

**MINUTES OF THE  
GREENSBORO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION  
JUNE 10, 2014**

**Members Present**

Mark Taylor, Chair  
Kay Brandon  
Bob Davis  
Bob Mays  
Tom Phillips  
Tony Davies  
Mary Louise Smith  
Ray Trapp

**Staff Present**

Dale Wyrick  
Chris Marriott  
Sheldon Smith  
Nancy Lindemeyer  
Alex Arnett  
  
Mary McClellan (ReCommunity)

The Solid Waste Management Commission met on Tuesday, June 10, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. in the Field Operations Training Room. Council members Marikay Abuzuaiter and Jamal Fox attended the meeting. Godfrey Uzochukwu was excused.

Chair Mark Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting. Guests in attendance included Stan Joseph with Waste Management of the Carolinas, Jeff Shell and Paul Zurav with Memios Environmental Services, and Paul Clark with the Rhino Times.

Dale Wyrick asked if there could be a change in the agenda, Under New Business, that Item B, be heard first, before the Work Group reports.

Chair Taylor asked that those in attendance introduce themselves.

**Approval of minutes of May 13, 2014 meeting**

Chair Taylor stated that the May minutes were approved by acclamation with the changes noted by Bob Davis, which have been corrected.

**Old Business**

**a. Meeting Frequency**

Chair Taylor stated that there has been conversation about whether to continue to hold a monthly meeting or to meet less frequently.

Tom Phillips suggested keeping the meetings on a monthly schedule, but have the Chair cancel the meeting if there is no business to discuss.

### **b. Staff Updates**

Dale Wyrick stated that he will discuss this as part of the Work Group updates.

### **New Business**

Dale Wyrick thanked Alex Arnett and Mary McClellan from ReCommunity for their research and information gathering over the past eight months. He stated that the recycling presentation is a result of that work, along with a program assessment and ideas for improving the recycling program. The ideas are suggestions that need further research and can be changed if needed.

#### **a. Recycling Program Assessment Report**

Alex Arnett gave a PowerPoint presentation on the recently completed Recycling Program Assessment. The assessment identified strengths and weaknesses and established performance benchmarks for the program. A sample of a week's worth of recycling material were sorted and a very high rate of contamination - around 21% - was found, which is much higher than other cities' contamination rate (8%). There is only one Code Enforcement Officer looking at 82,000 homes. 90,000 recycling surveys were mailed out and there was a 10% response rate, which provided a lot of information about how residents use the recycling program. Industry standard figures tracked performance in Greensboro to other programs and found significant room for improvement. The findings were that there is a lack of program knowledge caused by lack of communication with the public; low participation and non-participation, particularly in East Greensboro; and a very high contamination rate. The City generates \$30 per ton in revenue for recycling; incurs \$44 per ton cost for solid waste disposal; and so obtains a savings of \$74 per ton moved from trash to recycling. It is time for Greensboro to step up and become a leader and innovator in this effort.

Recommendations include strengthening the program and improving performance; improving customer service and access to programs, and developing a plan that makes financial sense with a return on investment. More specifically, staff recommends:

- A new program of cart conversion by delivering a new blue container to every household and converting the existing brown containers to yard waste with

automatic yard waste pick-up. The benefits of using the new containers would be a cost saving of over half a million per year; it would simplify the yard waste codes and code enforcement, and maintain cleaner curbs and gutters. The new blue carts would eliminate confusion about which carts to use on what days and would also create a “buzz” about recycling. Integrated RFID technology improves data collection and performance management and inventory control. The cart investment is \$4.1 million with 5-8 year payback.

- Instituting a rebrand of the program with new education and outreach efforts, including direct marketing with a sticker or magnet (or both) to all households. Education is not a one-time effort and requires maintenance. There should be integrated services education. The cost estimate for this would be \$82,000.
- An increase in the number of Inspectors from one to four; equip those Inspectors with the necessary technology and tools; and increase inspected cans to 100%. The estimated cost is \$182,750.
- Updating the city Ordinance to state that recyclables are to be placed in the recycling bins; develop a policy to support service equity and move away from a la carte services; internal requirements to make recycling available to all city-owned spaces; consider new ordinances to increase the availability of recycling program to the public. This cost is to be determined.
- Create a Multi-Material Recycling Center for Styrofoam, mattresses, carpet, textiles, scrap metal, etc.; and a Swap Shed for good clothing, furniture, building materials, electronics and household items. The estimated cost is \$70,000.

In response to a question about using the brown can for yard waste, Alex Arnett stated that there will be options for overflow pick-up and seasonal considerations for how to handle heavy yard waste times. Dale Wyrick stated this would not presume the elimination of loose leaf pick-up program. There are a lot of details to be worked out and the main thing at this point in time is to focus on what people think about changing the brown can from recycling to yard waste. He pointed out that the recommendations are not set in stone and are for discussion at this time.

