

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
March 9, 2006**

**DATE:** March 9, 2006

**TIME:** 2:00 pm

**PLACE:** Hamilton County Environmental Services  
250 William Howard Taft Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

**PRESENT:** Policy Committee Members

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative  
Dr. Carl Evert, General Interest Member  
Bernie Fiedeldej, Township Representative  
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County General Health District Representative  
Deborah Holston, Representative of Largest Municipality  
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair  
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member  
Glenn Welling, Public Member

DOES Staff

Jeff Aluotto, Solid Waste Program Manager  
Cory Chadwick, Director  
Holly Christmann, Assistant Program Manager  
Sarah Dowers, Public Affairs Coordinator  
Ken Edgell, Environmental Administrative Coordinator  
Ali Khodadad, Operations Coordinator  
Sue Magness, Education Specialist  
Susan Schumacher, Administrative Secretary, Clerk

Others In Attendance

Tom Braun, City of Cheviot  
Nee Fong Chin, Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office  
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County General Health District  
Brian DePeel, Environmental Enterprises, Inc.  
Tiffany Hardy, City of Cincinnati  
Alice Kennedy, Resident  
Karen Luken, RW Beck  
Steve Neal, City of Cheviot  
Bob Orr, CSI Waste  
Dana Storts, Warren County Solid Waste District Manager  
Nancy Sunnenberg, Urban Timber

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm.

**II. CLERK'S REPORT**

**A. Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2005 and January 12, 2006**

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the November 10, 2005 minutes. Mr. Ingram moved; Mr. DiPuccio seconded. All who were present at that meeting were in favor and the minutes were approved. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the January 12, 2006 minutes. Ms. Holston moved; Mr. Welling seconded. All who were present at that meeting were in favor and the minutes were approved.

**B. Additions/Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Aluotto stated that the only addition was the Special Assistance Grant for the City of Cheviot in which the Policy Committee had already been informed.

### **III. PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE DISTRICT PLAN UPDATE/PLAN ADOPTION**

Mr. Portune officially opened the public hearing and asked Mr. Aluotto if he had any introductory comments. Mr. Aluotto gave a verbal summary of the Ratification Process and the Plan Update. The highlights/changes of the Plan Update are as follows: 1) Formal commitment for a permanent HHW collection system; 2) Establish a guiding philosophy for the Reduction Assistance Grant program (grant name will be changed to the District Priority Grant); 3) The Residential Recycling Incentive (RRI) Grant Program will be changed to a performance based grant versus an entitlement grant; 4) Committing to e-waste recycling; 5) Listing of specific measures that will be used to determine whether or not there was a material change in circumstances; 6) A formal continuous improvement process (measures for each program).

Mr. Aluotto discussed the siting strategy that was included in the Plan Update. In past Plans, a siting strategy was included. In discussions with Ohio EPA, the District has been informed that if the District is not planning on siting a public facility within the next five years, then Ohio EPA does not want a siting strategy included in the Plan.

Mr. Aluotto stated that the Policy Committee was adamant that there were elements of the existing siting strategy that may not have complied with state or federal law; as such, the old siting strategy has been removed from the Plan Update. The Policy Committee debated removing the siting strategy during several of the work sessions and determined that the likelihood of the District siting a District-owned facility over the next five years was minimal and that the siting strategy should still be removed from the Plan Update. In the case that the District did find, three years from now, that a facility needed to be sited, things would have changed enough that this would be a material change in circumstances and the Plan would need to be re-written.

Mr. Aluotto stated that in summary, the Plan Update is an incremental change to the past Plan yet the incremental changes are substantial. Mr. Aluotto stated that the District found a way to incrementally change the Plan Update and, at the same time, upgrade the services that are provided making them more conducive for recycling in Hamilton County.

