

FINAL MINUTES
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
SOLID WASTE ADVISORY GROUP (SWAG) MEETING
May 20, 2021

OPENING:

Mr. Scott MacDonald called the meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Group to order at 4:00pm via Cisco WebEx.

ATTENDANCE:

SWCAG Members:

Present: Mr. Harry Glasgow, Mr. James Gestrich, Mr. David Watjen, Mr. Joseph Chisholm, Ms. Jane Wyman, and Mr. Richard Arvin.

Absent: Mr. Mark Bonner, Mr. Ned Greene, Mr. Will Lintner, Ms. Tiziana Bottino, Ms. Virginia Douglas and Ms. Keisha Strand.

Guests: Mr. John O'Bannon

Solid Waste Staff: Mr. Tom Smith, Mr. Jason Pauley, Mr. Scott Kleinfeld, Ms. Iobel Seyoum, Ms. Amy Zitzmann, Mr. Scott MacDonald, Mr. Sadhu Sandhu, Ms. Deborah Campbell, and Ms. Christine Hobbs.

AGENDA TOPICS

INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. MacDonald welcomed everyone to the meeting via Cisco WebEx and proceeded to confirm which members were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A quorum was not valid, so the draft minutes of the April 15, 2021 SWAG meetings were not approved.

ANNUAL RECYCLING PROGRAM UPDATE

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Mr. Scott MacDonald presented his annual recycling report to the committee. This report details the recycling rate, and projects that were presented by the Solid Waste Division in calendar year 2020. Mr. MacDonald started out by stating that the recycling rate had dropped to 33.5% as opposed to 38.2% in 2019. Overall trash was up 16% and recycling fell 9%. The increase in material landfilled is most likely due to the coronavirus pandemic. The County's rate is below both the state and regional average principally because we are not diverting yard waste. Without organics recycling, we are relying on scrap metal and paper recycling to boost our numbers. The paper recycling tonnage has been falling for years due to shift to electronic files, which leaves scrap metal which fluctuates depending on market pricing. Mr. MacDonald's shining star this year has been the glass recycling which was up 137%.

Mr. MacDonald continued by stating that the Solid Waste Management Plan has continued to be updated, which the committee knows very well. The division continues to work with SCS Engineers on the development of the new plan. SCS is currently working on preparing the draft plan. When this draft is ready, the committee will have a chance to review it as well.

One of the big changes this year is the separation of yard waste. This will start October 1st, 2021. Deborah Campbell has been reaching out to the communities and HOAs to get the word out. There have also been webinars with trash haulers, and landscaping contractors. Additional outreach is expected to start in August.

Deborah Campbell along with Keep Prince William Beautiful hosted the first Fix It Fair on October 17th, 2020. This was in lieu of Recycles Day due to the pandemic. There was a great response and staff is looking at continuing the program again this year. One shredding event was also held last fall. Again, the pandemic cancelled the event in the spring. Ms. Campbell informed the committee that both events were low contact, and low density, but still allowed staff to reach out to the community. Mr. MacDonald was happy with the events and pleased that we were able to keep up the engagement with the residents.

The Balls Ford Road compost facility Phase I kicked off in 2020. The Phase I system of bunkers is principally designed to compost yard waste but can also handle food waste. As for Phase II, Freestate Farms is planning on putting in an in-vessel system to handle wet food waste; however, Phase II is currently on hold.

Mr. MacDonald then moved to discuss glass recycling. Shortly after the start of 2020, two more glass recycling trailers were added. One at James S. Long Regional Park in Haymarket, and the

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second at the Dr. A. J. Ferlazzo building in Woodbridge. The public seems to be receiving them well, as about 5,000 tons of glass was collected in 2020. Mr. MacDonald is considering different ideas to increase glass recycling. One idea is using a pop-up style collection or drop off that would move between communities. All in all, glass recycling continues to rise, and Mr. MacDonald is excited to see the progress it will continue to make in 2021.

As for the recycling, about one-third of material that goes into the recycling continues to be trash. Fire also continues to be a concern, as many people put batteries into their recycling containers. Markets for mixed paper and other paper commodities are all in good shape. The markets for plastics, especially number 2 (the translucent milk and water jugs) the pricing is going into record territory. Markets for the other plastics is very poor. Mr. Watjen asked how the single stream recycling gets sorted once it is collected. Mr. MacDonald answered that once at the recycling facility, the recyclables travel over a start screen that separates light and heavy material. Once separated, containers are mechanically sorted, and paper is hand sorted. Mr. Watjen asked where these facilities were located. Mr. MacDonald replied that there are two facilities in Manassas, operated by Republic Services and American Disposal Service.

Turning his attention to the recycling building, Mr. MacDonald explained that this was the building was the county's main processing facility for recycling going back to 1993. The facility finally closed in 2016 after a series of companies were not able to make it financially. There has been some recent interest in the building. If utilized, the use of the building would add value to the county and the region.

Mr. MacDonald also touched on the Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics program. The electronics collection is handled by a new vendor called Securis, which is saving the County money. This past year, the Household Hazardous Waste program collected just over 200,000 pounds of material.

