

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HAMILTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
March 20, 2008**

DATE: March 20, 2008

TIME: 9:30 am

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
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative
Dave Meyer, Public Member
Todd Portune, County Commissioner, Chair
Larry Riddle, Ex-Officio Member
Glenn Welling, General Interest Member

Staff

Michelle Balz, Program Specialist
Cory Chadwick, Director
Holly Christmann, Solid Waste Program Manager
Sarah Dowers, Public Affairs Coordinator
Ali Khodadad, Operations Coordinator
Sue Magness, Education Specialist
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk

Others in Attendance

Nee Fong Chin, Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health
Edward Fisher, Hamilton County Park District
Dave Fossaluzza, City of St. Bernard
Bob Orr, CSI
Sam Sherrill, University of Cincinnati
Nancy Sunnenberg, Urban Timber
Jack Sutton, Hamilton County Park District
Tom Turchiano, Rumpke
Mike Wiedmann, City of St. Bernard

ABSENT: Policy Committee Members

Joe Charlton, Back-Up for Tiffaney Hardy, Largest Municipality Representative
Tiffaney Hardy, Representative of Largest Municipality

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 9:48 am and welcomed everyone.

2. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2008

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the January 17, 2008 minutes. Mr. Ingram moved; Mr. Meyer seconded. Mr. DiPuccio, Mr. Welling, and Mr. Fiedeldey abstained. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Additions to the Agenda

- Mr. Portune stated that although residents could recycle their CFLs at the household hazardous waste program, the District could look into partnering with stores that sell the lights for residents to recycle them there.
- Litter pick-up program - Mr. Portune stated that he was approached by Keep Cincinnati Beautiful to reinstitute the litter pick up program in Over-the-Rhine. Two thirds of the money is available and KCB has approached the District for the other one third.
- RecycleBank – Potentially expanding the jurisdictions that will participate in the pilot program.
- RecycleBank grant update
- Creative Outdoor Advertising update. Ms. Christmann stated that the District received one Expression of Interest which was Creative Outdoor Advertising. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff was working with Purchasing to review to make sure they meet all the requirements.

3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS

Ms. Christmann stated that Attachment B had three sets of information regarding District revenue and explained each set. Ms. Christmann stated that overall, comparing 2006 to 2007, revenue was up approximately \$200,000 and tonnages were up roughly 100,000 with the reason being an increase in out-of-district waste.

Ms. Christmann stated in comparing just January 2007 against January 2008, revenue was down \$31,000 due to a decrease of out-of-district waste. Ms. Christmann stated that it was important to note that the average January revenue has been approximately \$228,000 and January 2008 was above that average at \$239,672.20.

Ms. Christmann discussed the third attachment which was revenue and tonnages by quarter from 2004 – 2007.

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

4. POLICY ITEMS

A. Request for District Funding for Urban Timber Study

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff was requested to bring this proposal to the Policy Committee. A proposal was submitted by Mr. Sam Sherrill and is included as Attachment C.

Ms. Christmann stated that a grant was submitted by the Cincinnati Park Board Foundation to the US Department of Agriculture to request funds to identify outlets for urban trees, to raise awareness for using urban trees as useable lumber, and to develop a business plan, as well as, identifying saw mill operators and kilns in the area to have an all encompassing wood waste utilization program.

Ms. Christmann stated that as part of the scope of that project, the District was approached as a potential funding partner for the urban timber survey. The goal of which would be to estimate the type, amount, quantity, and accessibility of the trees in Hamilton County's urban forest. This would include both public and private tree stock.

Ms. Christmann stated that the findings could provide an estimate of the board feet of useable lumber that could potentially come down every year through the normal cycle of trees coming down.

Ms. Christmann discussed a similar project that was conducted in SE Michigan and stated that as outlined in the attached proposal, the funding request would be between \$40,000 - \$50,000.

Ms. Christmann discussed Staff concerns regarding the proposal. 1) Does this project fall under the allowable uses of District funds as set by the Ohio Revised Code? Does this fall under the mission and vision of the District? Ms. Christmann stated that Staff feels this project may be stretching the mission and vision. 2) Ms. Christmann stated that currently, the Cincinnati Park Board is developing an urban utilization program through the help of Mr. Sherrill and Ms. Sunnenberg.

Ms. Christmann stated that when the City's ash trees come down, the Park Board has a portable saw mill operator under contract. The contractor will then mill the material, the Park Board will drive it to a kiln, and from there, Cincinnati Public Schools is responsible for kiln drying the material, planed and finished to meet there specifications.

