

Minutes – Regular Meeting  
Solid Waste Advisory Board  
January 11, 2010  
**Approved March 10, 2010**

Attendance: Jan Sassaman, Al Vickers, Remus Smith, Doug Guild, Steve Yuhasz and BJ Tipton

Staff: Gayle Wilson Blair Pollock, Paul Spire, Rob Taylor, Cody Marshall, Terry Thomas and Wanda McCain

Guest: Bonnie Hauser and Tony Blakely

**1. Opening and Welcome**

**2. Adoption of Minutes from December 3 SWAB meeting** Vickers moves to accept. Guild 2<sup>nd</sup>. Passes unanimously

**3. Follow-up discussion from December 15 Solid Waste Plan Work Group Meeting**  
Wilson states that there are a couple of handouts at your seat given to me by a citizen. One has to do with Massachusetts governor calling for moratorium on incineration and supporting increased recycling and waste reduction. Some say that the future is incineration, but things are confused because some areas are trying to get away from incineration so I'm not sure how this would be settled in the long run. Secondly something related to something Doug had brought up at a previous meeting is a brief on Montgomery Alabama [that] is conducting a feasibility study regarding plasma technology.

What we thought we would do tonight is to continue the discussion from the last work group meeting since this is going to be major issue and a major part of our solid waste plan. It is the focus of the public and the elected officials and a significant budgetary issue as well. We thought we [would] have a free flowing discussing tonight regarding the future role of convenience centers, are they going to be small facilities open one or two days a week to provide the basic necessities, are they going to change to focus more on recycling and waste reduction with room for future opportunities for recycling waste reduction, how many are there going to be and where are they going to be? Alternatively how will we or should we fund the solid waste convenience center activities in the future. We talked about that at the last work group meeting. Even if you reduce the costs like we have recently, how will that remaining amount of funding be provided? The options range from continuing general fund funding which comes primarily from property taxes to the other extreme which comes from the enterprise fund provided with dedicated funding with one or more sources of fees. We may have another workgroup meeting next month so you all will need to come to some conclusions if you all plan to make a recommendation.

Pollock states that before talking about the things specific to the convenience centers and that part of the plan, the bigger context is that this is going to be part of our solid waste plan that we would like to complete this year. Getting some decisions and

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recommendations to the Board on the solid waste plan will help the process along in the bigger picture. This is only one of the bundles of decisions, those related to the unincorporated area. Other areas we haven't touched upon include commercial recycling and regulatory measures and so on. This is the context.

To go back to the December 15<sup>th</sup> and even previous meetings, the anatomy of this is that there are the three areas -- convenience centers, the idea of broadening curbside recycling and the concept that the county might get more deeply involved in waste collection. To recap a couple of things the work group and SWAB approved the broad strokes on curbside recycling expansion. It hasn't been finally recommended yet, but the understanding is recommending the 1,000 homes that can be readily done with the current staffing and that after we size up the impact of that integrated with the move in urban toward single stream and then get an assessment of that in terms of efficiency and the ability to further expand the rural curbside recycling. It will be an incremental approach. The first two increments are clear, 1,000 homes then single stream along with urban single stream with implementation in the Spring of 2011.

As far as waste collection is concerned, the decision not to site a transfer station puts a different light on the idea of do we then have a need to control the flow of waste and the regulation of waste if there isn't a place to control it to. While it may be useful to exert county oversight on waste collection for a variety of reasons, right now is probably not a time when that's a critical issue. That leaves us with convenience centers. Gayle laid out a good path for us to take a look at all the issues related to what the future of the convenience centers are. You may have brought your maps from last time to think about the options of where and what type, how to consider paying for them, and what we want them to do for us. Once the landfill closes that is going to be a huge component of what the county's involvement in solid waste is. The person that gets caught with his waste on a day the convenience center is closed will have to go to Durham to legally get rid of his waste. The way we choose to address the operation of convenience centers will have a significant impact on services that get provided.

Wilson states that the future of convenience centers, theoretically one in the north and one in the south, could provide some minimal level of service. From you all's goal setting exercise the other end of the spectrum that seemed to come out number one was the neighborhood/district concept being similar to the county-wide park concept where there are several large parks and some small parks. There can be convenience centers that are open two days a week, perhaps on a rotating basis around the county so that there is one or two open every day and have it accept only residential solid waste and some minimal amount of recyclables the same as at curbside, cans, bottles, and paper, for low cost. For those that have the periodic dead couch or tires it would have to be hauled to Durham. Or there could be a more full service approach where there are small satellite ones and one or two large ones that provide a wide array of

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services. As Blair mentioned, once the landfill closes and we are utilizing the Durham transfer station there will essentially be no MSW infrastructure in the county any more. The convenience centers in whatever configuration they exist will be the only MSW and they are only for residential, so a business with a half a pickup of something will have no option unless the convenience centers are further defined to accept commercial also, which will make them larger to accept the larger amounts rather than smaller. I don't think we want mini transfer stations. A lot of people just want the minimum or whatever is cheapest. There are also the calls into the office from those people that don't like the way things are being done. So we have to figure out what level of service the citizens of the county want. The convenience centers were originally set up to do something lawful and legally with tires, white goods, sofa and chairs to keep them out of ditches and road sides. I would like for you all to discuss how convenient or inconvenient the centers should be, how many, what are the hours and days they should be open, the kinds of services there should be and are there different kinds of centers in different parts of the county.

