

Ontario County
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 23, 2016

Committee Members: *RUSSELL*, Baker, Evangelista, Singer, Venuti, and Wickham

Attendees: Supervisors Russell, Baker, Singer, Venuti, Evangelista, and Wickham

Staff: Tom Harvey, Mary Krause, Mary Gates, Tim Jensen, Linda Frasca, Regina Connelly, Carla Jordan, Holly Adams, and Kris Thorsness

Consultants/Guests: Supervisor Vedora, Jerry Leone, Matt East - Casella Waste Management, Steve Healy - CSEA, and Dave Shaw – FLT.

Call to Order: Chair Russell, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., and declared all members present.

Approval of Minutes: Chair Russell requested a motion to approve the March 2, 2016 minutes as presented. *Motion to approve the 3/2/16 minutes as presented made by Supervisor Singer, seconded by Supervisor Baker. Motion unanimously carried.*

2. Solid Waste Management Plan

A. SWMP 2016 Implementation Strategy Update: Tim Jensen stated that staff modified the progress report on the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to simplify it. The new format is included in the agenda packet for the committee's review. Things continue to move along and staff is making good progress on most fronts. Committee members stated they liked the new format and appreciated staff's time and dedication towards the implementation of the SWMP.

Supervisor Venuti questioned if advertising had yet begun in regards to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection event. Staff reported that a brief side note appeared in the Daily Messenger and a full length article with all the information appeared in the Finger Lakes Times. A two-page flyer with all the information has been sent to all the Towns/Cities as well, and will be sent out to grocery stores, bowling allies, etc. for further exposure. Planning staff and CCE staffs are planning other outreach efforts as we go along with the implementation. Supervisor Russell requested an update on the event registration. Mr. Jensen stated the maximum number of HHW drop offs is 800 for this event were the goal in past years was 600.

Supervisor Evangelista agreed that he liked the new format and content of the plan progress reports. He questioned that aside from the committee and board level how else can we advertise the upcoming event. How can the towns/city residents find information on the event? Can we put it on the County website? Staff and committee further discussed different ways to get the word out. Staff will make sure that it is featured on the newsflash feature on the County's website.

B. SWMP – County Agency Waste Diversion Progress Report: Mr. Jensen reported that Casella has been picking up trash/recyclables for several weeks now. As of today we have not yet received a waste characterization report. Casella has begun working with the County Public

Works dept. to get recycling bins placed throughout County buildings. Mr. Harvey reported staff has been reaching out to department heads to identify where recycling bins can be added in public places. They are also working with the new Director of Human Resources to ramp up the recycling 'super hero' reps in departments throughout county government.

C. Household Hazardous Waste Collection Update: See SWMP section. No additional update.

D. Presentation on Municipal Solid Waste Operations: Regina Connelly and Carla Jordan, Planning staff, gave a brief presentation on municipal solid waste operations. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is on file with the official minutes in the office of the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Russell thanked Ms. Connelly and Mrs. Jordan for a great presentation, and asked what the County's next steps are. Mr. Jensen shared that staff continues to obtain information, and are already generating ideas for ongoing education on recycling. Staff will be drafting a report for the committee in the near future for their review and additional discussion. Mr. Harvey noted that one of the significant things that came out of this effort was the portion of the waste stream flowing through municipal facilities (less than 10% of the waste generated from within the County) versus what is handled by municipal curbside collection and private haulers. This will help us determine the focus of SWMP implementation projects as well as the role transfer stations will play in implementing the SWMP.

E. Recycling Challenges: Mr. Harvey and Mr. Jensen reported that they and several administrative staff personnel had met on March 10th with Casella to discuss the market for recyclables. Mr. Harvey ran through the presentation provided by Casella contained in the agenda packet. Many areas were discussed - i.e. competitiveness, commodity, cost difference over the years, etc... Commercial recyclables commodity prices in 2011 averaged \$120/ton whereas today, in 2016, it just about breaks even at \$72.50/ton. Casella made it clear that breaking even for the time being means Casella has no intention of charging the commercial customers for processing their recyclables. The landfill lease with Casella also states that Casella cannot charge for accepting recyclables from residences within Ontario County, even though Casella is currently losing money on processing residential recyclables. Supervisor Russell stated he had a very good conversation with Casella people and passed on what he had learned from the VP at Casella. Staff and committee members brainstormed and discussed the deteriorating revenue stream for recycling commodities and how that matched with the SWMP's goal of increasing recycling. Mr. Harvey responded that we are looking for ways of increasing the value of the commodities as well as finding new materials to add to the list of materials recycled.

Mr. Harvey reported that discussion had taken place at the 3/10 meeting on Casella's experience with "Pay As You Throw (PAYT)." Some areas implement pay as you throw through the sale of garbage bags, and others base it on weight. Looking at the weight models, installing scales at a transfer facility such as what the Town of Manchester has done is one way to implement PAYT. They have seen where some planning units have required municipal and private haulers to install scales on garbage trucks. Casella relayed their experience with truck scales as they have tried these themselves. They believe in the northeast because of salt and winter weather they had issues with durability and keeping the scales in consistent operation. They felt the technology is not where it needs to be at right now to mandate implementation.

Supervisor Venuti wanted to know if work was being done to improve the quality of recycling materials, to increase their value. He wondered if single stream had decreased the quality of recyclables. Casella staff responded that they were confident that single stream did not impact quality. They pointed out that residuals from the Ontario Material Recycling Facility (MRF) are 4-5%. Mr. Harvey noted the industry standard is 15%, and Monroe County has a 16% rate. The long history of recycling in Ontario County, the public's understanding and cooperation, and Casella's operation of the MRF all contribute to an outstandingly low rate of residuals (leftovers) from the recycling process that end up at the landfill.