Mr. David Watjen asked if people put their glass in the recycling for the trash haulers, does it go to single stream recycling or is it separated out. Mr. MacDonald answered that if glass is put in with the single stream recycling, it falls through the filter screens and ends up broken. This contaminates the recycling, which ends up becoming part of the residue stream. Mr. MacDonald emphasized that it is more beneficial to either take the glass to a purple glass bin or put it in the trash.

GENERAL PROJECT UPDATES

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Mr. Smith stated that the Bocke's property would like more money than the County is willing to give them. Mr. Smith has suggested they get an appraisal done and re-evaluate once that is done. He also brought up that a new Strategic Plan which was recently presented to the Board. This new plan has an environmental goal and now includes sustainability development. This goal has the objective to increase recycling. Mr. Smith asked committee members to look at it and email him with any.

Mr. Scott Kleinfeld informed the committee that the landfill cell construction is moving along at great speed. They are currently ahead of schedule, and if this keeps up the project will be completed early. He continued by stating that they are currently installing five new wells in the active work area to combat odor. Three of the wells are already drilled, and the other two will be completed tomorrow. After that, they will just have to fine tune and test the system. Mr. Smith is also negotiating with Fortistar to put in a new project that will convert the gas to pipeline quality gas. These discussions are currently ongoing. As for the water well project, the contractors still have some fine tuning to do, but the well drillers have completed everything and left the site. Samplers were supposed to come with the next few days to give us a base reading.

Mr. Smith is continuing to talk to potential vendors and our engineers to look at putting solar panels on the slopes. Discussion with NOVEC are also ongoing.

Mr. MacDonald informed the committee that the waste conversion plant in Maine that was operated by the company that we were in talks with was still shut down pending the approval of the sale to Delta Thermo Energy. This means that communities were organized and bought the property on which the plant sits. The plant is not currently open and is in talks with the communities to discuss certain changes to operation. Mr. Smith stated that the current contractor they had been in talks with has been unresponsive. More than likely they will put out another request for proposal (RFP) and start the process over again.

LANDFILL OPERATIONS

Mr. Kleinfeld reiterated that everything at the landfill is moving along fine.

BALLS FORD ROAD OPERATIONS

Mr. Smith stated that the Phase I at the Balls Ford Road facility is operating. As for Phase II, the contractor is working through some financing issues. Mr. Smith continues to keep pressure on the contractor to keep the project moving.

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COMMITTEE ISSUES/CONCERNS

Mr. MacDonald introduced Mr. John O'Bannon to the committee. He resides in the Haymarket area. He is with the Thunder Oak Homeowner's Association. Mr. O'Bannon informed the committee that his community has contract out refuse collection after many years of each homeowner paying separate companies for service. With each homeowner paying for their own service, trucks were in and out of the neighborhood all the time and the roads (which the homeowners pay to maintain) were being destroyed. Their current trash hauler is Charlie & Son. He went on to say that scheduled pickup days are being missed and pushed back to days later in the week, with little to no notice. There is also no guarantee that trash will be picked up on the make-up day. He has brought these issues to Charlie & Son and the only answer he has received is, "if you don't pay, we won't pick up your trash." He and other homeowners cannot seem to get a line of communication through to Charlie & Son to inform them earlier of late pickup days. Mr. O'Bannon also has worries that if Charlie & Son cannot pick up trash in a timely manner, how will they be able to pick up yard waste? He also feels that in the western end of the county, not many homeowners will utilize the yard waste collection, as they do not have much yard waste to begin with and if they do, they tend to just throw it in the woods on their properties.

Mr. MacDonald thanked Mr. O'Bannon for voicing his concerns and informed him that staff will sort through this and figure out a solution.

Mr. James Gestrich interjected stating that Mr. O'Bannon brought up a good point about trash haulers picking up recycling and trash separately. How do we regulate that when it comes into the landfill? How do we make sure they are collecting correctly? Mr. MacDonald answered that we have random load inspections, and they look for loads that have high concentrations of recyclable materials. If the load is 25% recyclable it can receive a citation. Most loads that we cite are commercial loads that are rich in cardboard or metal. The second way is through individuals or HOAs bringing their concerns to our attention and we can investigate the situation.

Mr. Chisholm stated that he has a friend who lives in the county who had a friend do some work in her yard. Both people are county residents. However, when the gentleman came to the landfill he had to pay for the material. Mr. MacDonald answered that we have different rates for different types of customers. If the homeowner were to bring in the material, there would be no charge, but if a contractor comes in there is a fee.

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Mr. Buck Arvin asked if Mr. MacDonald had heard any more information regarding chemical recycling. Mr. MacDonald replied that chemical recycling is controversial right now. Under chemical recycling system, plastics are heated and are broken down to either plastic pellets or an industrial grade fuel. Environmentalists are okay with chemical recycling systems so long as it does not produce any more pollution. They do not want it heated to the point where it is giving off gasses. People are also concerned that if used for fuel it is being used as a dirty fuel for an asphalt plant or something similar. He will continue to follow information regarding chemical recycling, but for right now, Mr. MacDonald does not see this as something that will take off any time soon.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Scott MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 5:20 pm. The next SWAG meeting will be on Thursday June 17, 2021 at 4:00 pm via Cisco WebEx.