Sassaman states that it seems that we may need to step back one step. The landscape is different if there is no waste transfer station, which is basically what you are saying. What kinds of decisions should we make and in what order so that we get some kind of rationality to all this process. We can continue to talk for another year but we need staff to focus our conversation towards exactly what types of decisions are needed.

Vickers asks what exactly was going to be handled at the transfer station – municipal garbage?

Wilson replies yes.

Vickers asks what about the couches.

Pollock says yes

Vickers asks about metals, or refrigerators.

Wilson replies that those are all recyclable so those would have been diverted elsewhere on the landfill. There is a receiving area for those.

Vickers asks what about items like hazardous waste? Will those still not be handled by the waste transfer station?

Wilson states that it would have allowed us when dumped on the floor if seen could be pulled out but there was no intention to have a hazardous waste function.

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Vickers asks what else is there that would not be in the transfer station mix. What else is received at the landfill that wouldn't get into a transfer station? Construction debris goes to the C&D landfill, correct.

Wilson replies some of it does. There is a quirk in the law. If it is construction debris that originates from a construction site then it is C&D and can go to a C&D landfill. If it is construction debris that comes from your home that is generated at the residential level - replaced carpet from your home is MSW. The point is the transfer station would have received MSW -- garbage and that portion of construction and demolition waste stream that is not permitted to go to the C&D landfill.

Spire states that the yard waste, tires, clean wood, clean metal and white goods will continue to go to their current space.

Wilson states that all that stuff could be hauled to Durham and they will not require it to be recycled - that which is not State law. A car battery or tires would have to be pulled out but Durham has a special dispensation from the State - they are one of only a few that has permission from the State of NC to bury yard waste. They are sending yard waste to Virginia. The reason in part is from a fire they had and permitting issues. They got permission when they didn't have a permit for yard waste and were allowed to bury it.

Tipton asks how the convenience centers are funded now.

Wilson replies that they are funded solely from the general fund which is primarily property tax based.

Tipton states that it sounds like what will not be accommodated will be the small haulers, whether they are residents or businesses. It sounds like what is needed are for the convenience centers to become mini-transfer stations in a sense.

Pollock asks do you mean like a micro-hauler who might collect a trailer park and two businesses.

Tipton replies anything from Josephine resident to the guy that tears down a deck and is he going to drive all the way to Durham to dispose of it? To little businesses that should or shouldn't use the transfer station (means convenience centers) to UNC who has a pickup truck load of not C&D waste but something that has been cleaned up from a vacant lot that needs to be disposed of. Do we drive to Durham with each pickup truck load? If you think of it, good or not, transfer station or not, convenience centers become a place for these small loads. If they have the paying ability then they could accommodate the little pickup truck of Joe Builder.

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Pollock states that that is a really important policy decision for you all to take on.

Tipton states that it has to be said because having that option not available three days a week is not realistic. What could be the accommodation, I don't know. It's like stating the obvious that how realistic is it for pickup truck loads to go to wherever the transfer station is in Durham?

Sassaman states that what you are implying is that we need some kind of transfer function if not for the municipal waste for all the rest of the waste that is generated on a smaller scale.

Vickers states that essentially the convenience centers have always been transfer stations for individual residential waste haulers.

Smith states that to speak a little about the Walnut Grove site which I use two or three times a month and at different hours of the day. It seems every time I'm there I see 15 to 20 people or more coming in to do their thing and leaving. It is clean and well run. I don't see that we can send a garbage truck to those 150 houses a day and cheaply as we can get them to bring it to us. I am a great believer in increasing the number of convenience centers. If we have them people will use them and that is the cheapest way to dispose of it. What is done after it gets there I can't comment on that but I am pleased at the quality of work at the Walnut Grove center and the number of people that use it.

Yuhasz asks how much of the solid waste operation and what specific things are going to be different with using the transfer station in Durham and what things are going to be the same? For example household hazardous waste that is not something generally taken at the convenience centers, is that going to continue? That is one thing, but of the list of things how many will remain the same and what things are going to change. Until I understand that I can't make a recommendation on how we need to approach that.

Wilson states that there will be a lot that stays the same. We will continue to have the C&D landfill, yard waste collection at Eubanks Rd. (at the landfill) while it's questionable at the convenience centers, clean metal, cardboard, white goods, and tires to the landfill. Some things that will change are for non-residential waste. There will be no place to put it, whether you're hauling from a restaurant or an office, unless the convenience centers become mini transfer stations.

Yuhasz asks how much of that is being done by the individual businesses and how much is being done by franchise commercial haulers.

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Wilson replies the vast majority of the non-residential waste is collected either by the municipalities or private companies but there are on average 5-7 small loads a day at the landfill where someone comes in with a pick up truck or brings a small load from like a banquet somewhere. There will be increased cost of hauling from the convenience centers to Durham unless some changes are made to use compaction or larger roll-off containers.

