

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
July 19, 2007**

DATE: July 19, 2007

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

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

PRESENT: **Policy Committee Members**

Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative
Bernie Fiedeldey, Township Representative, Vice Chair
Tiffaney Hardy, Representative of Largest Municipality
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County General Health District Representative
Dave Meyer, Public Member
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member

Staff

Michelle Balz, Program Specialist
Holly Christmann, Solid Waste 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

Brad Bonham, Wyoming Resident
Barrett Brunsman, Cincinnati Enquirer
Nee Fong Chin, Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office
Emily Davies, City of Cincinnati Department of Public Services
Chuck DeJonekheere, Hamilton County General Health District
Chris Dole, Crosby Township Trustee
Dave Fossaluzza, City of St. Bernard
Mike Lippert, City of Wyoming
Sam Sherrill, University of Cincinnati

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**

Glenn Welling, General Interest Member

1.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Fiedeldey called the meeting to order at 9:40 am. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that the Committee would start with the informational items and Mr. Portune would be arriving momentarily.

Mr. Portune acknowledged and congratulated Mr. Riddle and Rumpke for the tremendous announcement and opening of the methane gas production facility that is providing 7% of the energy that Duke Energy is making available. This facility is very consistent with the mission of the District.

Mr. Riddle stated that there have been some industries and other districts that have had some challenge in getting the State to agree that there should be some recycling credits. Perhaps with some movement that Rumpke has had as a result of the grand opening with some of the other representatives from State politics as well and it might be a good time to make a run at that again. Mr. Riddle stated that there is a certain amount of tonnage that can be equated to the gas being removed and that recycling benefit is not credited to the District.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann what she thought of this. Ms. Christmann stated that she would ask the State. Mr. Riddle stated that it would take some concerted effort with the legislature to make that happen and that Rumpke has asked several times but he did not think that there had been an organized effort.

Mr. Portune suggested that rather than embarking on an organized effort, could Ms. Christmann detail what an organized effort would entail and this could be discussed at the next meeting. A brief discussion ensued on the recycling of the methane gas.

2.

CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – May 17, 2007 & June 12, 2007

Mr. Portune suggested that the Committee vote on the minutes individually. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the May 17, 2007 minutes. Ms. Hardy moved; Mr. Fiedeldey seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the June 12, 2007 minutes. Mr. Meyer moved; Mr. DiPuccio seconded; Mr. Fiedeldey abstained. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Additions to the Agenda

Under Information/Discussion Items, Rumpke's award, CSI Transfer Station, and the November 15 Policy Committee Meeting were added to the agenda.

3.

DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS

Mr. Portune stated that if he was reading the analysis correctly, it looked as though revenues had increased (approximately \$150,000) compared to last year. Mr. Portune asked Mr. Riddle if he thought this trend was going to continue. Mr. Riddle stated that 68% of the District's revenue was coming from out-of-district and he thought this trend would continue.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Riddle if out-of-district was due to more contracts and more providers coming in to the landfill or with existing contracts from out-of-district. Mr. Riddle stated that Rumpke is seeing a great deal of development in Butler and Warren counties and the industrial waste is consistent with what they have had in the past. There is no large increase, in fact, there is probably some decrease with some of the high unit weight material that they receive and gave an example.

A brief discussion regarding the out-of-district trend.

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

4.

POLICY ITEMS

A. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

Mr. Portune stated that as everyone recalled, a special Policy Committee meeting was conducted on June 12, 2007 to discuss the impact of confirmation that the EAB has arrived in Hamilton County. Following that meeting, Ms. Christmann put together a task force to consider a variety of issues and consequences that are now created for the County and District.

Mr. Portune stated the short and long term impact of that, and wanted to publicly thank all of the members of the Task Force that participated in that meeting on June 28, 2007 and also, any additional work and effort they have provided since that date. Mr. Portune stated that in Attachment C of the Manager's Memo is a list of all participants.

Mr. Portune stated that also included in Attachment C was a variety of options identified by the Task Force for the Committee to consider.

Ms. Christmann stated the Task Force identified three options: education and outreach, consumer protection, and wood waste management.

Ms. Christmann stated in regards to public education, the District could potentially provide outreach on general EAB information (discouraging the movement of firewood and assisting home owners in locating a certified arborist). Ms. Christmann stated that all of these issues are briefly

outlined in the public outreach outline which is attached to the back of the report.