In response to a question concerning what contaminated items were found most frequently in recycling, Alex stated that, from the 60-65 ton sample they looked at, the major sources of contamination consisted of small papers and fiber along with Styrofoam that cannot go through the recycling machines.

Chair Taylor thanked Alex and Mary McClellan for their efforts and congratulated them on a fine study.

Dale Wyrick stated that this study would kick off the proposed rebranding program and there is still a lot of work to be done before anything would go to City Council. These ideas will now be sent to Work Group C-2, Recycling & Reduction Strategies, for review and allow them to make their findings and suggestions regarding next steps.

Bob Davis suggested that maybe this should be followed up with some smaller focus groups.

## **b. Work Group Reports**

### ***Work Group A – White Street Landfill Utilization & Post-Closure Strategies***

Bob Mays stated that the work group meeting was split into two different meetings to accommodate member schedules. The work group has not been able to find the quality time needed to research all the variables before them. Staff has looked at some of the technical data and is still gathering information. There are two other variables that need to be looked at; one is White Street and the 1,000 plus acres that make up White Street with post-closure, active Cell Phase III, soil borrow pits, etc. The other variable is road construction around White Street and the potential effect of that from a development point of view, as well as a solid waste point of view. It was decided that more data needs to be collected and public input. The Work Group will work on the timing of the two and will probably need a few meetings for that. NC A&T State University will be asked for feedback.

Bob Davis stated that he has indicated that something needs to be done with the landfill, particularly prior to the closing of phase III. If the composition of the Council changes and there is support for reopening the landfill to MSW, the community will have to fight a battle that has already been fought. Kay Brandon added that as she looked at the Resolution establishing this Commission, this is one of the Commission's charges.

Dale Wyrick stated that some time ago the Nealtown Road Connector alignment was identified east of S. Buffalo Creek and west of White Street, and where the new road will go there is an old unlined landfill that was started in the 1940s. It was used by the military for MSW disposal. The City has to relocate about 31,000 tons of waste out of that landfill in the new road alignment. He would like to share that data with this subgroup to vet this out and also take it before the Concerned Citizens of Northeast Greensboro and CEEJ.

Chris Marriott stated that there are multiple samplings with multiple pictures so they have a good idea of waste from the 1940s and it does not look the same as the waste at the transfer station now. He would like to present that information to the work group and let them ask all questions. Jamal Fox asked that any of that information be sent to him, as well as the work group participants.

### ***Work Group B1 – MSW Disposal Strategies – Alternative Facility Development***

Mark Taylor stated that their Work Group was asked to do a preliminary vetting of the MEMIOS proposal. He sent a progress report to members and asked that the Commission either endorse or not endorse their recommendation: WGB1 recommends to the full Solid Waste Management Commission that MEMIOS' proposal be forwarded to Dale Wyrick and staff, for further analysis and vetting to determine if a recommendation for action to City Council appears warranted. WGB1 offers its ongoing assistance to staff with this vetting process should the Commission agree with the recommendation. If Dale Wyrick and City staff conclude that a recommendation to City Council is warranted, WGB1 recommends that the revised MEMIOS proposal be returned to the SWMC for consideration and endorsement if it so chooses.

Chair Taylor moved the recommendation that City staff review the preliminary proposal for a Pilot Scale Project made by MEMIOS for further information, seconded by Mr. Mays. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### ***Work Group B3 – MSW Disposal Strategies – Regional Collaboration***

Tom Phillips stated that there is no report today.

### ***Work Group C2 – MSW Recycling & Reduction Strategies***

Bob Davis stated that they met last Thursday and agreed to submit to the Commission three reasons why they came to the conclusion of not endorsing the Waste Zero "Pay As You Throw" program.

Dale Wyrick stated that Waste Zero made a proposal earlier in the year. Bob's group decided to take a final look at the proposal to see if it should move forward. At this time, it is felt this is not a proposal that should move forward. A letter has been prepared to send to Waste Zero outlining the reasons. The first reason is that the City of Greensboro's residential solid waste program is not an Enterprise Fund and it is felt that

the residents would not be willing to buy into this program because there is no instant realization of any savings. The second reason is there are several other methods from a capacity standpoint that may be a better solution at this time. The third reason is that Waste Zero is one program in a number of “Pay as You Throw” programs that are available. He asked for other feedback from Commission members via e-mail.

Bob Davis stated that all the group members had a chance to vet and put out their thoughts on this and they fully agreed on the three reasons for not addressing the “Pay as You Throw” program at this time.

**c. Other New Business**

Stan Joseph with Waste Management stated that they have been awarded the franchise to construct and operate a regional MSW landfill in Randolph County. They have been awarded a service agreement to begin permitting operation immediately. The best case scenario for opening the new landfill is still the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2015; worst case is believed to be the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016.

**Comments from Commissioners, Staff, Council Representatives**

None

**Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Mark Taylor, Chair

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