

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2009

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Brown, Rymph, Scribner, Banks, Lindsay, Suprenant, Hurley, Campbell

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Shay

SUPERVISORS: Wilbur, LaPointe, Henke, G. Hall

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator

Roger Wickes, County Clerk

Phyllis Cooper, Treasurer

Public

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes - December 2, 2008 & December 27, 2008
3. Department Request/Reports:
 - D. Department of Public Works
 1. 2009 Highway and Car Pool Equipment Purchases
 2. Write Off of Uncollectible Invoice - Solid Waste
 3. Solid Waste Alternatives
 4. Miscellaneous
5. Subcommittee Discussions
6. Other Business
7. Adjournment

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 2nd and 17th, 2008 meetings was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.

SOLID WASTE ALTERNATIVES:

Mr. Andrew Pate displayed a recycling poster and read a letter expressing views on the importance of the recycling and the transfer stations, on file.

Chairman Brown stated the Board and this committee are concerned about future costs in all departments not just Solid Waste. He stated the burn plant contract is coming to an end in 2011 and we do not know at this time where the municipal solid waste will be sent. He asked for any ideas on how to save money and be more efficient.

Kevin Hayes, County Administrator, distributed a handout detailing financial information on the Solid Waste Management fund including budget figures from 2005 to 2009, Solid Waste projections and RS Lynch and Company projected shortfall of the burn plant contract for 2009, on file.

Willy Grimmke, Superintendent of Public Works, distributed a handout detailing Solid Waste 2009 budget options that included background information, measures to reduce

impact to fund balance, service reduction scenarios, possible revenue enhancement, other items that may warrant consideration at a future date, Solid Waste impact operational subsidy, Solid Waste trends, projected recycling revenues, year to date 2008 recycling transfer stations report for tons shipped and transfer station daily traffic samples, on file. Options to reduce impact to fund balance include bill other funds for 40% of time mechanic spends servicing other funds \$20,500, reduction for reduced cost of oil \$48,600, favorable savings on bale wire \$25,000, removing paving at the transfer stations for 2009 for a savings of \$30,000, reduce repair line for transfer stations \$10,000 savings, and increase cost of wood chips from \$13.05 per ton to \$49.50 for additional revenue of \$25,550.00.

Mr. Hurley stated that the County should be stressing the importance of recycling and have a countywide effort to increase the volume of recyclables.

Ms. Frisch stated that she feels that someone within Solid Waste should be overseeing the recycling program and providing education.

Willy addressed service reduction scenarios including reduction of costs, revenue reductions, unemployment benefits and outcomes as follows: #1 - three days per week - 2 stations (reduce the operating hours of the two least busy stations to 3 x 8 hour days per week) with a likely outcome \$28,500, #2 three days per week - 4 stations – operating hours to 3 x 8 hour days per week for all but the busiest station, and leaving that station open 4 days per week for 10 hours with the likely outcome no reduction to -\$5,000, #3 - two days per week - 4 stations – reduce operating hours to 2 x 8 hour days per week for all but the busiest station, while leaving that station open 4 x 10 hour days per week with a likely outcome +\$76,500, and #4 - close all stations but Kingsbury-based on central location only – leave a single station open under the current schedule while closing the remaining four with the likely outcome -\$367,000, scenarios attached.

Chairman Brown stated we lacked data. Willy stated prior to 1999 there was a Solid Waste Manager but with the reorganization of the department this position was eliminated because it was felt that Solid Waste no longer needed to justify itself and spend all that time crunching numbers.

Willy's handout also includes revenue enhancement by increasing the sticker price. He also included other items that may warrant consideration at a future date: exploring the institution of a waste generator fee and exploring the expansion of the County solid waste system to provide curbside garbage and recycling pickup to all county residences.

Chairman Brown stated at the end of 2011 the County would not longer have to subsidize the burn plant.

Roger Wickes, County Attorney, read the purpose of a local law considered in 2001 but not adopted, Introductory Local Law A of 2001 that states “The purpose of this Local Law is to provide for the health safety and general welfare of the residents of Washington County by establishing a mechanism by which reliable and complete information can be obtained to assist County Officials in their continuing efforts to assess, understand and resolve difficulties currently confronting the County with regard to unacceptably high solid waste disposal costs and recycling program short comings.” Adoption would have allowed the County to gather information necessary to make decisions on operations, i.e. formation of waste districts. Mr. Pate suggested the County needs some expertise, someone/consultant, to gather and review data and design a system. Mr. Banks stated no one has more experience than we do. Haulers do not have to provide their data, trade secret. It was recommended taking another look at this proposed local law. Mr. Wickes stated that Local Law No. 3 of 1992 requires the source separation and segregation of recyclable items from the waste stream.

