

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
July 16, 2009**

DATE: July 16, 2009

TIME: 9:30 am

PLACE: Hamilton County Public Health
250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

PRESENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Wright Gwyn, General Interest Member
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality 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
Irene Hart, Environmental Permit Technician
Keebler Holley, Education Specialist
Ali Khodadad, Operations Coordinator
Cher Mohring, Education Assistant
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk

Others in Attendance

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

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Bernie Fiedeldej, Township Representative, Vice Chair
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative
Joe Maas, Generator Representative

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 9:35 am and welcomed everyone.

2. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2009

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the minutes as drafted. Mr. Meyer moved to approve the May 21, 2009 minutes. Ms. Magness seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Additions to the Agenda

Mr. Meyer asked for an update on the schedule for the Plan Update. Ms. Christmann stated that the District has an approved contract with GT Environmental. GT Environmental will attend the September meeting to introduce themselves and to present a rough timeline of the Plan Update process.

Ms. Magness briefed everyone on the Southwest Ohio Local Governments Solid Waste Consortium which involves local governments trying to develop a consortium to collectively bid out waste services. Ms. Magness discussed the progress to date. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff was currently involved with the consortium. Mr. Portune asked that if any issues arise that Staff keep the Committee informed. Ms. Christmann concurred.

3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS

Ms. Christmann stated that revenue continues to decline. Through May, revenue is down roughly \$166,000, or approximately 13.4%, when compared to 2008.

Mr. Riddle stated that Rumpke had a customer in which their tonnage decreased but now was back up into full production which could increase District revenue. A brief discussion ensued regarding this customer's tonnage.

A. District Revenue and Expenditure Scenarios

Mr. Portune started the discussion by asking if the revenue reduction was due to the recession or changes in business practices at Rumpke or another landfill facility.

Ms. Christmann stated that as mentioned at previous meetings, Staff has contacted other Ohio solid waste districts and they are all seeing 20 – 25% revenue declines. The declines started last fall when the economy started going down. Ms. Christmann stated that her thought was that the majority of the reduction was due to economic reasons and it was extremely hard to predict when the country would recover.

Ms. Christmann stated that in light of not being able to predict when the recession would end, Staff is preparing for no revenue increases over the next few years. Staff is planning on \$2.5 million in revenue/year through 2013, which is a 17% reduction as compared to 2007 and 2008.

Ms. Christmann stated that in the 2010 budget, there were no major program modifications however, in planning for \$2.5 million in revenue, there will be some potentially significant program reductions in 2011. Ms. Christmann stated that this decision should be made by the Policy Committee in early 2010 so proper notification can be given to all involved parties.

Ms. Christmann stated that Attachment C contained three revenue scenarios and explained how the reductions would affect the carry-over/eight months operating, and budget. The three scenarios include status quo, reducing the budget by \$100,000 in 2011, and reducing the budget by \$230,000 in 2011. Ms. Christmann discussed each scenario in detail.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff was already looking at ways to increase program efficiency, for example, eliminating latex paint in next year's HHW program. Ms. Christmann gave other examples for the HHW program such as sending correspondence to residents that used the program multiple times and seeking sponsorships. Other examples were provided for the computer program such as researching permanent outlets from the private sector. There was a brief discussion on charging residents a nominal fee for services.

Ms. Magness stated that in Columbus, Ohio Mulch was operating all their yardwaste drop off sites at no cost and requested that the District make sure they were on the bid list. Ms. Christmann concurred. Ms. Christmann stated that the yardwaste contract came in lower for 2009 compared to past years because one bidder was no longer charging a processing fee to compost the material.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the TV portion of the computer program. Mr. Portune requested Staff compile a report outlining tons collected, number of participants, number of TVs collected, etc.

Ms. Magness requested the report include (for HHW and electronics) how many residents participated by community. Ms. Christmann stated that this could be done by zip code but some zip codes overlap into different communities. Ms. Magness stated that once this information is obtained, the District could request the help of the individual community to help offset some of the costs.

A brief discussion ensued regarding previous recessions and the revenue. Mr. Portune stated that no action would be taken today on the revenue scenarios but it should be closely monitored and perhaps Policy direction will be given to Staff at the next meeting.

