

**Carroll County
Solid Waste
Advisory Council**



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Solid Waste Advisory Council

July 21, 2015

Present:

Committee-Don West, Bob Ernst, Charlie Hughes, Bruce Holstein, Jim Marcinko, Ellen Cutsail, Karen Leatherwood

Guests-Jeffrey Topper, Sheree Lima, Dusty Hilbert, Maria Myers, Stephanie Utz, Dan Andrews, Amy Andrews

Meeting began at 4:00 p.m. There was one change to the previous minutes. Jeff Topper is not the “new” Deputy Director of Public Works. With that correction, Jim Marcinko moved that we approve the previous meeting minutes and Bruce Holstein seconded. Approved unanimously.

Don West opened the meeting and asked Dusty Hilbert to report on the recent changes to the recycling contract.

Dusty explained that the new contract with Recycle America is a 12 month contract that is market based and can change. Separated recycling could balance out the loss of revenue, however, citizens have now become accustomed to single stream recycling. It would be advantageous to pull cardboard out when it can be done. Glass breakage in paper is not the issue. Dusty also reported that the County is still negotiating with a private company regarding handling yard waste.

Don reviewed the four recommendations given to the Commissioners. They have sent the letter to the Governor. Dusty is working on the objective of improving the yard waste end product. There has been no changes to the Resource Recovery Park or diversion.

New Business: We re-elected Don West, Chairman and Jim Marcinko Vice-Chairman. This vote was unanimous. Ellen Cutsail made a motion (seconded by Bob Ernst) that the offices be two year terms and this was unanimously accepted as well. Dusty will ask counsel to make a change to our by-laws to reflect this objective.

Don began the discussion portion by asking, “What is the purpose of this group?” Jeff said it is worth recognizing that this committee can give the staff credibility as we all look at Solid Waste and the future options. Don talked about the five constituencies that are at play: citizens, haulers, staff, municipalities and the Commissioners. Jim pointed out that revenue is about volume and under the current structure, we don’t have control, to successfully move to PAYT there would need to be some kind of mandates imposed. Bruce proposed taking PAYT straight to the Commissioners and letting them determine what mandates they would impose. (Bruce pointed out Maryland’s goal of 85% diversion just around the corner.) Jim mentioned the idea of a different kind of hauler licensing that would disallow new competitors.

There are a lot of issues at stake. Financially, the general fund currently supports the Solid Waste enterprise fund partially due to the ongoing expenses of the closed landfills. PAYT both increases recycling and has the potential to increase the money into Carroll County. We know simply raising the

tipping fee does not solve the problem. Charlie Hughes suggested only allowing haulers that pay to dump their solid waste take advantage of dumping their recycling. This is particularly important now that Carroll County has a fee imposed on processing our recycling. Jim suggested raising the tip fee over a period of time.

As we began to talk about the PAYT model that Bruce had submitted, he reminded us that we cannot be talking about saving money when there is a shortfall. Don supports PAYT conceptually, but has some questions about how we can make it happen here in Carroll County. With this program, the county sets the rates on the bags and requires all residential trash be set out in the bags. This would raise money as the bags would be purchased through Carroll County, but individual haulers would still collect fees for hauling and dumping. From Bruce's presentation, we moved to a model that Public Works created.

Side note: As Jeff was setting up the projector, and having some difficulty, Don referred to himself as a Luddite. (The Luddites were a group of workers in England that destroyed weaving machines in the early 1800's as they feared "technology" would destroy the working class. In modern language, the term is generally used to describe a person resistant to or fearful of technology.)

The Solid Waste staff (building on the presentation made by Waste Zero) put forth a possible proposal that could reduce the cost to the haulers. It would deal with commercial waste separate from residential and increase the cost on the commercial side in order to make up for the fact that residents would be paying for bags AND service.

Bruce reminded us that there is no "easy button", but that the county must do something. Jeff suggested the idea of temporarily closing the landfill and we would save on the leachate hauling costs. Before we go into the BOCC meeting again, we need to have a sense of what the Commissioners are willing to do. Are they willing to impose a system benefit charge? Put a temporary cap on the landfill? Is there a workable "hybrid"? Make an incremental increase to the tipping fee? Begin charging for recycling? PAYT can raise money. What are they amenable to?

Our next meeting is September 3 at 4:00.

Respectfully submitted: Karen Leatherwood