

**HAMILTON COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
MANAGER'S MEMORANDUM**

DATE: March 1, 2006
TO: District Policy Committee Members
FROM: Jeffrey W. Aluotto, Solid Waste Manager
Cory R. Chadwick, Director

I. Introduction/Opening Comments

NOTICE: This memo is for the meeting to be held on March 9, 2006. This meeting will be held at 2:00 pm at Hamilton County Environmental Services, 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

Policy Committee Information (Agendas, Manager's Memos, Minutes, etc.) now available on the District's Website at www.hamiltoncountyclecycling.org.

II. Clerk's Report/Additions to the Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes – Minutes from the November 10, 2005 and January 12, 2006 Policy Committee meetings are included as Attachment A.

B. Additions to the Agenda

Please contact Susan Schumacher at 513-946-7734 or susan.schumacher@hamilton-co.org if you have items to add to the agenda.

III. Public Hearing Regarding District Plan Update – 2:00 p.m.

On February 3rd, the District began the formal public comment period relating to the update of the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management Plan. Notifications and information regarding the Plan Update were sent to the following stakeholders:

- Administrative staff of every political subdivision in Hamilton County.
- Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners.
- All waste haulers operating in Hamilton County.
- Every environmental group which has asked to be a part of our notification process.
- 23 local chambers of commerce.
- 65 of the largest industrial/commercial/institutional solid waste generators in Hamilton County.
- Several trade associations which have expressed interest in District activities.
- Each surrounding solid waste management district.
- An e-mail list of over 100 interested parties including local government personnel, media contacts, industry representatives, State officials, etc.

In addition, copies of the Plan were available for viewing at seven branches of the Hamilton County Public Library System along with the Solid Waste Management District's office.

During this segment of the meeting, time will be reserved for interested parties to provide public comment on the District's Plan Update. This public comment will be prefaced by a brief presentation, from Staff, regarding the contents of the District Plan – specifically focusing on programs and changes from current operations (See attachment B).

IV. District Revenue Updates/Analysis

Included, as Attachment C, is a summary of the past five years in District revenues. Also included is a summary of tonnages exported out of State and a summary of total District waste generation over these years.

V. Policy Items

A. Plan Adoption

Over the past two years, the District has engaged in an intensive process relating to the update and re-write of its Solid Waste Management Plan. This process has involved significant outreach to public and private stakeholders including: Surveys to a wide variety of stakeholders (general public, political subdivisions, private sector, etc.), individual meetings with stakeholders, publicly available issue papers, information sessions and work sessions all designed to obtain and utilize public feedback relating to District programming.

The result of that process is a Plan document which differs incrementally, yet meaningfully, from the District's current Plan. Of specific note and importance are:

- The District's formal commitment to a permanent infrastructure for the collection of HHW.
- The annual prioritization of District grant funds to focus on issues of significant concern to the County's recycling infrastructure.
- The inclusion of an additional performance incentive in the District's Residential Recycling Incentive Grant Program.
- The District's commitment to programming for the collection and recycling of electronic equipment from Hamilton County residents.
- The inclusion of specific measures for determining whether or not a material change in circumstances would require modification to the Plan.
- The inclusion of a commitment to the development of a continuous improvement process for all District programs.

The changes identified above will provide the following benefits to the District:

- Improve the allocation of District resources in order to provide the most benefit to recycling in Hamilton County.
- Provide new services to address waste streams which are problematic to Hamilton County residents.

- Through its continuous improvement process, the District will be provided with the flexibility to manage and amend its programs in response to financial and programmatic performance measures. While wholesale changes to District programs may require a modification to the Plan, the continual improvement process will provide the District with the flexibility to make incremental changes, based on fact, without the need to formally modify the Plan.