Yuhasz asks if the roll-offs you take now, that would go to the landfill is just for garbage. All the other recyclables collected at the convenience centers are brought back here for processing before they are distributed?

Wilson replies the garbage will be collected in the current methodology by front loaders and delivered directly to the Durham transfer station. The bulky waste material and furniture and the residential construction material will also be delivered to Durham. Everything else will come to the same place, so there would be no change there. There will be changes if there is a dead deer someone is trying to get rid of as well as the animals that are euthanized at the animal shelter. They will have to travel to Durham or somewhere to dispose of those.

Guild asks where does DOT take dead animals.

Wilson replies they come to the landfill. They will be responsible for taking them to Durham. Then there are some materials that heretofore we haven't paid for that we will have to start paying for such as the residuals or contaminants that come out of loads of recycled materials. Now it goes in the landfill. Those materials will have to be hauled to Durham and paid for in the future. Also with C&D if there is a little garbage mixed in with it currently the garbage is pulled out and a container is provided. We will have to either to continue to provide the container or make the hauler take it back with them and hope they don't throw it in the ditch. There will be a lot of things discovered as we go along.

Spire states that there are four roll-offs located at the landfill that are used for what Gayle mentioned. Of those four, typically two are emptied twice a week. They are for the convenience of the [small] customer that comes in with bags of waste. That will not longer be available.

Tipton replies unless you charge a fee for that. It could still be accessible and they could be charged a contamination fee.

Spire states that some people feel that a small bag of trash from a construction site should be put where they want to. It is not allowed in the yard waste or the clean wood so we provide a container for them to put it in (separate from their construction waste).

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Yuhasz states that if you don't provide that they will take it to a convenience center and put it in there and you will pay to haul it off anyway.

Pollock states that if they are in their commercial yard waste truck they will not get into the convenience centers.

Wilson states that there is also the trash left at the unstaffed drop-off sites that will be put into those containers. Maybe it will only be \$5,000 to \$6,000 a year but that is another thing that will be different.

Vickers asks what services are at each convenience centers now.

Wilson replies garbage, C&D debris, miscellaneous bulkies, which are furniture and the C&D generated from residents, clean wood, clean metal, tires, white goods, waste oil, batteries, antifreeze, yard waste although Bradshaw doesn't have yard waste because of its size, salvage sheds at most of the facilities (except Bradshaw), electronics oil filters and the traditional recyclables.

Sassaman states that the problem is commercial opposed to residential. If the convenience centers are business as usual that really doesn't have an egregious impact on the residential customer.

Wilson concurs – but maybe cost.

Sassaman states that it is something that we can get around. The problem is what happens to the small commercial customer who does not pay some franchise or hauler to deal with their material. The other problem is how are we going to enforce any of our recycling goals if we have no control of what goes where. That can be controlled as long as we collect in the municipalities if they wish.

Pollock states that to shape the discussion a little in the near term issue of funding – FY2010-11 budget we believe there will be some continued downward pressure on funding for all of our services. The pressure stands in contradistinction to the fact that people in the county really enjoy-demand-need the bundle of services they have now. The huge number of materials that Gayle mentioned we can't continue to provide all that without a guaranteed stable, predictable source of funding. There has been continued pressure to add fluorescent lamps and there are other materials that could be added given the opportunity, including food waste, clothing, and plastic film/bags. There is a conflict about financing vs. the need for expanded services. Dealing with the shortfall for next year's budget vs. creating a longer term use of an enterprise fund that implies some kind of fee structure that divorces us from reliance on the general fund in part or in total.

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The other thing that helps focus the discussion if anyone brought their maps from last time of the three different scenarios and you could mix and match or add any. You could add a new center in the northeast quadrant that would give us more uniform coverage throughout the County. We don't want these to become the inconvenience centers and at the same time recognizing the constant pressure to save more money in light of the budget situation.

When going through the ranking and weighting exercise there is one scenario that is economically compelling. It is the cheapest, quickest fix to put everything into compactors and densify the loads and makes hauling more efficient. But it doesn't meet any of our other goals in terms of the overall system. A system that meets the other goals will cost more. A system that drives us towards our waste reduction goals has the highest ranking and is more robust and safer but more capital intensive. You will have to decide on these things, how do you want to pay for them, how big do you want them to be, what do you want to pay for. I heard Remus loud and clear that more convenience centers are a good thing, great, all we have to do is figure out how to pay for it.

Wilson states to Jan on the issue you raised regarding the small commercial hauler, they are in a quandary, but on the other hand they had an opportunity as much as they could recognize what was going to happen in the public process to make their concerns known.

Sassaman states that they will make their concerns know later and you will have to deal with it and you [Steve] will have to deal with it.

Yuhasz states that if we were to look at a model with two large convenience centers one in the northern part and one in the southern part of the county, and a number of smaller, part-time convenience centers we could probably accommodate the small commercial at those two larger convenience centers.

Sassaman states that it could be a PAYT.

Yuhasz replies yes, it could be a PAYT for those small commercial [entities] that don't want to do that.

Sassaman adds that it could be cheaper.

