

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 21, 2009**

**DATE:** May 21, 2009

**TIME:** 9:30 am

**PLACE:** Hamilton County Public Health  
250 William Howard Taft Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

**PRESENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Bernie Fiedeldey, Township Representative, Vice Chair  
Wright Gwyn, General Interest Member  
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative  
Joe Maas, Generator Representative  
Dave Meyer, Public Member  
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair  
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member

**Staff**

Michelle Balz, Community Outreach Coordinator  
Holly Christmann, Solid Waste Program Manager  
Sarah Dowers, Public Relations Coordinator  
Ken Edgell, Environmental Administrative Coordinator  
Keebler Holley, Education Specialist  
Ali Khodadad, Operations Coordinator  
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk  
Catherine Walsh, Program Specialist

**Others in Attendance**

Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health  
Linda Holterhoff, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful  
Dean Walden, Village of Lockland

**ABSENT:** **Policy Committee Members**

Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 9:38 am and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Portune stated that he was in Washington, DC earlier in the week as part of the National Coalition of Local Elected Officials who are urging Congress in the drafting of environmental legislation and discussed specific examples. Mr. Portune stated that he met with a representative from the Forestry Service and they were very impressed with Hamilton County's Urban Timber Program. The Forestry Service representative suggested Hamilton County submit a grant to the Forestry Service.

Mr. Portune stated that the Forestry Service was also looking into innovative programming with respect to organics.

Mr. Portune also discussed a new program that the EPA is developing called "Showcase Communities" in which 20 – 30 communities can submit grant applications for innovative, creative projects such as energy efficiency, recycling, green building, purchasing, design, etc.

A brief discussion ensued on sustainability.

**2. CLERK'S REPORT**

**A. Approval of Minutes – March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the minutes as drafted. Mr. Ingram moved to approve the March 19<sup>th</sup> minutes. Mr. Fiedeldey seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**B. Additions to the Agenda**

Mr. Ingram asked to speak about the proposed C&DD fee increase under Agenda item 5B.

**3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS**

Ms. Christmann stated that Attachment B included revenue information for the first quarter of 2009. Revenue was down 12%, or \$83,000, compared to 2008.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District received a revenue check yesterday and passed out updated revenue information which reflected a revenue reduction of 13%, or \$125,000, when compared to the same time period in 2008.

Ms. Christmann stated that if this trend continued, the District could anticipate a \$375,000 revenue reduction for 2009.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the recession and revenues.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that quite often, yardwaste enters the landfill and was very happy that the District had a record compost bin sale and that it was unfortunate that the District does not receive recycling credit from Ohio EPA. Ms. Christmann stated that 1,603

compost bins were sold. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that composting has been gaining momentum over the years.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that the District does have the carry-over to use if need be versus reducing programming.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the revenue report. Mr. Fiedeldey moved; Mr. Maas seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**4. HEALTH DEPARTMENTS UPDATE**

Ms. Christmann stated that Attachment C summarized the first quarter, 2009 activities from the Hamilton County Public Health and the Cincinnati Health Department and provided a recap of activities.

Mr. Ingram asked for more comparisons and details regarding activities in the summaries (i.e. how much trash was removed from the abated open dumps?, What community the open dumps were located?)

A brief discussion ensued regarding odors at Rumpke Landfill. Mr. Ingram stated that Hamilton County Public Health has been continuing to meet with Colerain Township, Rumpke, and Environmental Services regarding odors at Rumpke.

Mr. Ingram stated that he wanted to publically recognize Rumpke in taking the suggestions that came out of the meetings and implementing them. Mr. Ingram stated that Rumpke sent him a letter outlining what capital improvements would be implemented to deal with the odor issues. Mr. Ingram thanked Mr. Riddle.

Mr. DeJonckheere stated that the summary stated that 19 odor complaints from Rumpke were received during the first quarter and that there were only 10.

**5. POLICY ITEMS**

**A. Litter Collection Program**

Mr. Portune stated that in 2008, the Committee authorized a pilot program which was a partnership between 3CDC, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, and the District. This program utilizes Sheriff's and inmates to clean up litter in Over-the-Rhine and 16 other communities in Hamilton County (eight in the City of Cincinnati and eight outside the city limits).

Mr. Portune discussed the success of the program and stated that the County Commissioners unanimously supported the program.

Mr. Portune stated that although this program was successful, it was a pilot and due to revenue reductions, the Staff Recommendation was to not continue funding the demonstration litter collection program.

In meeting with Ms. Christmann, Mr. Portune suggested the following: The District not discontinue the involvement in the program but instead, the District modify its support and participation by: 1) Eliminating the litter education element which is approximately \$7,000 and 2) Agreeing to continue District support for the remainder of 2009 with the understanding that this issue will be revisited in respect to revenues and budget. If revenues continue to decrease, then the idea would be to discontinue the financial support of the program.

If however, the District is climbing out of the recession or if revenue increases, the Policy Committee would then decide on the continuance of the program.

Mr. Portune stated that he would urge the continuance of the program with Keep Cincinnati Beautiful and 3CDC at that point. Mr. Portune stated that this information was shared with the BOCC yesterday and there is a very strong sentiment by the Board to want to continue this program.

Mr. Portune stated that Board members expressed an understanding of what the District's budget considerations were and felt that this seemed to be a fair and reasonable approach.

Mr. Portune stated that this approach would also "put everybody on notice" that there is the potential that the District's investment would be discontinued.

Mr. Portune suggested committing to the investment of this program through the end of calendar year 2009 through a modified way; to withdraw the litter education component of \$7,000.