Ms. Christmann stated that OSU Extension, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and Ohio Department of Agriculture already have marketing materials and fact sheets available. The District would then use what these groups already have available and showed the Committee examples. Ms. Christmann stated that the only cost associated with this type of undertaking would be Staff time (~40 hours) and miscellaneous mailing costs.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District has strong partners in this and great relationships have been developed with OSU Extension, ODNR, and ODA. The District would partner with these organizations with anything that was to be done. The benefit of this is the District has a lot of local contacts with communities and local contacts with the media.

Ms. Christmann stated that another option was consumer protection. The District could discourage unscrupulous behavior by giving out information to homeowners on how to hire a certified arborist and information regarding this is already available. Ms. Christmann stated that educating residents would be one of the best ways to discourage this fraudulent behavior. Residents can ask three simple questions: 1) Do you have liability insurance? 2) Do you have worker's compensation? If so, have the arborist show the resident and 3) Are you certified by the International Society of Arboriculture?

Ms. Christmann stated that another option discussed was to encourage municipalities to pass fraud or tree care ordinances. Ms. Christmann discussed other states besides Ohio that have a tree licensing program and explained the program.

Ms. Christmann asked that with both options, public education and consumer protection, if the Committee could discuss if this fell under the allowable uses of District funds. Ms. Christmann stated that the majority of the cost would be Staff time (approximately 40 hours for education and about the same for consumer protection). Ms. Christmann stated that Staff would work with the Prosecutor's Office if the District decided to inform communities about tree care ordinances.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if this issue was at the State level. Ms. Christmann stated that if this fraudulent behavior is a State-wide issue, it might prove beneficial to involve the state legislatures.

Ms. Christmann stated that the Task Force spent a lot of time on "how will the wood waste be managed?" The Task Force discussed tub grinding, saw

milling, and developing markets for Ash. There was consensus that the District should not purchase a tub grinder and discussed some of the issues such as maintenance and liability.

Ms. Christmann stated that maybe a better option for the District would be to provide assistance to communities to help them jointly contract for tub grinding services. Currently, there are communities with annual contracts for tub grinding and in the future, more will have to provide this service once Ash trees start to come down. Ms. Christmann stated that jointly contracting may help reduce the overall cost for communities.

Ms. Christmann stated that the Task Force discussed the possibility of the District working with Hamilton County's Shared Services committee to move this option forward.

Ms. Christmann stated the Task Force also discussed the possibility of the District helping to develop a program where Ash would be used to its highest and best use. This would fall very nicely within the vision statement of the District. Ms. Christmann stated that in some cases, highest and best use would be tub grinding or chipping the material. In other cases, it could be making it into useable lumber.

Ms. Christmann highlighted some of the key questions that came up during the Task Force meeting regarding a sawmill operation as outlined in Attachment C.

Ms. Christmann stated that in the interest of using Ash to its highest and best use, she was recommending that a very small working group be developed. This group would include private saw mill operators, OSU Extension, ODNR, Mr. Sherrill, Cincinnati Park Board, and USDA Forest Service. This group would work on a plan that will include marketing and processing the material.

Mr. Portune stated that the Policy Committee was for the Solid Waste District and asked Ms. Chin if the District could expend funds on public education and consumer protection. Ms. Chin stated that she would need to research it and once the request was at the Prosecutor's Office, it would be put on the fast track.

Mr. Portune stated that if the District could not spend funds on public education and consumer protection, these recommendations could be referred to the Board of County Commissioners and the Commissioners could inform the local legislative delegation, as well as, the Attorney General and the Governor.

Mr. Portune stated that regarding managing the wood waste, there was no question that this was within the District's role. Ms. Chin agreed.

Mr. Ingram stated that he did not think the saw mills would be interested in trees below 10-12" in diameter and he saw this as a two prong issue. Some of the wood will have to go for chipping which would be the highest and best use. Mr. Ingram asked if this was the approach the Task Force was looking. Ms. Christmann stated that the Task Force realized that this will be multi-pronged. When the Task Force discussed jointly contracting for tub grinding services, it was realized that there will be a need for some of this material to be grinded.

Mr. Portune stated that on June 25, the First Suburbs Consortium was present in a joint meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. This notion of shared services is an issue on the front and center elements for conversation with the Consortium. Mr. Portune stated that he thought it would be appropriate to raise this issue at that meeting. Mr. Portune stated that the Consortium would be informed that the District was willing to work collaboratively with the Consortium in talking about how various jurisdictions can share in contracting for this kind of service.

Mr. Portune suggested that Ms. Christmann schedule this issue as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Competition and Efficiency Committee that is also discussing shared services.