Mr. Aluotto stated that he received one comment and, if the Plan Update gets adopted today, that the Policy Committee does so with the inclusion of one addition based upon this comment. Mr. Aluotto stated that a resident reviewed the Plan Update and contacted him regarding the siting strategy. Included in the Plan Update, is a siting strategy description that makes reference to the fact that the District will rely on the Ohio EPA to carry out their formal role from a siting strategy/siting strategy guideline standpoint. The resident indicated that the Plan Update refers to the Ohio Revised Code/Ohio Administrative Code, however, most residents who read that will not know what that means. Staff will include in the Plan Update fact/guidance sheets from Ohio EPA so that anyone who reads that section will have a clear understanding of the ORC and OAC as it relates to the siting strategy. Mr. Aluotto recommended that those documents be included with the adoption of the Plan Update.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if District fees would increase within the next five years. Mr. Aluotto stated that the Plan Update called for a fee increase (\$1.20/\$2.40/\$1.20) in 2011 which is an additional change from the previous Plan and is the first fee increase since the District's establishment in 1989. Since 1989, the District has been at the State allowed minimum for fees which is \$1/\$2/\$1 fee structure.

Mr. Aluotto stated that in the past, there has been times that the Plan called for fee increases that were to go into place but got pushed back because they were not needed. It has always been a commitment by the District not to take for granted the fact that just because the Plan calls for a fee increase that it needs to happen. The District constantly looks for ways to reduce program costs and to use sound financial

management to avoid any fee increases and he expects the same commitment throughout the life of the Plan Update.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if the siting strategy currently in the Plan Update deals with EPA's criteria. Mr. Fiedeldey asked what would happen if someone wanted to site a facility. Mr. Aluotto stated that what he was saying was that the Plan Update will say is that the District, at this time, is not looking to site any public facilities as such we are not including a siting strategy and all facilities that are sited within Hamilton County will be held to the standards of the Ohio EPA and the code was referenced in the Update. The comment that the resident submitted to Mr. Aluotto was that a code was referenced but there is really not an explanation for that code so the District will include in the Update some references/explanations as to what the siting guidelines are.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if what Mr. Aluotto was saying was that Ohio EPA regulates the industry and they do not regulate the Plan. Mr. Aluotto stated that Ohio EPA regulates anyone who is looking to establish a solid waste facility. Mr. Fiedeldey asked, for example, if you wanted to put a solid waste facility in Blue Ash, and Blue Ash said no, it goes away? Mr. Aluotto stated that this was just the environmental guidelines relating to siting strategies.

Mr. Portune stated that he would entertain public comments at this point.

Ms. Storts introduced herself and stated that she respected and appreciated Mr. Aluotto as a colleague in this industry and it has been a pleasure working with him. Ms. Storts congratulated Mr. Aluotto.

Ms. Storts stated that Warren County just finished writing and ratifying their solid waste plan and it was approved March 4, 2005. Ms. Storts stated that based on the comments she was going to share, she did not expect the District to re-write the Plan but to take them into consideration.

Ms. Storts stated that the District is blessed and cursed with Rumpke's facility. The blessing being Rumpke is a fabulous facility but the District also has responsibility associated with that but it does give the District outstanding financial resources in order to provide services to residents, businesses, etc. in order to meet the mandates established by Ohio EPA. From what Ms. Storts has seen in the District's literature, some of the required standards are being exceeded.

Ms. Storts requested, as a consideration to a neighboring county, when one looks at fee increases, its like throwing a stone into a pond. Solid waste is regional; we are in a pond of solid waste and when one throws a stone and looks at increasing fees, that also affects the neighboring counties (Warren, Butler, Clermont, Indiana and Northern Kentucky). All the materials that are going into that facility are assessed that fee which, since Hamilton County is the host, are able to spend that in order to benefit residents.

Ms. Storts asked that when the District gets closer to the 2011 point to remember the ripple effect and try to keep the ripple effect to a minimum. Ms. Storts discussed Warren County's fee structure, where waste went, different partners, etc. and asked the District as they look at their programs, consider household hazardous waste. This is a program that the District is exceeding in the requirements of the state goal. Ms. Storts stated that if the District thinks this is an important program, in that the District wants to keep any environmental offenses or environmental problem materials out of that facility, is probably why the District decided to invest money in the program. Its also a fabulous program and residents just love it. Ms. Storts discussed her history in HHW programming.

Ms. Storts stated that if it was the District's true goal to keep this material out of the landfill, then maybe the District would want to look at allowing access by residents that are also served by Rumpke because

they are going to bring those materials to that facility. Ms. Storts mentioned Warren County's budget and spoke of what she tells her residents when asked about HHW disposal.