Ms. Christmann stated that while the District appreciates litter prevention education, the District is cutting back on its programs and a way must be found to make the litter program as cost effective as possible. Providing funding for litter removal and litter enforcement through the end of 2009 would cost the District approximately \$15,000.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff would recommend program reductions to compensate for the \$15,000 at the July meeting. Mr. Portune stated that the Policy Committee should be included in the decision of programmatic cuts or to dipping into the carry-over. Mr. Portune suggested an emergency meeting if this issue cannot wait until the July meeting. Mr. Riddle requested a cost per ton of the collected litter.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Staff recommendation of not continuing the funding of the program.

Mr. Portune suggested tabling this item until the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. At the July meeting the Committee will be asked to vote on the “compromise proposal” of eliminating the litter education component and providing an additional \$15,000 to fund the program until the end of the year.

Mr. Portune stated that at the July meeting, the Committee will also be able to compare program reductions Staff would have provided.

The Committee concurred tabling this issue until the July meeting.

**B. State Tipping Fee Increase on Municipal Solid Waste**

Ms. Christmann stated that in Governor’s Strickland’s proposed budget was a increase to State tipping fees on municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction & demolition debris (C&DD).

Ms. Christmann stated that the proposed increase for MSW will be \$1.25/ton which will create the new fee as \$4.75/ton.

Ms. Christmann stated that the proposed increase for C&DD initially was \$2.70/ton and in the House version, it was reduced by \$0.45. The per ton fee is currently before the Senate for discussion.

Ms. Christmann stated that this fee increase would assist in removing departments from the general fund due to Ohio’s current budget situation. Ms. Christmann stated that collected fees will be used to fund various OEPA programs and ODNR’s Soil & Water Conservation Districts (this funding would funnel to local soil & water conservation districts).

Mr. Ingram stated that the local health departments are charged with enforcement of C&DD facilities and that if there is going to be a fee increase, based on the needs, \$.50 of the \$2.45 should come to Hamilton County Public Health or the program responsibility should be assigned to the Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

A brief discussion ensued pertaining to Mr. Ingram’s comment.

Mr. Portune stated that he was in support of the Staff Recommendation and suggested that the correspondence that is sent to Hamilton County’s local legislative delegation have both his and Ms. Christmann’s signatures.

Ms. Christmann stated that the Staff Recommendation was focused only on MSW increase of \$1.25/ton and not the C&DD fee increase.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion for Staff to take the position as expressed in the Manager's Memo and recommendation. Below is the information that was presented in the Manager's Memo for the May 21, 2009 Policy Committee Meeting:

*To the degree that it does not negatively impact other interests of the County, the District should ensure that the State legislature is informed of the impacts of the State fee increase on Hamilton County. Staff recommends that correspondence be sent to Hamilton County's local legislative delegation detailing the following points:*

- 1. While the District is cognizant of the budget constraints faced by the State of Ohio and commends the State for taking measures to reduce operating costs, the District is concerned about the local impact this fee increase will have on communities and businesses.*
- 2. It should be recognized that higher State fees enhance the likelihood that waste, currently being disposed at in-District landfills, will begin to flow out-of-State. This would have revenue implications to the District.*
- 3. As previously stated, the District is aware of the State's budget constraints, however, the District is concerned that the State is funding programs with tipping fees that are not directly related to solid waste reduction of solid waste facilities. The District is concerned that a precedent is being set to fund State programs whose functions are not directly related to solid waste with landfill tipping fees.*

Mr. Meyer moved; Mr. Ingram seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**C. District Priority Grant**

Ms. Christmann stated that this was the annual agenda item in which the Committee was asked to set the priorities for the areas that the District will be seeking grant applications for the District Priority Grants.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff recommends setting the priorities for 2010 as: organics diversion, new, permanent residential drop-offs, and recycling in public areas.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to authorize Staff to proceed as indicated. Mr. Fiedeldey moved; Mr. Maas seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**D. Plan Update Consultant**

Ms. Christmann stated that the District solicited a request for proposals for consultants for the Plan Update. Ms. Christmann thanked Ms. Balz, Mr. Gwyn and Mr. Meyer for being on the interviewing committee. Three firms were interviewed: GT Environmental, Malcolm Pirnie, and SCS Engineers.

Ms. Christmann stated that through evaluations and much discussion, the interviewing committee is recommending contracting with GT Environmental.

Mr. Meyer and Mr. Gwyn briefly commented on the reasons for recommending GT Environmental.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve moving forward with GT Environmental and directed Staff to negotiate a contract. Mr. Fiedeldey moved. Mr. Meyer seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**7. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Ms. Christmann stated that Michelle Balz was named Hamilton County Employee of the Year. Ms. Balz thanked everyone and stated that she loved working at the District and really appreciated the recognition.

The rest of the Information/Discussion items: First Quarter Performance Measures, House Bill 1, Compost Bin Sale were accepted as written.

**8. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Revenue Discussion (program reductions, litter program)

**9. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Meyer asked for an update on the organics committee. Ms. Christmann stated that the committee might meet again in June.

Ms. Christmann stated that Findlay Market received a grant from the District to conduct on-site foodwaste composting. It was found that four regulatory agencies had to be involved to do such a small scale operation which is delaying the project. Ms. Christmann stated that Ohio EPA may be brought in to discuss how their composting regulations may be able to be streamlined to allow for smaller generators to compost on site.

**10. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments at this time.

**11. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

The next regularly scheduled Policy Committee meeting will be **Thursday, July 16, 2009, 9:30 am** at Hamilton County Public Health, 250 William Howard Taft Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:09 am.