Yuhasz states that let's not make it too much cheaper so we attract that waste. The other part of that is we need to look at how the small convenience centers will operate and what is really expected out of those. That is what most people will see. They will

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go to the small ones to dump their garbage and recyclables. There is going to be single stream recycling and that's all we need to think about for the small ones.

Vickers asks if most of the commercial waste will be generated around the Hillsborough - Chapel Hill area.

Wilson states that most as far as quantity goes. But some of the isolated folks, small business in the more rural parts of the county are more likely not to have regular service. A lot of the small rural businesses do self-hauling [more] than some of those in the urban areas.

Yuhasz states that those groups would be much more accepting of a PAYT situation. "You're commercial, you go in, you expect to pay a certain amount". They would recognize that they have an obligation to pay extra, they are not residential.

Spire asks are you [Steve] envisioning two centrally located major sites that are the super sites and then the four corners for the others.

Yuhasz states that whether it would be the four corners, four sites or six sites I could see sites that would be open two days a week and the two days would rotate throughout the week so that there wouldn't be a big personnel investment in the smaller convenience centers. They will be used by people that are local and people who will know what days the centers are open and it won't be an inconvenience. On the other hand we need to plan to have the major centers open 7 days a week if possible so that regardless of where you are you know that there is some place to go to dump your garbage.

Tipton states that I was just thinking why not have one super center because that is what we have now with the landfill, we have scales that could be used, but make it one super center that the businesses could use. Then would the other convenience centers need to change. Except Bradshaw. They work, they're fine, other than the plans to modernize them?

Yuhasz states that a lot of the recycling that is done at the centers could just as easily be done at two major centers. The people with a broken lawn mower aren't doing that every day. If they have to drive six miles further once a year I don't think they will see that as a huge impediment. We can actually narrow down what we are doing in most of the centers if we have the facilities available when they are needed.

Vickers states that for routine garbage and recycling there are the mini convenience centers and with HHW or oil --- I don't know how often people have oil.

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Wilson states that the oil is pretty low cost. It is the hauling of the yard waste and the bulkies from all the small sites that adds up.

Yuhasz states that overall looking at it county-wide there is a lot but for any one individual the disposal of white goods for example, happens every few years.

Spire states that there is [a haul] from every site at least one a month. Forty-four loads of tires were hauled last year to the landfill from the sites. White goods is a lot more often.

Vickers states that there is a lot more white goods but how many citizens make multiple trips per year with white goods? A lot make one trip.

Pollock states that there are 21,000 potential rural customers every year. If 5% or 10% get rid of something it comes to 1,000 to 2,000 appliances from just kind of turnover.

Vickers states that I'm looking at it from the citizen that has to travel an extra ten miles to get rid of its washing machine once a year. Is that a major inconvenience?

Wilson notes that those who live in town have the option of paying \$15 to make it go away.

Tipton states that from someone that uses the centers I would request before you start reducing the services at the convenience centers you make a good case as to why. Why is it from a financial standpoint? You've studied the usage and see that only ten customers a week are bringing in "X" product. It is a one-stop place for me to go. I load it all on and I go. I can understand if you justify that there aren't enough white goods coming to one center then that's OK. If you're not going to make some savings then don't get rid of it.

Taylor states that it truly has significant cost savings and that's why it's on the table.

Tipton replies I would like to see that. Tires once a month not so much, white goods maybe. Yard waste, you have to keep that.

Wilson states that if the manager requests that the sanitation budget to be cut by ----

Tipton states that I'm just saying study and look at it on a site by site basis. It may not have to be all or nothing. You may not have to go across the board. Make a case for it financially and from a customer service standpoint. You need to make the case that you have to cut.

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Wilson states that we are all about customer service and it bothers us to cut but there are fiscal realities that we have to respond to. Many of us have spent a career making the convenience centers convenient.

Spire states that that is where we are now. We understand what you are saying but it is the funding of the centers that have become the forefront of the issue.

Tipton asks because it is paid with taxes.

Spire states that yes it is a general fund operation. It is the commissioners' duty to balance the budget. If we have to start charging for them, then this is where we want to go. What is the general public outlook on refinancing them in a different manner? Is it through a fee, a gate fee where they pay every time they drive through they pay and can do what they want, is it a one time annual fee?

Tipton asks if there is a charge for a different product. You don't know that yet. So what I'm asking that you study and look at the different costs of what you are looking at doing. If I could take my white good to the convenience super center for \$0 or if I take it to my convenient convenience center for \$5 do I have a choice? Maybe it is that you only take the standard things. Right now I see that you are going to cut and I don't see enough that says "We've looked at this and [here's] what our options are specifically material by material".

Taylor states that there have been three work group meetings through the Fall where this has been discussed in detail.

Yuhasz states that one of the things that we are talking about is modernizing the convenience centers so that when you bring your washing machine you don't have to lift it up – just push it off the truck. If we are going to try to modernize the convenience centers to make it more convenient for those occasional things that is going to cost money and we can't afford to do that everywhere. We have to be selective of where to put the more modern centers. If we do that in a way that still provides convenience for what most of the people use the convenience centers most of the time it seem that we can consolidate, save some money on operations and still provide the greatest amount of convenience.

