years it won't be worth it. There are no partners imminent, like next June.

Sassaman states that the gas would have to be used, you can't store it.

Smith asks if the landfill was closed tomorrow how many years would it take to produce gas?

Wilson states that gas worthy of recovery – 12-15 years of time left.

Tipton states that the report talks about the flow.

Wilson states that there are two landfills. The old one on the north is down the [gas production; it started in 1972] curve. The one on the south side isn't half way up the curve. It has some good stuff coming from it now, but it will not produce for a long period of time [because it's small].

Kabrick asks if it is being flared now?

Wilson states that we are passively venting it. We have one flare at a central point. I have been resistant in the past because I didn't want to scare the neighbors lighting up the landfill like a birthday cake. Now we are going to take another look at it even though we are below the regulatory threshold for recovering it.

Kabrick estimates 500,000 cubic feet a day are vented.

Wilson notes that the biggest single cost of recovery is the network of piping that must be installed and for an active landfill it's more difficult until it's closed.

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

Spire notes that there is no infrastructure for recovery on the south side now at all and there are problems with putting this gas into the pipeline; the gas company doesn't want it.

Wilson notes that [unlike Duke Power] the gas company is not required to accept landfill gas.

Tipton asks when will this group take any action on this?

Wilson states that I plan to keep you all apprised of any reports. If you all have any input it would not be out of line to make a recommendation. You will be hearing more about it in the next six months.

April Work Group Meeting Wilson states that the next meeting will be April 12 at 4pm.

Transfer Station Wilson states that the BOCC took your recommendation for the location out on Eubanks Road landfill and have given me the assignment to talk to someone in Durham County government. I am to talk with my counterpart with the City of Durham to determine whether they are planning a second transfer station in the southern part of the county, if so could we join together.

Sassaman asks if the discussion is actually a Commissioner's decision, not from the Assembly of Governments?

Wilson states that the decision of a transfer station is on hold until I am able to meet with Durham and come to some conclusion at the staff level and report back.

Bowerman asks as clarification that there are no intentions of building it on Eubanks Road and having Durham truck their garbage there?

Wilson replies no that has never been discussed.

Scavenging at Convenience Centers Wilson states that there have been letters to the editor in the Chapel Hill Herald and the Chapel Hill News. This comes up periodically. There appears to be a couple of commissioners that favor scavenging. If they can verbalize the policy they want, I will try to write and implement it.

Kabrick states that the SWAB was put together to make technical and financial recommendations to all the interlocal signees. We've have said that we agree with staff on the scavenging policy and it needs to happen.

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
April 6, 2006
Approved May 4, 2006

Wilson states that half the material from the salvage sheds ends up in the flea market in Buckhorn that does divert material but doesn't necessarily help poor people furnish their homes.

Sassaman expresses concerns about the location of a transfer station being at locations nearer to one potential landfill destination than another. If the philosophy were to site the transfer station nearer to one potential landfill site, that would affect the cost of local hauling of waste and make it less predictable. You save money on the few transfer costs but it costs the many trucks delivering waste to the transfer station more to get there.

6. **Other Business** Wilson states that I have given you some handouts of Bills that have passed legislation – anyone that holds an ABC [on-premises] permit will be required to recycle their containers. There is also a bill that bans oil filters, oyster shells, pallets and plastic bottles.

Pollock notes that surveys have been issued to the SWAB and work group members to get more feedback on preferences regarding the solid waste plan and we hope to get responses from all members of the work group.

Smith moves to adjourn. Vickers 2nd.

Adjourn: 9:30 pm

Next meeting: May 4, 2006
Hillsborough, NC