Ms. Storts stated that these were just thoughts and didn't know if it needs to change what is currently written in the Plan Update at this point in time. These are some things to consider as the District moves through this process in looking at materials that are coming into that facility, protecting that facility, providing services not only for Hamilton County but maybe services that the District thinks should be expanded.

Mr. Portune stated that this was an interesting thought and asked Ms. Storts what kind of volumes she experiences in Warren County in reference to HHW or if she had an idea what kind of volumes she is talking about. Ms. Storts stated that the average household generates a pound of HHW/year and there were approximately 50,000 households in Warren County. In 2001, Warren County conducted their last HHW program, they filled a semi tractor trailer with just paint. The materials they were more interested in was chlordane, DDT, gas/oil mixtures, etc.

Ms. Storts reiterated that this was just a thought and maybe limit the program to the "bad stuff" and not accept paint.

Mr. Portune stated that her comments were not something that needed to be acted on today and thanked Ms. Storts for being at the meeting to comment on the Plan Update.

Dr. Evert asked Ms. Storts to explain their funding. Ms. Storts stated that Warren County has a .50/ton generation fee and discussed her staff. Mr. DiPuccio stated that Ms. Storts specifically mentioned the HHW program; and he thinks its worth exploring. Mr. DiPuccio stated that if Warren and Hamilton Counties worked together, it would greatly reduce the cost of Warren County's program. Ms. Storts stated that Warren County didn't have any sort of HHW program besides answering questions on the phone.

Ms. Storts stated that not having an HHW program was one of the concerns Warren County faced when going through their planning process. Warren County businesses have over a 55% recycling rate and they told Warren County not to charge any more than absolutely necessary to run the District because businesses do not have access to those programs and they were adamant about this. Businesses stated that they understood that Warren County may have to take programs away from residents but they would rather see the District stay small and not increase businesses costs to dispose of waste. Warren County started with a \$4/ton generation fee and has gone through the Plan ratification process twice because when the higher fee was proposed, the City of Mason (Warren County's largest municipality) opposed the Plan because businesses were not supporting the higher fee.

Ms. Storts stated that Warren County was fine on curbside recycling and yardwaste, its just the HHW. Ms. Storts stated that just by Hamilton County having the permanent site available, she can send residents to Cincinnati-Dayton Road versus Spring Grove and EEI can charge them directly. Ms. Storts stated that she could already see the benefits and appreciates this benefit and she supports what Hamilton County is able to afford.

Ms. Storts stated that there are things happening anyway but this is something to think about. If the District really wants to keep the HHW out of this facility, maybe we need to look just beyond our own boundaries.

Ms. Storts thanked the Policy Committee.

Mr. Portune asked if anyone else was present that wished to speak. Since no one else wished to speak, Mr. Portune stated that the public comment period of the hearing was officially closed.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to close the public hearing and to adopt the Solid Waste Management District's Plan Update. Mr. Welling moved; Ms. Holston seconded. All were in favor. Mr. Portune stated that included as Attachment D of the Policy Packet was a resolution and by adopting the resolution would formalize the actions. Mr. Portune entertained a roll call vote on the resolution and stated that all those in favor of approving the adoption of District Plan Update 2006 – 2021 resolution number 2006-1 please indicate by saying "Aye." All were in favor and the resolution was adopted.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Aluotto to discuss the time line involved for the rest of the Plan Update process now that the Update was formally adopted by the Policy Committee. Mr. Aluotto stated that the Update will be delivered to clerks/administration of all 48 political subdivisions along with a briefing booklet. From the time the political subdivisions receive the Update, they have ninety days in which to act on the Plan by either formally approving or formally disapproving the Plan through a vote of the legislative body.

Mr. Aluotto stated that in order to have an approved, ratified Plan within ninety days, the District needs the approval through the legislative bodies of 60% of the population of the County. In addition, the District also needs a ratification resolution from the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners and an approval from the City of Cincinnati as the District's largest political subdivision. Mr. Ingram asked if the Plan was assumed ratified if the community does not vote. Mr. Aluotto stated that the Plan was assumed not ratified if they do not vote. In the past, the District has seen between 93 – 100% ratification rate. Mr. Portune asked Mr. Aluotto if this information will be tracked. Mr. Aluotto stated yes. A brief discussion ensued regarding the process.