Tipton states that what I hear you saying is that you would save the convenience centers for the more ergonomically manageable items – light recyclables and light trash, and the things that are ergonomically challenging are what you are focusing on for the super centers.

Wilson states that that is partially correct. It is also to try to become more efficient in hauling. Even without the ergonomic argument when you're hauling 20 (cubic)-yard

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containers from six different places there are costs associated with that, especially having to haul them to Durham. If you can modernize and change the 20 into 40 [yard containers] then it becomes significantly more efficient. And hauling the 40 yd. container from two or three sites rather than five or six sites, it becomes much more cost-effective but it becomes less convenient.

Tipton asks is this why Steve picked two super centers?

Yuhasz states that I picked two because there could be one on the north side of [Hwy] 85 and one on the south side of [Hwy] 85 and cover all the county that way.

Wilson points out that in the goal setting exercise what scored the highest but had the highest costs was the neighborhood and district centers.

Tipton states if the basic structure is two super centers that handle all the materials and neighborhood centers.

Pollock states that that is one model that we ran some numbers and the cost of how to do that and how it compared to the others. The other two scenarios looked at in some detail were a version of the current five sites partially modernized or fully or four centers, one in each quadrant of the county more or less, that were more modernized with the lowest level being compactors at grade to two tiered gravity fed compactors. To the super centers where you even have HHW.

There was a spread of options. Part of the issues around paying is do we think that these are things people are willing to pay for and how much would they pay. We put numbers to different levels of divorcing the convenience center financing from the general fund and putting it into a discrete fee that became more stable and predictable sort of like the 3R fee. Part of it is that a direction people want to go both set up funds that will capitalize the improvements and continue to pay for them in a manner that every year we don't have to go back and decide what to cut. Is the idea of stabilized funding and a predictable set of service over the long run an important goal or is the new paradigm the most important thing to reduce cost to the bare minimum and let services meet whatever costs can be paid?

Wilson states that if nothing is done with alternative financing there will almost certainly be service and hour reductions.

Pollock states that each year we have to go back and re-educate on what is done where and when.

Sassaman states that it seems that the situation is where there are three sources of potential funding. Those things in the convenience centers that are capitalizable and

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infrastructure probably ought to come out of taxes. Those things that are use related could come out of fees maybe an annual accessibility fee that could vary depending on what our needs are. The third item would be a specific PAYT fee for the commercial sector. The latter two could be variable from year to year.

Vickers states that at the last discussion the city residents paid for garbage disposal now and the county residents pay through taxes and so do the municipal residents pay through taxes. I thought we came to the conclusion that there was potential for an availability fee for the whole county to have it available for intermittent use and another fee for regular disposal use – a two tiered system.

Sassaman states that the one thing to be careful about is that the municipal residents pay for the convenience centers in their taxes as well.

Vickers states that I thought we came to the conclusion at the end of the meeting that at some point we would have to figure out some way to finance the convenience centers outside the general tax base.

Sassaman states that there are certain parts of the convenience centers and their function are reasonable borne uniformly by all the residents whether city or rural and those are those capital items and infrastructure items. The throughput and hauling costs probably is more reasonably paid for by a fee based on some sense of use and there are probably three tiers of use – commercial, county, non-county residents. There could also be two kinds of county residents – those that have a hauler are no different than a city resident and the person that depends solely on the convenience centers will have a higher throughput.

Vickers states that when we did the environmental economics for the recycling fee an issue that didn't go forth was the availability fee on the landfill for dumping waste [all] across county. The concept was to generate the fees when you paid your taxes you paid an availability fee, you actually [pre]paid for your waste disposal. If you hired a contractor to haul it he had the option of hauling and dumping the waste because you already paid for it but if he hauled it out of county he would pay a higher rate. It was a form of flow control.

Essentially looking at the convenience centers and this becomes an issue if you have a lot of small haulers if they have [pre]paid an availability fee then you have to police them to see if they are really from Orange County. But that's a possible way of going.

Wilson states that with the commercial aspect one is either self-hauling or a hired handyman is hauling for you, but there is also the commercial where for money you are collecting from a trailer park or something. I don't know that we would ever have the volume capacity to deal with that commercial collection. What I was talking

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about was if Spanky's [restaurant] had a banquet and wanted to haul a pickup truck of stuff away they might have a place to take it. If you have a commercial fee, now we don't allow commercial knowingly but to now allow it under these parameters and charge for it that is not new money. It is paying for the new service. It doesn't help the existing expenses.

Vickers states that the problem with that at the convenience centers you couldn't distinguish the citizen coming in with a load from the church or the guy coming in from the apartment complex.

Pollock states that the churches aren't allowed in now. Our neighbors in Durham and Chatham issue annual stickers.

Vickers states that a simple fee may be best, don't make it too complicated.

Sassaman states that the primary/secondary is the real distinction.

Yuhasz states that the distinction between the two commercials suggests that we might want to look at franchising haulers as a way to control that situation. The other distinction to look at is people who use the convenience centers as their primary means of disposal and those that use it as a secondary. That is those who have haulers, municipal or private, and those who don't.