Mr. Meyer asked for clarification regarding Ms. Christmann participating in the Task Force. Mr. Portune stated that in reference to public education and consumer protection, a Prosecutor's Opinion is required before any Staff time can be expended. As a District, caution should be taken prior to receiving the opinion. Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann to circulate the opinion to members if it is received before the next meeting.

Mr. DiPuccio asked to see the wording for the request prior to it being sent to the Prosecutor's Office. Ms. Christmann agreed.

Mr. Portune suggested to Ms. Christmann that regarding joint tub grinding services, to send a letter to all jurisdictions to let them know that this is what the District is considering. A brief discussion ensued regarding the Shared Services Committee.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if the Staff sending a letter to communities was duplicate of what the District and the City Park Board have already done regarding the survey that was sent. Ms. Christmann stated the survey was sent prior to being quarantined. About half of the communities responded that they would be interested in jointly contracting for services. Ms.

Christmann stated that she thought the District should talk with all of the political jurisdictions again to see there is additional interest.

Mr. Portune stated that the Task Force has discussed that one of the services that would be appropriate for the District to provide is assistance in the collaboration of jointly contracting. Mr. DiPuccio suggested to not only contact communities but to also contact the Cincinnati Park Board and other area parks, etc. Mr. DiPuccio also suggested to contact trade associations to ask for suggestions on how to proceed with joint contracting.

Mr. Portune stated that regarding the sawmill operation, organizing a small group would be appropriate to obtain answers to the questions outlined on page 3 of Attachment C. At the next meeting, this issue can be discussed in greater detail. Mr. Portune stated that he would like the small group to render an opinion on if the sawmill path is chosen, what kind of volume is expected and what sort of markets are available?

Mr. Ingram asked if anyone knew the capacity of the existing sawmills in this region or would the District need to invest in a portable saw mill? Ms. Christmann stated that this would be found out by contacting the private sector sawmills. Mr. Portune discussed prior discussions the Policy Committee had regarding a proposal for the District to purchase a portable saw mill for urban timber.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that a lot of thought needs to be put into the potential purchase of a sawmill.

Mr. DiPuccio asked why hasn't the private sector stepped in and done urban wood and what would it take for the private sector to step in? Mr. DiPuccio stated that he was very concerned how far the District is involved with the saw mill operation and again asked the question of why the private sector was not involved; probably because it is not profitable for them. Mr. DiPuccio stated that although the questions listed in the Staff Report were good, he thought that they were a little premature and wondered why it was not being done now. Technically, it could be done but from a business basis it probably does not make sense so maybe the question becomes, where the District could step in is, could the District do something to tweak the business to make it worthwhile for the private sector or does the District need to step in, in some role to, as Ms. Christmann stated, to push this, and he thinks it will be a relatively small part of the wood waste to put the wood to its highest use.

Mr. DiPuccio and Mr. Ingram discussed specifics.

Mr. Portune suggested that Ms. Christmann redistribute the secondary materials study done by R.W. Beck and gave examples of what the report contained and also told the story of how the original idea of a portable saw mill started.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee does not have a recommendation to purchase a portable saw mill. At such time the Committee might, it will need to be justifiable as a District expense. Mr. Portune stated that it was probable that rather than chipping up all of the Ash waste, that there will be a portion of it that is susceptible to being put to a better use. Mr. Portune stated that he thinks it is legitimate to assess how best that can happen and what the proper role is for the District including the expenditure of District proceeds.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he was not disagreeing with Mr. Portune but he liked the idea of a small committee. Mr. DiPuccio gave examples of how the private sector has stepped in over the years (computer recycling and paint recycling) and if some of his questions would have been asked, then the District would have got where they are a lot sooner and a lot quicker. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he was not saying that he does not think that it is potentially or ultimately the District's goal and it may be purchasing a saw mill or it may be contracting it out. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thought research should be done up front to make sure the District gets the best bang for its buck and the program has the best chance of being successful.

Mr. Fiedeldey gave an example of when he had trees cut down and stated that the tree service does not take the tree and the fact that the tree does not go into the landfill; it is absorbed by residents i.e. firewood. Mr. Fiedeldey stated that this issue is temporary; unlike computers which is an on-going business that will probably grow.

Mr. Meyer asked about a timeline; how much volume and when? If the EAB moves ¼ mile/year, how many trees will be expected in year one, year ten and asked if it was a twenty year project? It may be that it ends up being firewood because there is not enough volume generated. Mr. Meyer stated the timeline or some kind of projection should be the first step.

Ms. Christmann stated that she wanted to let the Committee know that the Ohio Department of Agriculture believes another infestation has been identified within the City of Cincinnati but it has not been confirmed.