Staff Recommendation: *District staff recommends that, presuming minimal or positive public comment, that the District Policy Committee proceed to adopt the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management Plan (See Attachment D). This would initiate the formal ratification process whereby the Plan would be delivered to Hamilton County political subdivisions for their consideration and approval.*

In the situation where there is substantial public comment, or questions, relating to substantive issues in the Plan, District staff would recommend that staff be provided 48 hours with which to analyze these comments and that the issue of Plan adoption be tabled until the District's meeting on March 16.

B. Legislative Issues (See Attachment E)

Recently, District staff made policy committee members aware of two legislative issues applicable to Ohio.

HB 505: This bill, sponsored by Representative Reinhard from Bucyrus, Ohio, seeks to ensure that Ohio adopts no environmental regulations which are “more stringent than their Federal counterparts”. While staff has not had the opportunity to completely evaluate this proposal, it would seem to set a troubling precedent for the ability of states and localities to act in their best interests relating to matters of environmental protection.

Mercury Proposal: Ohio EPA is currently seeking support and co-sponsors for introducing mercury legislation as indicated in Attachment E.

Staff Recommendation: *District staff would recommend that local partners be sought and that these partners jointly solicit support, for this proposal, from local legislators.*

C. Vision Statement (Item was Tabled from the Sept. 1 Meeting)

The District Policy Committee met on Wednesday August 17 to discuss a draft vision statement for the District. The following draft vision statement was constructed:

The Hamilton County Solid Waste District provides ethical environmental leadership to equitably promote the public good through innovative and responsible strategies leading to

Option 1: a society that generates zero waste OR
Option 2: the management of all waste as a resource.

The Policy Committee determined that this vision statement would be discussed on September 1st. At that time, the Committee will determine which of the above options will formally be

integrated into the statement. The Policy Committee will also vote on whether or not to proceed with a formal strategic planning initiative.

The Policy Committee asked staff for more detailed information relating to what may be involved, from a resource and time perspective, in a strategic planning initiative.

Time Involved: While there is no set standard for the amount of time which must be committed to a strategic planning process, it is estimated that a planning process for the District would take approximately 12 -15 months. This timeline considers the breadth of a typical strategic planning process, considers that this would be the DPC's first strategic plan, and includes time for the committee to:

- Finalize organizational vision statement
- Discuss and formalize District mission statement
- Discuss and formalize organizational value statements
- Determine which stakeholders (internal and external) need to be involved with process and extent of desired involvement
- Engage stakeholders/Solicit involvement
- Determine key strategic issues which the organization will consider addressing
- Discuss/set organizational goals relating to each issue and perform analysis on status of organization toward accomplishing those goals
- Perform gap analysis to determine what must be done to meet pre-determined goals
- Determine objectives which need to be implemented in order to accomplish pre-determined goals
- Discuss and develop individual program strategies/action plan for meeting objectives

The above bullets represent an outline of one model of strategic planning. Obviously, accomplishing the above would entail an additional number of meetings for Policy Committee members. The above model could entail approximately 1 or 2 additional work-session style meetings per month.

Consultant: Whether or not to employ a consultant to assist with the process has pros and cons. On the pro side, it may be helpful to have an independent third party available to guide the process. However, this will also lead to additional costs. It is difficult to assess the possible costs a consultant may charge without having a better idea of the scope of the project. For example, if the consultant were hired to guide the entire process, prepare documents, gather information, meet with stakeholders, etc. the cost would be much higher than if the consultant were simply hired to facilitate several sessions. Another issue to consider is that to the degree the planning process focused on goals, objectives and strategies that were unrelated to solid waste and recycling, it would be unlikely that District funds could be used toward this initiative.

Staff would estimate \$5,000 - \$75,000 depending upon the scope of consultant involvement. These costs are based on past quotes from consultants on facilitation and planning services.