Wilson states that now we don't hassle someone who wants to put in a few recyclables, that's OK but they cannot get rid of garbage. One other thing to think about in looking into the future and trying to minimize our waste disposed is that recycling centers also present an opportunity for new recyclable materials recycling and expanding recycling. While waste is an important component, making some improvements in the sites you can increase the recycling opportunity and waste reduction. Through making some improvement you could add film, enhance salvage sheds, add cooking oil, textiles, or other materials as markets come about. All we would have to do is add a container and not worry about the site space.

Yuhasz states that that brings me back to a question I had early on that has to do with the change to single-stream recycling. What is that going to do for volume of recycling? Now the curbside routes are run every other week. With single-stream would we expect that the volume would increase to a point where we might want to look at once a week rather once every other week? Do we need to plan for that?

Taylor states that with the change to single-stream recycling we anticipate both an increase in participation and the amount of materials collected. We still anticipate maintaining the drop-off site infrastructure and provide that service for those that are outside our service boundaries and for the commercial entities that don't get

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collection now and for overflow. There has been no discussion about changing collection frequency.

Wilson states that another thing that single-stream does is allow the collection capacity to be more efficient. Instead of having a two compartment truck that when one side fills up you have to dump collecting single-stream you fill it up and not worry about air space.

Pollock states that if we go with a 95 gallon cart now there is only 36 gallons of capacity with the two bins; we anticipate being able to handle that. I thought, Steve, when you were talking what's the implication when we go to single stream at the smaller convenience centers.

Yuhasz states that that is part of it. Single-stream implies to those who aren't deeply involved in the recycling that anything that is recyclable goes in this thing and I think that that is probably not where we are actually.

Taylor states that there would be acceptable and unacceptable materials. With single-stream recycling the amount of what is collected that is stuff not wanted invariably goes up – the residue increases. That is a byproduct of the transition.

Vickers asks what is the residue rate at the place where they process the single-stream – 13%-18%.

Taylor replies it depends on which MRF you are talking about. There is a wide variety of rates even at the facilities that are accessible to us.

Pollock states that some of it is a function of how fast the belt moves. Some re-run materials to run residue rates down. In the last year or two single-stream facilities have gotten below the 10% threshold. Part of that is due to strong public education coupled with better technology.

Sassaman asks Rob what do you see with the cardboard at the drop-off sites now that it is accepted at the curb.

Taylor replies it really has not gone down and that is part of the trend with each item that has been added to the curbside collection. We anticipated some dip at the drop-off sites but that really hasn't materialized. The transition to single-stream would eliminate some of the need to use the drop-off sites like the size and breakdown restrictions would be significantly relaxed because the truck would compact it.

Smith states that I feel strongly that we need to increase the convenience centers. I feel strongly that the only way to pay for them is through taxes. I personally, live in

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the city of Hillsborough the Sheriff doesn't come by my house but I'm paying for the Sheriff. I do not go to the library in Hillsborough, I'm paying for the library. I do not go to the ice rink in Hillsborough, I'm paying for the ice rink in Hillsborough. I don't go to the Senior Center, I'm paying for the Senior Center. I am going to have to pay for the convenience center. To me that is the easiest, most efficient cheapest way of handling our waste. Collect it somewhere and then carry it somewhere else and get rid of it.

Vickers states that it should be fees because as it was found out with recycling there are so many tax exempt entities in the county that get services anyway.

Sassaman states that it should be a combination of taxes and fees. There is a certain proportion of the value that is built into the convenience center that should be taxed just like the schools and some of the other things in the county that a lot of us don't use.

Vickers states that it is like a utility service.

Pollock asks Jan how do you like the current configuration of number and types of sites compared to other options.

Sassaman replies I think I am with Remus. I like the idea of a couple of super convenience centers. I've gone on record in the past that we should have as many convenience centers as our budget can afford because the emphasis is on the word 'convenience'. I don't think that all the convenience centers should be all encompassing with ram compactors and take everything, but they ought to be able to take the basic recyclables and solid waste. They may not take tires, refrigerators, batteries and refrigerators.

Vickers states that it should be discussed by manned and unmanned sites. An unmanned center there is very little material except looking at municipal waste it really goes to manned.

Wilson states that we would not support a concept that any center that took solid waste not be staffed.

Spire states that going with that scenario is everyone more agreeable that they were developed on county property where we own them but not spend money on a leased site where we might have to leave in 180 days. We own Eubanks, Ferguson and Walnut Grove sites. We do not own Bradshaw or High Rock. We've looked at the Mincey Road site where the County owns some property.

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Vickers states that if there is going to be a long-term investment it would be better to own the site.

Spire states that looking at in that context and there are a couple of sites that we don't own in one part of the county there may not be the ability to get the super long-term lease but it is something to consider going forward. Do we need to look for a permanent site or two that can be joined together as one county owned facility where we would not [have] the heartburn of investing \$200,000.

Wilson states that we would not invest any significant amount of money in a short-term lease site. The two sites that we currently lease have a potential for a long-term lease. The last thing I want to do is get into a site search for a convenience center, so we need to make every effort to make what we have work.

Sassaman states that what we are talking about is how would something like this be implemented financially.

Wilson states that this is the discussion we hoped you'd have and at the next work group meeting hopefully with some additional information that follows this discussion you will be prepared to make some recommendations or suggestions to the BOCC.