This material will then be used in the new construction of the Cincinnati Public Schools. Ms. Christmann stated that the question Staff has is “Is this study necessary if this program is already underway to use the Ash and potentially expand to other species”? Ms. Christmann stated that in talking to Cincinnati Park Board, they need more material to feed Cincinnati Public Schools. Cincinnati Public Schools needs about 40,000 board feet a year. Currently, Cincinnati Park Board is only able to supply them with 20,000 board feet a year.

This is being opened up to the County and a couple of municipalities are already interested in talking about this more and being able to send their trees to feed Cincinnati Public Schools. Ms. Christmann stated that if the program is already under development, this survey is taking a step backwards.

At this time, Staff is concerned about funding this proposal. Ms. Christmann stated that if the Committee wants more information regarding this, as you can see in the Staff recommendation, Ms. Christmann recommends that the District receives formal input from both the Cincinnati Park Board and the Hamilton County Park District. Ms. Christmann stated that the last thing the District wants to do is fund something that may not meet their needs. They are the tree experts; the Solid Waste District is not.

Ms. Christmann stated that the Staff Recommendation states that formal input from the Cincinnati Park Board and the Hamilton County Park District be received prior to addressing this issue.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann what urban timber surveys were used for. Ms. Christmann discussed the SE Michigan survey and stated it was for informational purposes and it ended the myth that urban trees could not be used as saw logs.

Mr. Portune stated that currently, the Policy Committee is in support of a portable saw mill, marketing the timber, etc. and given these facts, what would be accomplished, consistent with the mission of the District, by conducting an urban timber survey of all of the timber within the District?

Mr. Sherrill stated that Ash is about 10% of the hardwood tree population in this area and it is the other 90% that is more valuable (walnut, cherry, and hard maple) and this should be focused on.

Mr. Portune stated that developing a business plan to harvest other urban timber as opposed to the waste timber that is received, goes beyond the scope of the mission of the District, as a matter of policy. The reason the Committee is considering the harvest of Ash is to be proactive about dealing with Ash versus handling it as waste once the EAB kills the tree.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Sherrill to address his comments. Mr. Sherrill stated that other species are also prone to infestation and the other woods are also able to be processed as well. Mr. Sherrill stated that an advantage SE Michigan has is that they now have a mechanism for dealing with whatever comes along.

Mr. Sherrill stated that this could help create a private market response and discussed this concept.

Mr. Portune stated that Mr. Sherrill's presentation went beyond what the mission of the District was and briefly explained what he meant.

Mr. Welling stated that the reason this whole issue came before the Policy Committee was because of the EAB and discussed the reasoning behind the statement.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked if trees would be cut down in parks. Mr. Sherrill stated no. A brief discussion ensued regarding the potential harvest of trees in the parks.

Mr. Ingram thanked Mr. Sherrill for the presentation and stated that he was sure that this was a very worthy project but it doesn't seem to align very well with the District's mission and he would be inclined not to approve the project.

Mr. Portune stated that he wanted to be courteous to Mr. Sherrill but thought the Board would agree with Mr. Ingram and stated that if Mr. Sherrill wanted to continue, the floor was his.

Mr. Sherrill continued to discuss the SE Michigan survey and highest and best use practices.

Mr. Portune stated that he agreed with the District's highest and best use practice but did not know if a District wide timber survey needed to be conducted to access what the market potential was of the annual wood waste above and beyond just converting it to mulch or firewood.

Mr. Portune stated that it may be possible to record and track the volume of material that is being handled as mulch, firewood, or landfilled so that some amount of volume can be determined. Once this is determined a more lucrative market may be able to be determined.

Mr. Portune stated that he thought this could be done without having to do a survey of the entire timber population in the District at considerable expense. The same point can be made in determining what that market might be short of doing a District wide timber survey.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that Colerain Township already has a plan to deal with the Ash as he believes Anderson Township also has a plan.

Mr. Ingram agreed with Mr. Fiedeldey and discussed what communities are doing now with regards to natural disasters.

Mr. Portune thanked Mr. Sherrill and reiterated his earlier comments.