4. POLICY ITEMS

A. Litter Collection Program

Ms. Christmann stated that this item was discussed and tabled at the May meeting. Ms. Christmann stated that over the past year, the District has provided \$40,000 to fund a litter collection program provided by the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office to collect litter, in partnership with Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, 3CDC, and the City of Cincinnati. The City of Cincinnati and 3CDC also each contributed \$40,000 to fund the program.

Ms. Christmann stated that District funding helped offset the total program cost and also provided funding for litter clean up outside the City, in eight political jurisdictions which are Golf Manor, Delhi Township, Colerain Township, Green Township, Forest Park, Mt. Healthy, Lincoln Heights, and Cheviot. Overall, the program has been well received and Staff has no issues with the merits of the program.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff's concern with funding this program was declining revenues. In addition, the Governor is supposed to sign the budget today which will include the municipal solid waste fee increase. At this time, Staff does not know what impact this will have on waste flows. Due to these reasons, Staff is not recommending funding the continuation of the litter program.

Ms. Christmann stated that outlined in the Manager's Memo were the same options discussed at the May meeting:

Option 1 – Approve Funding of Litter Collection Program through the end of 2009. This option would include funding for the litter collection through December 31, 2009, with the understanding that this issue will be revisited in respect to revenues and budget. If revenues continue to decrease, then the program would be discontinued. If revenues increase, the Policy Committee would make a decision on continuing the program past 2009. This option provides no funding for litter education. The cost to continue the program through December is approximately \$15,000.

Option 2 – Discontinue Funding of the Litter Collection as of July 31, 2009. This option would discontinue the litter collection program on July 31, 2009, which is the date the demonstration program is scheduled to end.

District staff has concerns about the financial impacts of continuing the litter collection program. While Staff is not disputing the merits of this program, Staff is not recommending that the litter collection program continue past the demonstration year for the following reasons:

1. For the first five months of 2009, revenues have declined approximately 13.4% compared to 2008. Given the reduction in revenue, Staff does not want to add another program at this time.
2. With the proposed State tipping fee increase, it is unknown what the impact will be on revenues. Again, with this uncertainty, Staff does not believe now is the time to extend a pilot program.
3. The following program reductions are recommended if the litter collection program continues through the end of the year: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing, Recycling at Work, Waste Assessments, Tire Collection Program, and Public Recycling. The total reduction is equal to approximately \$15,000 which is the cost to continue the litter program through the end of the year.

Ms. Christmann stated that the participating communities were notified of this potential change and stated that she received comments from the following communities and one west side resident: Cheviot, Golf Manor, and the west side resident would like to see the program continue; Green Township and Forest Park both understand the budget concerns and are okay with ending the program.

Mr. Portune asked if Ms. Holterhoff wanted to speak before the Committee discussed the program.

Ms. Holterhoff stated that she would be disappointed to see the program end. Ms. Holterhoff stated that the cost/ton to pick up litter is one of the largest due to an intense amount of labor and that prevention programs are very important.

Ms. Holterhoff discussed the ramifications to the program if District funding was lost (i.e. one Sheriff working eight months out of the year then increasing to two in April/May in Over-the-Rhine only.)

Ms. Holterhoff stated that the District was very focused on recycling and waste reduction because it is written in the Plan but other Ohio districts do embrace litter collection as part of their Plan.

Mr. Portune asked if the Committee wanted to vote on the litter issue today since three members were absent. Mr. Meyer stated that regardless of voting on the issue today or conducting a special meeting, he would be reluctant to support continuing the program. Mr. Gwyn stated that in terms of voting today or at a later date, either would be fine with him but he had reservations about the program and briefly discussed them. Ms. Magness stated that she was sensitive to litter issues and wanted to see litter prevention occur but it was not quite aligned with the vision of the District. Ms. Magness stated that she did not want to see other District programs reduced to fund the litter program especially without the education component. Ms. Magness also stated that she felt the enforcement efforts were minimal in looking at

number of citations issued (9) and warning letters issued (109) in terms of the sustainability of the program and that volunteer groups could provide the pick up.

Ms. Holterhoff discussed the warning letters, sustainability, etc. in response to Ms. Magness' comments. Ms. Magness stated that she would like to see the business owners and residents take responsibility and would like to see more measurable goals reached that show that litter reduction efforts are sustainable. Mr. Portune stated that Ms. Magness raised a good point in terms of sustainability and further stated that regardless of members' views of the program, District funding was not to be permanent. This was intended to get something going in the hopes that individual communities could take ownership over the program.