Sassaman asks if there is anything else someone wants to say on this issue.

Yuhasz states that the value of fees [is that it] does give a steady income. The problem with [it] is that it is another fee. If there is some way and I would suggest it, but not sure if it would fly, but on the implementation of a fee, provide a cut in the county tax rate in year one and then going forward, the commissioners would be responsible for raising taxes for other reasons.

Sassaman states that we would be happy to recommend that to you. The other advantage of the fee is that it reaches a broader base. That reaches those entities that do not pay taxes.

Pollock states that to do the simple math from last year it is about 1.5 pennies on the tax rate raises the amount to finance the convenience centers. So if you extrapolate it was 1.5 cents it was \$35 on the \$250,000 house.

Yuhasz states that structuring the fee so that folks that have a hauling service pay less of a fee should be looked at because presumably they would have less an impact on the convenience centers. If you prove you have a hauler, you get your fee reduced.

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Pollock states that Chatham does it. They have a differential that is commensurate with the tipping fee. The only part that people with a private hauler don't impact is the tipping fee. They calculate the differential as a cost somewhere close to a ton.

Wilson states that someone could get a contract and then cancel.

Yuhasz states that it doesn't seem to be reasonable to charge the same fee to municipal residents that would be charged to those who aren't carrying that kind of cost. As Jan states that capital cost ought to be a property tax.

Sassaman states that those capital items add to the assets of the County.

Pollock states that the evaluation of that model can be done. And city people can buy a permit,

Yuhasz states that I'd rather go the other way.

Hauser states that this has been a great discussion. When I look at the budget for the convenience centers, there are three parts and I can't tell what all of it is but there is about \$600,000 of the \$2 million for disposal and some for hauling and collection. When talking about the convenience centers you are only talking about collection. When the Orange County \$50/ton landfill is closed and go to the Durham \$42/ton transfer station it is cheaper and if there are ways to take the decentralization concept further and take Bradshaw Quarry and Ferguson, to Alamance where it's \$38 per ton and Walnut Grove up to Person County to the commercial landfill for \$25/ton especially if there is a compactor wouldn't that create a cheaper operating model? Once we don't have the landfill to fund anymore we should look at the economics of the other facilities where private haulers take trash out of the county to their own transfer station rather than our landfill. So at least ask the question.

Wilson states that there really is no flow control now except with the municipalities and that was voluntary. The privates can take it wherever they want. The majority of the privately collected trash, over half of it goes outside the county. If Republic picks up around Hillsborough they almost certainly take it to Piedmont. What you say makes sense if you can increase the carrying capacity either by compaction or by hauling larger loads because it costs the same to haul 20 yards as 40 yards. It is theoretically possible to take Walnut Grove to Piedmont it is a little further but a lower tip fee could be negotiated than Durham's. Alamance there would have to be some political action because Alamance now -- the politics of taking Orange County waste is not good and hasn't been good for a few years. While that concept looks good on paper, they have not agreed to take it.

Hauser states that it would only be a little bit, not the whole county's trash.

Wilson states that it might be 1,500 to 2,000 tons/year.

Yuhasz states that there is a question of how much Alamance trash gets put in Bradshaw Quarry anyway.

Wilson states that it used to be a lot but it is a lot less now. We have really clamped down on that.

Sassaman states that if no one has anything else on this we will move on.

#### **4. Programs/Services Updates**

*Transfer Station Site Search* Wilson states that at everyone's place there a draft of the resolution of the transfer station decision of the BOCC. The things that are associated with that is now what happens to the municipal-county partnership, the interlocal agreement, are there still some areas we can continue to work together on or should the arrangement be dissolved and everyone do their own thing. Embedded in that is the future of the SWAB that was created by the interlocal agreement. While conceptually it seems wise and very necessary to have a voluntary, mostly public board to discuss some of these issues like tonight it could be done in a number of ways. That is some of the issues discussed by the county managers and the county attorneys and then the governing boards of the other jurisdictions as they examine the interlocal agreement and determine what is in their best interest. Short term the benefits may be rather small. Long-term it will be rather significant. In ten years when some new technology comes about, the county's 11,500 tons of waste is a period at the end of a sentence on a contract. With everyone's waste combined then there is more leverage in participating in whatever project that might be. We are all in this waste reduction boat together. It is a joint effort. We do have joint solid waste reduction programs and consolidated education and outreach of these programs. Were this goes I don't know. You can convey your thoughts on how this should go with your own jurisdictions.

Sassaman states that there seems to be two different issues - one is garbage and the other is recycling. Overlaying that is the fact that the waste reduction goals are county goals and the standards and the way we are evaluated by the State are on a county basis.

Wilson concurs. Included with the interlocal agreement also is the provision that the county develops on behalf of the towns with their cooperation the three-year plan and updates.

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Sassaman states that that is something that the SWAB has put a lot of effort into but the current place where we are which is the Durham waste transfer station leaves us with a state where with regard to MSW its every jurisdiction for itself.

Wilson states that we are at 50% waste reduction and we are going to 61% the other 11% is in the garbage component. You have to get it out the garbage component and if it is diffused and going everywhere it makes it a little more challenging to squeeze those recyclables out of the garbage. We will have to figure out a new paradigm to deal with that.