Mr. Portune asked Mr. Sutton, Director of the Hamilton County Park District, if he wanted to add to the discussion. Mr. Sutton stated that they were focusing on Ash and it would be inconsistent with their mission to look at other timber species for marketing. Ash is being focused upon because of the EAB. Mr. Sutton discussed what the Park District has been doing and that they may be in a position to assist the Cincinnati Public Schools with the Ash demand.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Sunnenberg if she had anything to add. Ms. Sunnenberg thanked Mr. Portune for the letter of support he gave for the proposal to the US Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Portune thanked Ms. Sunnenberg for her advocacy and vision of bringing an idea to the Committee that fits squarely within our desire to look for other ways to handle organic waste.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to decline to fund the proposal. Mr. Ingram moved; Mr. Fiedeldey seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Waste Generator Representative

Mr. DiPuccio stated that the District received application for four candidates all of which were interviewed and all of which were excellent. It was a very difficult decision for himself, Mr. Welling, and Ms. Christmann to decide on the new Waste Generator Representative.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that the interviewing committee's recommendation to the Policy Committee was to appoint Mr. Joe Maas of JTM Food Group and discussed his background. Mr. Welling concurred with Mr. DiPuccio.

Mr. Portune stated that the interviewing committee has recommended Joe Maas as the Waste Generator Representative. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to appoint Mr. Maas as the Waste Generator Representative to the Policy Committee and reminded members that only statutory members could vote. Mr. Ingram moved; Mr. Fiedeldey seconded. Mr. Portune, Mr. Fiedeldey, and Mr. Ingram were all in favor and the motion was approved.

5. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. District Carry-Over Balance

Mr. Portune stated that currently, the carry-over balance is \$2.9 million which is approximately \$1 million over what the Committee voted on as an 8 month reserve.

Ms. Christmann stated that included in Attachment D was a non-inclusive list of some potential uses for the carry-over balance including the CFL collection program and an expansion of RecycleBank. Ms. Christmann stated that Staff will again begin the process of updating the Plan within the next year to year and a half. Hiring a consultant to assist with the Plan usually costs between \$50,000 – \$100,000 and asked the Committee to be aware of this when discussing the carry-over balance.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann to discuss RecycleBank and CLF's.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District applied for the ODNR grant for the RecycleBank pilot in Montgomery and will be notified in May if the grant is approved.

Ms. Christmann stated that ten Hamilton County communities are interested in participating in RecycleBank and gave examples.

Ms. Christmann stated that if the ODNR grant is not approved, Staff would request the Policy Committee approve the use of District funds in the amount of \$100,000.

Mr. Portune requested a complete list of interested communities be circulated to Committee members. Mr. Portune also requested Staff to consider what the parameters were in order to have a pilot that is representative of the demographics of the County and suggested using Hamilton County Regional Planning's assistance.

A brief question and answer period ensued.

Ms. Christmann stated that with the increased popularity of the CFLs, there is an end of life question of how to dispose of them. Currently, Hamilton County residents can utilize the free Household Hazardous Waste program for disposal. In the District's work plan for 2008, Staff is to develop more convenient outlets such as hardware stores.

Ms. Christmann stated that Staff will be meeting with all the solid waste districts in southwest Ohio to discuss a potential regional program.

Mr. DiPuccio suggested using the point of purchase for disposal and making the retailers responsible.

Mr. Portune stated that his office has been involved in trying to get large volume donations of CFLs to hand out at Earth Day or at the Go Green Recognition Breakfast. Mr. Portune requested, with Committee approval, that District Staff engage around the planning of the promotional element. The Committee concurred with Mr. Portune.

B. Policy Committee – General Interest Member

Ms. Christmann stated that interviews for this position will begin in April in anticipation of having a recommendation at the May meeting. Mr. Meyer and Mr. Welling have agreed to be on the interview committee.

Mr. Fiedeldey asked how the position was advertised. Ms. Christmann stated that it was posted on the District's website, a letter was sent to all the environmental organizations, a public notice ran in the Enquirer, and a press release was sent to the Enquirer and was picked up.

C. Hamilton County Green Initiatives

Ms. Christmann stated that Environmental Services, as an agency, is heavily involved in Hamilton County's Green Initiatives in terms of the greenhouse gas inventory that is being conducted for the County. To help with Hamilton County's Green Initiatives, the District is to expand recycling in those buildings that are currently recycling and expand recycling into county buildings that are not recycling.

A brief question and answer session ensued.

Mr. Portune stated that regarding the issue of litter pick up in Over-the-Rhine, it is not recycling although recycling could be an element of it. Keep Cincinnati Beautiful has asked Mr. Portune to consider a way that the County could support re-introducing the Sheriff's Deputy's supervised inmate litter pick up service in Over-the-Rhine. Mr. Portune stated that when this program was functioning, the area looked good but now it is looking pretty littered again.