Mr. Welling asked Mr. Aluotto if it would be helpful for Policy Committee members to avail themselves in this process. Mr. Aluotto stated yes and that typically the District will conduct between 10 – 12 formal presentations to communities. Mr. Portune stated that he wanted to make himself available to various political subdivisions during presentations. Mr. Aluotto stated that this would be appreciated. Mr. DiPuccio asked if Mr. Aluotto if he could just e-mail all members when a presentation is scheduled. Mr. Portune complimented Mr. Aluotto on notifying interested parties regarding the Plan being available.

Mr. Aluotto stated that he and Ms. Christmann gave a presentation on the Plan to the Vibrant Neighborhood and Public Works Committee of the City of Cincinnati a few nights ago and the Plan was extremely well received. A brief discussion ensued.

#### **IV. DISTRICT REVENUE REPORT**

Mr. Aluotto stated that Attachment C included a complete revenue analysis covering the past six years along with charts identifying disposal, recycling and waste generation data for Hamilton County, 2000 – 2004 that the Policy Committee had requested. The Committee briefly discussed the report. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the revenue report. Mr. Fiedeldej moved; Mr. Welling seconded. All were in favor the report was approved.

#### **V. POLICY ITEMS**

##### **A. Cheviot Grant Request**

Mr. Aluotto stated that the Policy Committee had been provided a detailed memo regarding Cheviot's grant request and that there was also a copy in front of them for reference.

Mr. Aluotto stated that the District had received correspondence from Cheviot that they had been looking at their yardwaste program. The City of Cheviot has a very comprehensive yardwaste program and they also collect their own refuse. Mr. Aluotto stated that staff had a meeting with Mr. Neal and Mr. Braun and discussed the situation facing their yardwaste program.

Mr. Aluotto stated that Cheviot currently has two refuse trucks that collect refuse and they also have a truck that collects yardwaste. Typically, in any municipal practice, the newer trucks collect refuse and the older ones collect yardwaste. Currently, Cheviot has a truck that is 14 years old and is “on its last leg” and Cheviot is looking to replace the truck to continue to provide yardwaste collection. By replacing the yardwaste truck, Cheviot is requesting a \$30,000 grant from the District to assist in purchasing a new refuse truck so the oldest refuse truck can be retired to collecting yardwaste only. Without the purchase of a new truck, Cheviot would be forced to cancel yardwaste collection.

Mr. Aluotto elaborated on the District’s Reduction Assistance Grants which do not come out until the Summer and that Cheviot’s budget is being prepared now. Mr. Aluotto also discussed several other special assistance grants that the District has funded over the years.

Mr. Aluotto stated that included in the Manager’s Memo was a recommendation to approve the special assistance grant and without that, there is a significant chance that Cheviot’s yardwaste program would end. Mr. Aluotto also discussed the fact that other communities are changing to co-mingling yardwaste. Cheviot has been one of the longest standing communities that has continued separate yardwaste collection and has never requested a special assistance grant from the District other than receiving the RRI funds.

Mr. Neal stated that the District pays for the yardwaste service at Kuliga Park which is located in Green Township. Since the District began separate yardwaste, although Cheviot has been doing this as well, Cheviot thinks that they should be eligible for some sort of incentive for continuing to do so. Mr. Neal stated that Mr. Aluotto stated that there was not such assistance available because the District offers different levels of grant funding.

Mr. Neal stated that he was here to request \$30,000. Mr. Neal stated that Cheviot’s residents love the program and discussed how the program worked. Mr. Neal stated that according to the District’s figures, Cheviot recycled approximately 300 cubic yards; Mr. Neal stated that he reported 720 cubic yards to the District.

Mr. Neal discussed the specifics of refuse trucks, the program, handed out pictures of trucks, etc. and stated that he did not want to end yardwaste pick-up.

The Policy Committee asked Mr. Neal questions such as if the yardwaste was composted, frequency of collection, drop-off program versus a pick-up program, fair market value/wholesale value/retail value of the old truck, etc.