*Bradshaw Quarry SWCC* Wilson states that beginning February 1 there will be new hours and schedule for the remainder of this year. What will happen to it or any of the other sites next year is still to be determined through the budget process.

Smith states that I would like to know three months from now if there is much alteration or much lesser tonnage picked up there than last year.

Thomas states that it may be a little difficult because Bradshaw is picked up in combination with High Rock.

Wilson states that we will make an educated guess on that.

Yuhasz states that Bradshaw Quarry will remain open for the rest of this year, we are not going to have any new super centers generated for next year so we need to begin looking sooner rather than later how we are going to operate the convenience centers for the next year given the structure they are now. I don't want to be looking at June saying we have to close Bradshaw Quarry again anyway. I'd like to get some information about what kind of scheme we can have for the next couple of years until we get some of these things in place that will allow us to know what to expect.

Wilson states that the obvious way to maintain or reduce next year's budget is to change some of the other sites to less than the current schedule perhaps down to two days. These are larger more central sites, they are the two busiest. The way to save money is to haul less or reduce personnel. Or you could go into services the biggest chunk of money other than garbage is the bulkies. It depends on what the manager is looking for.

Sassaman asks if bulkies would be reduced at all the sites.

Wilson replies that would be the only way to save.

Spire states that if it is closed two days and people at High Rock know that it will only be open on Monday and Saturday, everyone has been fairly clear that they want

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a weekend day. One of the two days will have to be Saturday. If you know that your local center will be open on Monday and you only have MSW the majority of the people will drive to Ferguson Rd. on Tuesday to get rid of it. They will save it until Saturday. The hauling will not go away; it will shift to different days.

Yuhasz states that but there will be lower personnel cost because there won't be the sites open as often.

Spire states that if every site is open on Saturday there is only one person that can be split in two, you can't split that half a man. It's not as clear cut when you start scheduling.

Yuhasz states that we may want to start looking at having some centers open on Sundays. I also think that this would begin to model what we are talking about having the major centers and having some of the smaller centers not open as often.

Pollock states that the human capital element becomes important in terms of the relationship between the people that work the centers and the ones that use them and keeping people whole in this environment, keeping their benefits for example. I don't want to lose sight that these guys are the lowest paid workers that Orange County has. Every time we do this kind of stuff we put more pressure on them. It is phenomenal what they do for \$10.50 hour.

Yuhasz states that I don't want to suggest that we look at them in that line but the fact is if we have to cut dollars, we have to cut dollars someplace. If we can't cut hauling costs, the only other opportunity is to cut personnel cost.

Pollock replies that we can if we compact, but we have to invest in the compactors.

Yuhasz states that that is part of what we are looking at.

*BOCC February 2 Meeting* Wilson states that as of now it is tentatively scheduled to give the commissioners an update on the work of the work group and the status of where they are. That is in preparation for essentially doing the same thing at the assembly of governments (AOG) in March. The AOG is a joint meeting of the elected officials of the three towns and the county. They have two meetings a year and it has been requested that solid waste planning be on that AOG meeting.

*Rigid Plastics Collection* Wilson states that we will inform the commissioners next week of the plans to implement rigid plastics recycling at all the drop-off sites February 1. The manager is reviewing the memo.

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Taylor states that this is the same program that was reported on in September with the hopes of doing the Fall implementation that didn't work. It is a drop-off based program to accept non-bottle plastics -- #2 and #5. It is commonly items like tubs, buckets and other non-bottle plastics that people have in their households. We are only accepting those two kinds of plastics because those are the ones that there is a ready market for. That market only exists when they are separate from other types of plastics. We originally budgeted to turn this project on last year but it was put on hold. We revised the program by seeking a grant from the State to help with the purchase of the containers.

Smith asks for more explanation of rigid plastics.

Taylor states that the common items are any kind of tub or cup that a food product comes in – cottage cheese, sour cream, and yogurt. Others things are a 5 gallon bucket, a kitty litter bucket, kiddie pools, recycling bin, laundry basket, some toys, flower pots, trash cans, etc. If the material is mostly garbage the program may not be successful but we are counting on the public to read and digest the education materials we are going to put out.

*2008-09 State Waste Reduction Rate for Orange County* Pollock states that every year a calculation of the waste reduction rate is done and is pushed against the State calculation. The good news is that it looks like we will be at 54% waste reduction this year [meaning 08-09]. A variety of factors lead to that. Consumption was down but more in garbage than in recycling, so we had more recycling by contrast. The numbers will be formally announced by the State on Friday.

*Other* None

5. **Board Member Comments** Guild states that Lou Cercio from Georgia Tech is willing to come and speak for travel expenses. I'm thinking it would be in the \$400 range.

Wilson states that I would need to get the OK from the manager.

Guild moves that we fund Lou Cercio travel expenses to come talk to us about plasma arc technology.

Vickers 2nd with an amendment that there should be a cap on the amount.

Guild accepts.

Vote 3 for 1 against. Motion carries.

6. **Other Business** None

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Smith moves to adjourn.

Vickers 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Adjourn: 9:00 pm  
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