Mr. Portune briefly discussed the origin of the program and stated that this program goes outside the mission of the District but from the Commissioner's perspective and some neighborhood representatives, this was the only way to have uniformed Sheriff Deputy's back on the streets, especially in Over-the-Rhine. Mr. Portune discussed the Sheriff's duties while on the street in terms of what District funding was providing.

Mr. Portune stated that it looked as though the Committee concurred that this issue should be taken up by the full Policy Committee and suggested that actions be taken by Staff to continue the program using the carry-over until the September meeting.

Ms. Magness stated that waiting until September would enable them to bring a case to the Committee on how this program could be more sustainable, education efforts, etc. Mr. Gwyn discussed his reservations on continuing the program and wanted to know what other efforts were being made in terms of seeking out other funding.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the beginning of the program and the reasons behind it being a county-wide program.

Ms. Holterhoff discussed examples of what KCB does in terms of sustainability, education, beautifying areas, etc. Mr. Portune suggested for Ms. Holterhoff put together correspondence and/or schedule meetings with Policy Committee members regarding sustainability, education, etc.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion that the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District continues its pro-rata financial support for the litter collection program at existing levels up to and including Thursday, September 17, 2009 to be funded out of District carry-over balance. Mr. Meyer moved; Ms. Magness seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Proposed 2010 Budget

Ms. Christmann stated that the proposed 2010 budget was included as Attachment E of the packet and all Policy Committee Members were sent this item a few weeks ago as well.

Ms. Christmann stated the proposed budget was \$2.83 million and there were no major changes as compared to last year's budget. The proposed 2010 budget is a 6% reduction as compared to 2009 and the District was projecting revenues to be \$2.5 million.

Ms. Christmann stated that the proposed 2010 budget does not include litter collection funding.

Ms. Portune asked how the proposed 2010 budget addressed wage/salary/benefit issues. Ms. Christmann stated that this budget as well as, the past three year's budgets, did not include any Staff salary increases. Ms. Christmann stated that the District was following the Board of County Commissioners personnel policies and the District does not foresee raises in 2010.

Mr. Meyer questioned reducing item #4 on page one of the budget briefing and stated that he had a hard time thinking about cutting training, computer upgrades, and subscriptions, which are means of staying abreast of everything. Mr. Meyer stated that this was a concern of his in terms of not giving employees the proper tools to do their job.

Ms. Christmann stated that the subscriptions being cut do not include any trade publications and gave examples of what was being cut.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff has spoke with the IT person and computer upgrades will not be an issue for 2010.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the recommended 2010 budget as indicated. Mr. Meyer moved; Ms. Magness seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Lifetime Achievement Award Presented to Rumpke

Ms. Christmann stated that William Rumpke, Sr. and his cousin and former business partner, Tom Rumpke, were presented with a lifetime achievement award from the Environmental Industry Association's Hall of Fame in June. This is an extremely high honor.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District sent a congratulatory letter to William Rumpke on this great honor.

Mr. Riddle discussed how nice the ceremony was which was held in Las Vegas.

B. District Program Receives NACo Award

Ms. Christmann stated that the District's Recycling at Work Program received the National Association of Counties achievement award. Ms. Christmann stated this program helps businesses start recycling programs.

Ms. Christmann congratulated Ms. Balz and Ms. Walsh for receiving this award and stated that they both oversee the program. Ms. Christmann stated that both of them have done a tremendous job starting over 100 recycling programs since the inception of the program in 2007.

6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Litter Collection Program
- GT Environmental, the District's Plan Update Consultant, will be at the September meeting to discuss the Plan process.
- New Technologies - Ms. Christmann stated that Staff would be attending a meeting in Dayton that will discuss new technologies, including Plasma Arc. Ms. Christmann stated that she would provide the Committee an update.
- Mr. Gwyn asked if an update on the food composting program was available. Ms. Christmann stated that she, Hamilton County Development Corporation, and Zoning had a meeting with an interested company about potentially siting a food waste recovery program in Hamilton County. Potential locations are currently being researched. Any new developments will be discussed at the next meeting.
- If available, an update of the Solid Waste Consortium
- Recap of the Storm Debris Clean Up

7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Gwyn complimented District Staff on their teamwork and the quality of information that is received.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

9. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

The next regularly scheduled Policy Committee meeting will be **Thursday, September 17, 2009, 9:30 am** at Hamilton County Public Health, 250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:15 am.