The Policy Committee discussed specific criteria that Cheviot should abide by if the special assistance grant was awarded. After discussion, Mr. Portune entertained a motion that 1) approves a special yardwaste reduction assistance grant to the City of Cheviot in the amount of \$30,000 to facilitate their curbside yardwaste collection program; 2) that an agreement be reached in the connection with the execution of the grant between the District and the City of Cheviot; 3) that the City of Cheviot commit to continuing its curbside yardwaste collection program through a period of not less than 5 years; 4) and that the City exercise good faith efforts to increase the level of yardwaste that is collected; 5) that if the City’s curbside yardwaste collection program terminates in a period of time less than five years, that there be a prorated return on the District’s grant from the City of Cheviot.

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

**B. Legislative Issues**

Mr. Aluotto stated that included as Attachment E was information regarding House Bill 505 which was a bill, sponsored by Representative Reinhard, that seeks to ensure that Ohio adopts no environmental regulations which are “more stringent than their Federal counterparts”. Mr. Aluotto stated that he did not think this bill had moved through the General Assembly as of today’s date.

Mr. Aluotto stated also included in Attachment E was information regarding the “mercury proposal” which means that Ohio EPA is currently seeking support and co-sponsors for introducing legislation. Mr. Aluotto stated that District staff was seeking Policy Committee approval so that local partners could be sought and that these partners would jointly solicit support, for this proposal, from local legislators. This proposal would ban mercury in schools, novelty items, thermometers, and thermostats.

Dr. Evert asked if there was a list available that outlined some of the novelty items that would be present on such a list and stated that some sneakers that had lights contained mercury. Mr. Aluotto stated that staff would check with Ohio EPA.

Mr. Portune stated that the District should continue to monitor and track legislation and generally prepare and to be aware and it may be prudent to engage members of the local legislative delegation to try to “test the temperature” in terms of where they are on these issues without necessarily taking a position. Mr. Portune instructed staff to keep the Policy Committee informed on issues such as this.

The Policy Committee briefly discussed HB 505.

**C. Vision Statement (Tabled from the Sept. 1, 2005 Meeting)**

The Policy Committee discussed whether or not this item should be discussed or tabled until the next meeting. After discussion, Mr. Portune stated that he would entertain a motion to either vote on the issue or table the issue due to the Policy Committee not being prepared to vote. Dr. Evert moved to table this item so that the Committee could re-familiarize themselves with this issue. Mr. DiPuccio seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**VI. INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Portune stated that in respect to informational item A, the Recycling of Urban Wood Waste that Staff should continue to move forward in trying to piece together a proposal. Mr. Aluotto stated that Staff has had several good meetings with Mr. Sherrill and Ms. Sunnenberg regarding this issue. The discussion has been very promising in terms of doing something really innovative. Though Staff, Mr. Sherrill and Ms. Sunnenberg feel that every piece of the grant does not need to be pieced together, at this point there are some major questions outstanding, not the least of which “who has ownership of this grant request”. Staff is trying to help those parties craft together pieces of a grant request that would get those basic questions answered and to the degree Staff can do this, hopefully come back with a proposal for the Policy Committee.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee already discussed the Solid Waste Plan Ratification which was informational item B.

Mr. Portune briefly discussed informational item C which was the HHW Drop-Off Opening and asked if there was going to be any sort of presentation. Mr. Aluotto stated that the District had a press conference scheduled for March 15 at 2 pm.

**V. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no future agenda items at this time.

**VI. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Portune, on behalf of the Policy Committee, congratulated Mr. Aluotto on his new position as Assistant County Administrator of the Public Services Department. Mr. Portune and the Committee stated their admiration for him and wished him good luck.

Mr. Ingram asked Mr. Chadwick what process was going to be used in replacing Mr. Aluotto. Mr. Chadwick stated that the standard process would be used and explained this process. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he would like to see this process expedited due to the Plan Update being in the ratification process.

Mr. Aluotto thanked the Policy Committee members for all of their support over the years and stated that they have been a fantastic board to work with due to them being very actively involved. Mr. Aluotto also thanked his Staff for their work and stated that they were great people in that they were so passionate about their jobs. Mr. Aluotto stated that he was very appreciative of the opportunity he has before him and he was happy that he will still be in contact with the Solid Waste District.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments at this time.

**VIII. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

Regular Policy Committee Meeting - Thursday, May 11, 2006 at Hamilton County Environmental Services, 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219 at 2:00 pm.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 4:09 pm.