F. Solid Waste Policy and Landfill: Mr. Harvey quickly explained that staff is working on a resolution on the matter. At this time, it needs more work to finalize details. He wants to make sure it is an accurate, good product before it is brought to committee for discussion at a future meeting.

Supervisor Venuti stated that we should consider making recommendations for state actions as those will be necessary to achieve our targets, possibly state it in the proposed resolution.

Supervisor Russell responded that we would let the state know we are seeking their assistance in this matter.

Additional Agenda Item: Supervisor Russell turned the floor over to Assistant County Attorney, Kris Thorsness. Ms. Thorsness quickly refreshed the committees' memory on the entire landfill expansion permit matter and provided a brief update. Ms. Thorsness stated an aspect of that is the air permitting matter. Ms. Thorsness reminded the committee that there is a gas to energy facility located next door to the landfill on land leased to a company called Seneca Energy – that company has a separate air permit from the landfill. During the permitting process one of the arguments that Zero Waste had was that the landfill and landfill gas to energy plant should be treated as a single emissions entity for the air permit. This issue is referred to as 'common control.' Zero Waste is contesting the findings of the EAP for common control in regard to the Title V Air Permit held by Seneca Energy. While this does not directly affect the County's air permit, Ms. Thorsness will keep the committee updated as needed.

Landfill Operations:

3A. Operations Report - Jerry Leone reported:

1. Things continue to move along on construction operations.
2. Supervisor Wickham stopped by for a tour earlier in the week.
3. Using a short video, Mr. Leone showed the construction progress that has taken place in the expansion area of the landfill, including the leachate pond.
4. Reported there had been a forced outage of the transmission of gas to the Gas to Energy Plant yesterday due to construction. A notice was sent out on the web site and those signed up via email. They are back on line today but do expect another outage as construction work continues.
5. Casella is expecting to receive approval from the State for work on the West side of the landfill. They are hoping to receive the go ahead shortly.
6. Casella has spoken with people regarding recyclable plastic from marinas. They are interested in going further with Casella on implementing this type of recycling.

Mr. Leone asked the committee for permission to extend Sunday construction hours beyond the initial approved end date (end of April). He explained that due to the weather and not receiving approval from the DEC, Casella has gotten a late start and now needs to catch up. Casella is

asking for an extension from May 1st through September/October as they are very far behind. They are building two (2) landfill cells this year and have three (3) crews working at this time. Supervisor Wickham explained the Town of Seneca's view on Casella's request. He shared that he had recently visited the landfill and looked at the noise issues. Mr. Wickham stated crews are working behind the berms and that the noise level is minimal. He also knows several area residents that reside close by the landfill and they have not complained of any noise problems. Mr. Wickham reported that the Town of Seneca has not reviewed or passed a resolution on Casella's request at this time. Casella is to come back to the Town at the end of the April to update them on the time issue. One of the conditions of approval is that all equipment must have white noise alarms on them (instead of the beeping alarm that activates when machinery is backing up). Mr. Harvey will bring a resolution back to committee as the construction progresses and the need is confirmed.

Matt East reported that they are finishing work on the East side. Asbestos is again being accepted and is being put in special zones. Casella staff continues to be very busy at the landfill. There is a full time State DEC representative on site watching the construction crews. Things continue to flow smoothly. Supervisor Wickham stated he is very pleased with all the job creation at the landfill.

B. & C. Excerpts from Casella 4th Quarter Earnings Conference Call and DEC Inspection Reports: Mr. Harvey and Mr. Jensen briefly reviewed both matters and answered questions presented by committee members.

Landfill Expansion:

Construction Schedule/Report: See above discussion.

Vertical Separation Variance Application Resolution: Mr. Harvey and Mr. Leone informed the committee that Casella is seeking permission from the County to obtain a variance permit from the DEC in order to provide only 5 feet of separation between bedrock and the bottom landfill liner instead of the 10 feet required by current DEC regulations. If they can get approval from the DEC to do this there is the potential of a 1.8 million dollar savings by Casella. Committee members questioned what benefit this would be to the County. Supervisor Venuti feels Casella is going to make out very well while the County will see none or next to none of the savings. He stated the County should have the opinion of an independent engineer, not Barton & Loguidice, if possible. Mr. Harvey stated he had received a letter from Barton & Loguidice basically stating the same thing but he did not have it with him at this time, he informed committee members he will see to it that they receive a copy of it. Supervisor Venuti asked since the variance application states the \$1.8 million savings would be available to assist the county with its solid waste management plan and household hazardous waste collection events, what would be the county's share or what is being offered. Supervisor Evangelista stated he has the same questions/concerns as Supervisor Venuti, and further stated he would not vote in favor of the variance request unless the County would receive some sort of benefit if the variance is approved. Additional discussion among staff, committee members and Casella representatives took place.

At this time, Chair Russell called for a motion of the proposed variance request resolution.
Motion to accept and recommend approval of the Casella variance request resolution as presented made by Supervisor Baker, seconded by Supervisor Wickham.

Chair Russell called for roll call vote on the matter.

Supervisor Wickham -	AYE	Supervisor Evangelista -	NAY
Supervisor Baker -	AYE	Supervisor Venuti -	NAY
Supervisor Singer -	AYE		
Supervisor Russell -	AYE		

Motion carried with 4 AYES – 2 NAYS.

5. Other:

Privilege of the Floor: Chairman Russell offered Privilege of Floor for those present. There were no requests.

Adjournment: There being no further business before the committee, a *motion was made by Supervisor Baker, seconded by Supervisor Singer to adjourn at 4:58 pm; motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Linda R. Frasca
Senior Clerk