Relationship With Solid Waste Management Plan: The strategic plan being discussed by the Policy Committee would constitute a vision for the organization as a whole. However, it

must be remembered that the District recently conducted an extensive process for writing and updating the District's solid waste management plan. If the Policy Committee decides to engage in a strategic planning process with the thoughts of expanding its role, it may wish to think of the Solid Waste Management Plan as one, legally required, component of the mission of the organization. Staff would recommend against taking actions during the strategic planning process that would fundamentally alter the solid waste plan which has been updated in coordination with district communities and stakeholders.

Zero Waste: The current draft vision statement includes the reference to zero waste. There are certainly benefits to including such a goal as part of the District's vision. However, committee members should understand that the phrase zero waste is a "lightning rod" in the environmental industry which may cause negative reactions from some District stakeholders. It is also possible that the current Solid Waste Management Plan may not be completely compatible with the idea of Zero Waste. As such, staff would recommend that, rather than alter the current Plan, the Policy Committee develop a plan for proceeding with Zero Waste programming as a long term initiative for the County.

Staff Recommendation: *No recommendation at this time as it is thought the Committee would like to re-fresh their discussion on this issue prior to determining a course of action.*

VI. Information/Discussion Items

A. Recycling of Urban Wood Waste

District staff has contacted several local communities and has worked with Sam Sherrill and Nancy Sunnenberg to answer questions relating to the establishment of an urban wood waste recycling program in Hamilton County.

District staff believes that there is promise for pursuing this project as a market development initiative. However, there are still several issues which need to be addressed prior to staff making a recommendation on proceeding with the project. Some of these issues include:

- Logistics – Who will operate and have ownership of the program/equipment? Where will it be based? How will the program coordinate work with municipalities, townships and others to access material?
- Marketing – What are the local marketing opportunities for the wood and how will those be pursued? What sort of revenue is possible? Will operation be self-sustaining? How will local foresters and public works departments be marketed to?
- Operational – Will anything else (equipment, labor) be needed in order to initiate this program?

District staff will continue to work with Mr. Sherrill and Ms. Sunnenberg to help craft a comprehensive proposal which can be brought before the Policy Committee.

B. Solid Waste Plan Ratification

For Policy Committee members information, the following is a summary of the Plan ratification procedure.

- Following the public hearing, the District has 30 days to deliver copies of the Plan Update to every political subdivision in Hamilton County as well as to several other groups of stakeholders stipulated in the Ohio Revised Code.
- Following their receipt of the Plan Update, each political subdivision will have 90 days in which to formally approve or disapprove of the Plan update through an action of their legislative body. Assuming the public hearing takes place on March 9, this 90 day period will expire on or before July 2. In actuality it will probably expire in mid June as the District will not wait thirty days before delivering the Plan to each political subdivision (The 90 day period officially begins once the political subdivision receives the Plan Update).
- 60% of the population of the County, through a vote of various legislative bodies, must approve of the Plan in order for it to be ratified. According to statute, this must include approval by Cincinnati – as the District’s largest municipality. (If a political subdivision fails to vote on the Plan during the specified timeframe, this is considered a “NO” vote).
- At its July meeting, the District Policy Committee will pass a resolution certifying the results of the ratification process after which the District will forward the Plan to OEPA for final approval. This will be prior to the submittal deadline of July 20, 2006. OEPA then has 90 days to approve the Plan.

C. HHW Drop-off Opening

The District will be opening its Household Hazardous Waste collection centers on March 18, 2006 and will operate them through October 31, 2006. Hours of operation are:

Spring Grove Location

Tuesday: 2 p.m – 7 p.m.

Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Cinti-Dayton Road Location

Wednesday: 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.

D. Community Development/Market Development Grants

Staff will provide an update on the process to submit grant applications in response to ODNR’s revised Community Development and Market Development Grant proposal solicitations.

VII. Tentative Future Agenda Items

VIII. Policy Committee Members' Comments

IX. Public Comments

X. Upcoming District Meetings

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2006 at 2 pm. The meeting will be held at Environmental Services, 250 William Howard Taft Road.

XI. Adjournment (Target Time: 3:30 pm)