Ms. Christmann stated that in addressing Mr. Fiedeldey's comments regarding this only being temporary and the fact that the District is considering the purchase of a saw mill; when the saw mill idea first originated, it was just focused on Oak, Maple, Walnut and other trees that were coming down. Even though the Ash trees may be gone in 20 years,

the District will have the option of using urban wood waste to a higher and better use. Mr. Fiedeldej stated that it still goes back to how much actual wood is there and also transportation costs may make it cost prohibitive.

Mr. DiPuccio suggested a few names for the small committee and stated that he would like to participate.

Mr. Portune invited Mr. Sherrill to speak at the podium. Mr. Sherrill stated that there were two different types of saw mills. A stationary mill that is either a large ban mill or it has a large circular saw blade which costs about \$2,000-\$3,000. One of the reasons that saw mills are reluctant to accept urban trees is that if the blade hits concrete or metal, it is a disaster. On the other hand, the transportable saw mill has a twenty dollar blade.

Mr. Sherrill stated that he did not understand the discussion of the cutting of the tree ten feet above the ground. Ms. Christmann stated that this is what one mill said; that they would be willing to take urban Ash as long as they worked with the tree company so the tree could be cut high enough in order to minimize the nails, etc.

Mr. Sherrill stated that he has been in this area for over ten years. He worked with a gentleman in Newtown and they only lost 2-3 blades to concrete or metal. Each blade only costs \$20. Usually, what will happen is that one will hit a rusty nail and it will dull the blade, it gets re-sharpened and you keep going. To go up ten feet is eliminating most valuable part of the log.

Mr. Sherrill stated that the Committee asked how much wood there was. He urges that the Committee think in terms of all species of hardwood in the area because the EAB will come and go but the trees are here. Mr. Sherrill stated that a colleague of his at Michigan State University conducted the first ever saw log content estimate of the urban forest that surrounds Detroit, Lansing, and Ann Arbor. His colleague specifically looked at the urban trees to see what the saw log content was. Mr. Sherrill discussed the process and stated that the dimension of the tree was calculated to see what the potential value was.

Mr. Sherrill stated that in the Detroit, Lansing, and Ann Arbor areas, there were accessible 235 million board feet of hardwood lumber in the standing trees. Mr. Sherrill stated that he has looked at Cincinnati and a survey similar to the Michigan one has not been conducted.

Mr. Sherrill stated that he has looked at the canopy cover and used that as a proved measure of the number of trees in the Greater Cincinnati area. In the Detroit area, they covered 6,500 square miles and the comparable area in Cincinnati is 4,900 square miles but Cincinnati has a greater canopy

cover than Detroit. Mr. Sherrill stated that his estimate, using the canopy cover as a proven measure, was that our area probably contained 3.5 – 4 million board feet of usable and accessible lumber in the standing urban forest in Greater Cincinnati. Mr. Sherrill discussed the different kind of hard wood trees in this area.

Mr. Ingram asked how much Ash was worth per board foot. Mr. Sherrill stated that he did not know. Mr. Sherrill stated that it was a hardwood; the market report, the one based in Memphis, is \$1/board foot. Mr. Sherrill stated that the other thing one could sell Ash for is railroad ties. Mr. Sherrill stated that he contacted the Executive Director of the Railroad Tie Association of America and asked if Ash would make good railroad ties. The Director stated that they would make excellent ones and that they were interested. Mr. Sherrill stated that there are 3,200 railroad ties per mile.

Mr. Portune thanked Mr. Sherrill for his helpful information.

Mr. Portune stated that Ms. Christmann could create the small working group to address all of the questions and also stated that he agreed with Mr. DiPuccio's suggestion of naming the Committee the "Urban Wood Committee" that will deal with the Ash issue. Mr. Portune reminded the Committee that there is still the other issue of a portable saw mill which is how this was first brought up.

Mr. Portune stated that Ms. Christmann could participate in the Urban Wood Committee in terms of discussing the shared services, joint contracting issues by consent, and the other issues will be determined after a legal opinion is received.

B. 2008 Budget Process

Ms. Christmann stated that this item was an update and she wanted to let the Committee know that Staff was currently preparing the 2008 budget and in early August all members will receive a budget briefing packet that will be voted on at the September 20, 2007 Policy Committee meeting.

Ms. Christmann stated that some costs will be increasing. Personnel costs, which include salary and benefits, is increasing roughly \$30,000 in 2008 which is approximately 3%. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff is working on reducing program costs with having the goal of having a balanced budget by 2010.

5. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Christmann stated that the Committee will be undertaking a strategic planning initiative starting this fall. Management Partners, Inc. is the contractor that has been chosen and the contract is currently being reviewed at the Prosecutor's Office. Ms. Christmann stated that once the contract is in place, she will meet with Management Partners and a timeline will be developed for this process.

Ms. Christmann stated that a key component is the one day strategic planning session that will include all of the Policy Committee members. Prior to that meeting, Management Partners will be contacting each Policy Committee member to interview them briefly so that they can have a good background on each member's view of the District, goals, etc.

Ms. Christmann stated that after the strategic planning session, Management Partners will work with Staff to prepare a report that summarizes the strategic planning session and a draft action plan will be developed from the summary report for implementing the recommendations from the planning session.

Ms. Christmann stated that she hoped to conduct the initial planning session in early fall.

A brief question/answer session ensued regarding the contract.

B. Solid Waste District in the News

Ms. Christmann stated that over the past year, the District has been focusing on trying to get more media attention for District programs. An idea generated by Mr. DiPuccio was to keep track of how often the media ran stories about District programs. Attachment D of the Policy Packet is the tracking sheet which was started in April, 2007. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff will keep this sheet updated and continue to inform the Committee.

C. Public Recycling Program

Ms. Christmann stated that as mentioned a few months ago, the District started a new program in 2006. The District loans out public recycling containers to communities and community groups. Ms. Christmann pointed out a sample that was in the meeting room.

Ms. Christmann stated that in 2006, nine festivals used the containers and so far in 2007, seventeen community groups have borrowed the containers. All this has occurred without any marketing or advertising and gave an example of how word was spread.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District provides the containers at no charge but the group is required to sign a short contract stating that if the container is lost or damaged, they are required to pay the District the cost of the container.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District is hoping to have the containers at bigger festivals each year.

Mr. DiPuccio stated how much he liked this program.

D. Rumpke Award

Ms. Christmann congratulated Rumpke for an award they received from the Solid Waste Association of North America. They received the bronze award in the category of landfill management. Mr. Riddle stated that he thought that Rumpke has really put forward the effort, the financial resources, and made a commitment to bring the operation to state-of-the-art.

E. CSI Transfer Station

Ms. Christmann stated CSI, which is a subsidiary of Republic Waste, was having an open house to celebrate the opening of their transfer station in Evendale on August 2, 2007.

Mr. DiPuccio asked Ms. Christmann to contact CSI to see if they could project how many tons of waste will be leaving Hamilton County. Mr. Ingram stated that they were permitted at 1,000 tons per day. A brief discussion ensued regarding transfer stations.

F. November 15 Policy Committee Meeting

Ms. Christmann stated that a Policy Committee meeting is scheduled on November 15 which is the same day as the annual District award luncheon. Ms. Christmann stated that she was recommending to reschedule this meeting.

After discussion, the Committee concurred to have the meeting on the same day as the luncheon in the afternoon at the Mill Race Lodge.

6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Update on the Emerald Ash Borer
- Recycling credit for Methane Gas?

7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. DiPuccio asked if Staff has received a Prosecutor's Opinion on the Creative Outdoor Advertising questions the Committee had. Ms. Christmann stated no and that she was hoping to have it within the next few weeks.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if Staff had met with the City of Cincinnati regarding their interest in the Creative Outdoor Advertising program. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff has met with several members of City Staff (Public Works, Purchasing, Architects Office, Transportation). Ms. Christmann stated that they were all very interested in pursuing this. The City is waiting to see if the District will be contracting for that.

Mr. Portune asked if the City was considering the possibility of revisiting the curbside garbage can program. Ms. Hardy stated that the Department of Transportation & Engineering was looking at the technical aspects to make sure the bins will follow any of the street right-a-way clearances, etc.

Ms. Hardy introduced Ms. Davies and stated that she was a student at Northern Kentucky University and stated that she would be the City's environmental intern for the Department of Public Services from now until November. Ms. Hardy stated that Ms. Davies would be helping with the recycling program and two other environmental issues within the Department.

Mr. DiPuccio asked about the Office of Environmental Quality. Ms. Hardy stated that it was a different entity and the new director started July 1. Ms. Hardy stated that she would like to introduce the director to the Committee. Ms. Hardy gave a brief background about the director.

Ms. Hardy stated that the Department of Public Services also had a new director, Andrew Glenn, and stated that she would like to introduce him to the Committee as well. Ms. Hardy gave a brief background about Mr. Glenn.

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 20, 2007 at 9:30 am** at Hamilton County Environmental Services.

10. ADJOURNMENT (Target Time – 11:00 am)

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