Mrs. Gayle Hall, Budget Officer, stated the Solid Waste program for 2009 with the \$500,000 shortfall needs to be addressed immediately and how the system will look in the future also needs addressing. She stated maybe the County should not be in this business.

If the County was to apply for grant funding for the Solid Waste Coordinator position, we would be put on a waiting list and it is very likely it would take two years.

A letter from the Battenkill Conservancy was read regarding the disposal of animal carcasses in Washington County, on file. The letter concludes as follows: “These shortcoming in oversight need to be addressed by the County, and the State as a whole, as soon as possible. The situation is only going to get worse as time goes on and the spring melt reveals an ugly, rotting mess in Greenwich. The Battenkill Conservancy urges you to take up this matter, and working with DEC and Ag & Markets, develop scientifically valid guidelines, standards, licensing, and monitoring procedures for the disposal of livestock mortalities, whether it be by burying, composting, or any other means. Furthermore, we would suggest a moratorium on any disposal operations until strict new guidelines, which protect public health and safety, are in place.”

Willy asked what does the committee want from him for the next meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 11th at 9:30 A.M. Proposed agenda items include: the issue of a consultant, budgetary concerns, and revenue that could be generated from a waste generator fee.

A motion to approve the recycling poster submitted by Mr. Pate, as that is what the County offers, was moved by Mr. Banks and seconded by Mr. Scribner. Discussion. Mr. Pate is looking into funding to produce this poster. Kevin mentioned that it does not

address just bringing in recyclables to the transfer stations at no charge. It was stated that it should be printed on recycled paper and it should be noted that the schedule is subject to change or call for hours/web site for information. A motion to approve the recycling poster submitted by Mr. Pate, as that is what the County offers, was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Scribner and adopted.

Chairman Brown read a letter from Jackie Chamberlain, resident, expressing her viewpoints regarding the topic of recycling and solid waste in Washington County, on file.

WRITE OFF UNCOLLECTABLE INVOICE – SOLID WASTE:

The rendering plant in Hartford (Chris Conlin) in late 2007 beginning of 2008 purchased three loads of wood chips and the Treasurer has advised him that she has been unable to collect these funds in the amount of \$1,260.00. Roger Wickes, County Attorney, stated the County cannot pursue collection in small claims court. He recommends first writing a collection letter from his office and if necessary initiate proceeding in County court, need to find the asset/funds to pay the debt. A motion to have the County Attorney, send a collection letter was moved by Mr. Campbell, seconded and adopted. He will report back to the committee on the status of the collection.

2009 HIGHWAY AND CAR POOL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES:

Willy distributed a handout detailing the 2009 equipment purchases for Car Pool and Highway, attached. The state contract prices are all lower than budgeted. One item under Car Pool that was not budgeted but is being requested is a lift in the amount of \$13,825.33 to replace an older lift that has failed.

A motion to approve 2009 Car Pool purchases including the lift was moved by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted. Mr. Brown opposed.

Mr. Banks left the meeting at 3:17 P.M.

A motion to approve 2009 Highway equipment purchases was moved by Mr. Scribner, seconded by Messrs. Lindsay and Campbell and adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Budget Amendment – A motion to amend the 2008 County Road Machinery budget increasing the fuel line \$40,000 from fund balance was moved by Mr. Rymph, seconded by Mr. Campbell and adopted.

Whitehall Barn - A week ago Sunday, the Village of Whitehall had a water main leak. It was in front of the Whitehall Highway barn and the water took the least resistance path into the barn. It pushed the slab up, crumpled some of the metal walls and he is unsure of the status of pavement until spring. The Safety Officer has viewed the site and our insurance carrier was notified. The County needs to file a notice of claim against the Village of Whitehall to protect our interest. A motion to present a resolution authorizing the Chairman to sign a notice of claim regarding the Village of Whitehall water main leak regarding damages to the County Highway Barn in Whitehall was moved by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Suprenant and adopted.

Snow removal study - Mr. Hurley stated several town highway superintendents would like to meet to discuss routes and review possible suggestions. Willy anticipates getting to this by mid to late March as he is addressing other matters at this time (i.e. bridge projects (2) in Granville and (2) in Whitehall getting ready for bids).

Battenville Bridge – This bridge was rehabbed in 2000 has been red flagged due to corrosion by the gusset plate. Willy stated the bridge has been posted for 20 ton to clear the red flag and hopefully fix this problem in the spring.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 P.M.

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