Mr. Portune stated that two thirds of the cost would be underwritten by other sources. In speaking with Sheriff Leis, there would be interest in the Sheriff's Department to re-introduce this program if there was a way to make sure the total cost could be underwritten.

Mr. Portune stated that the Sheriff's Department was facing some serious budget challenges this year and to add cost to their scope of work would be a challenge to them.

Mr. Portune stated that he was open to looking at the District underwriting one third of the cost of the litter pick up program (just under \$40,000). There could be an education element to this program as well.

Mr. Portune stated that he wanted to raise the issue and maybe it could develop into a proposal that could be evaluated from all angles. If this could be accomplished, Mr. Portune stated that it will be brought up at the May meeting.

Mr. Fiedeldey stated that one neighborhood has been singled out for clean up and special funding was being requested. There are numerous communities that could ask for the same thing. Mr. DiPuccio concurred.

A brief question and answer session ensued.

D. Go Green Challenge Recognition Ceremony

Ms. Christmann stated that the Go Green Recognition Ceremony will take place on Earth Day, April 22, 2008 at Paul Brown Stadium. As of yesterday, 68 businesses and organizations have taken the Go Green Challenge pledge which is well beyond the District's expectations.

E. Hamilton County Environmental Services' Youth Council

Ms. Christmann stated that that the Air Quality and Solid Waste sections are going to pull together about 8 to 12 high school students to form the Environmental Services Youth Council. The students will not only learn about what the Solid Waste District and Air Quality do, they will also give Environmental Services input on outreach efforts, input on programs, and ideas for improving the local environment in terms of Solid Waste and Air Quality.

Ms. Christmann stated that this will be started in the 2008 – 2009 school year. The Council will be set up similar to a Policy Committee and the students will be asked to attend at least one Policy meeting.

Mr. Ingram asked how the students would be solicited. Ms. Christmann stated that two newsletters are sent to teachers; one for Air Auality and one for Solid Waste. Mr. Ingram suggested sending a letter to the student government presidents.

Mr. Riddle suggested including the litter component as well as Solid Waste and Air Quality to the Council.

A brief discussion ensued.

F. Solid Waste Intern

Ms. Christmann stated that as Staff are spread thin with the addition of the Green Initiatives, which was mentioned in the Strategic Planning Session. Staff is outlining justification for hiring an intern sometime in 2008.

6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Christmann stated that she would like to discuss the carry-over balance again to address where Staff is coming from in terms of needs and possibly vote on some items that are not in the budget or work plan. Mr. Portune requested that Staff outline a list of everything with a description.

Mr. Meyer stated that one of the biggest waste items he sees is styrofoam cups from various coffee vendors. One vendor promoted the practice of bringing in a cup purchased from that vendor and it would be filled for a discount. Mr. Meyer suggested a program to encourage reusing cups and briefly discussed this concept.

7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Portune stated that today was Mr. DiPuccio's and Mr. Welling's last meeting and thanked both of them for all of their contribution and time. Mr. Portune presented Mr. DiPuccio and Mr. Welling a plaque recognizing their years of service.

Mr. DiPuccio thanked Mr. Portune and complimented Staff on their great work and feels as though he has learned from the Committee.

Mr. DiPuccio suggested changing the makeup of the Board; there is already a representative of the solid waste industry on the committee and suggested appointing a public ex-officio member to obtain different perspectives.

Mr. DiPuccio suggested the District give thought to going more regional in its efforts. Mr. DiPuccio stated that the District is hosting the major solid waste facility in southwest Ohio and believed that other district's feel like they should have more say into what is going on in the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District and how it operates. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he thought it would be beneficial to both sides due to solid waste being a regional issue.

Mr. DiPuccio stated that he commended Mr. Portune for encouraging the County to take a leadership regarding recycling and other environmental issues. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he would like to see the County expand what Environmental Services is doing now; beyond air and solid waste and get into broader environmental issues. Mr. DiPuccio stated believes the County needs to be doing this.

Mr. DiPuccio thanked everyone and stated that he has truly appreciated being on the Committee and knows that things will only get better.

Mr. Welling thanked Mr. Portune and the Committee. Mr. Welling stated his experience in solid waste issues started 18 years ago when Mr. DiPuccio hired him at SCS Engineers. Mr. Welling complimented Mr. Portune on his leadership abilities. Mr. Welling complimented District Staff on their professionalism and dedication.

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, May 15, 2008, 9:30 am** at Hamilton County Environmental Services, 250 William Howard Taft Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

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

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:52 am.