SOLID WASTE ALTERNATIVES FUNDING TASK FORCE

MAY 16, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Curtis Binney (Chairman)
Mr. Dan Gorden
Ms. Brenda Boggs
Mr. Donald Taylor (arrived about 9:15 a.m.)
Ms. Chloe Gentry (arrived about 9:16 a.m.)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Commissioner Jennifer Hill
Richard Grier
Mr. Lindell Dorsett
Mr. Peter Tarby

OTHERS PRESENT

Ms. Wendy Taylor, Executive Office Manager, County Manager's Office
Mr. Jim Stivender, Public Works Director
Mr. Sandy Minkoff, County Attorney
Ms. Courtney Vincent, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER, ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Mr. Curt Binney, Chairman, called the meeting to order and announced that they had properly noticed the meeting. He noted that they were short one person for a quorum, but they would start the discussions without voting on anything until a quorum was present.

CONTINUATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORT

Mr. Binney commented that he believed all of the members had a copy of the updated recommendations and comments from last week.

Ms. Boggs asked for explanation about one of the bullet points under item 1 regarding continuing universal collection which stated that some of the residents do not use the service.

Mr. Stivender explained that some residents that live near drop off centers take it there instead of using the service, and there are some people who compost and recycle everything.

Ms. Boggs thought they should further clarify that by stating that some only use drop off centers and to also add that seasonal customers could not turn off the service.

Mr. Binney announced at 9:15 a.m. that they now had a quorum present of four people, with the arrival of Mr. Taylor. He noted that universal collection was being treated similar to fire and hospital district taxes in that it does not get a pro-rated share. He opined that they should lay out the plusses and minuses of each recommendation for the Board to help them make their determination.

Mr. Minkoff commented that there are a significant number of part-time residents who oppose the 12-month bill for solid waste, because they view it as a service that they are only using for part of the year rather than a tax such as for schools.

Mr. Doug McCoy stated that counties that do not have universal service charge a lot more to residents who request that service individually due to economies of scale and efficiency.

Mr. Stivender opined that a big plus would be stability for the number of units, since those customers would also be on the tax rolls.

Mr. McCoy suggested that they state for that bullet point "Seasonal customers cannot turn off service, but everyone participating in the system keeps overall costs lower."

Mr. Binney noted that there were a lot of plusses and only one minus regarding universal collection, and there were always going to be opponents to any system or way of doing things. He commented that he thought the way it was currently written was alright, and this is the preliminary thought process invoker, which would be followed by numerous conversations between the Commissioners and staff.

There was consensus to leave item one the way it was written, except for adding clarification after "Some residents do not use the service" to state "as they utilize drop-off centers and/or recycle all of their waste." They also changed the word "continues" to "enhances" in the bullet that stated "Continues existing program that citizens are familiar with."

Mr. Taylor pointed out they used the term "automated" collection in item 4 and "mechanized" collection in item 5 and asked whether both those words meant the same thing and were redundant.

Mr. Stivender explained that one emphasized the mechanized collection and the other emphasized the single stream as part of the mechanized collection.

Mr. Minkoff suggested that item 4 state that it was for solid waste in order to separate it from item 5.

Mr. McCoy pointed out that automated referred to the one-armed bandit type of truck exclusively, and some areas might not be able to be serviced that way. He suggested that they use the term "mechanized," which refers to a cart that was picked up with "semi-automated" type of equipment.

On a motion by Mr. Gorden, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF voted to change item 4 to "Provide economically feasible, institute mechanized collection for solid waste" and to leave item 5 the same.

Mr. Gorden requested to add a plus bullet point under item 3 to state “taking the yard waste out of the waste stream.

Mr. McCoy suggested the wording “allow yard waste to be recycled, which removes it from the solid waste stream.”

Mr. Binney opined that that bullet would be redundant with the ones that state “encourages recycling.”

Mr. Debo stated that yard waste was not allowed in a class 1 landfill unless there is a gas collection system that can be generated and used for energy production, and although it was allowed in a class 3 landfill, Lake County does not have a class 3 landfill.

Ms. Gentry suggested that a strong positive was that they were separating waste that is not allowed in their landfill.

Mr. Minkoff added that separating yard waste from the waste stream will keep the County from having to put in a gas collection system.

Mr. Fred Hawkins stated that he would check that rule, because he believes that has been changed.

Mr. Stivender suggested a bullet which stated “allows yard waste to be recycled and removed from the waste stream” for item 3, which was agreed to by the committee.

On a motion by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Gorden and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF moved to delete the word “automated” in item 3 and replace it with the word “mechanized.”

Mr. Binney opined that the bullets under 3 were still confusing to him, so the committee gave consensus to add “of solid waste” after “encourages recycling.”

Mr. McCoy suggested that they clarify the word “mechanized” to explain that it was with toters or containers for people who would not know what mechanized means.

Ms. Boggs stated that they could attach a glossary to the last page to explain some of those terms.

Mr. Binney proposed that they could put that description in the executive summary, and he related that he and Mr. Stivender would talk about where to put in the technical definitions.

Mr. Minkoff asked for clarification of the collection frequency referred to in item 3.

Mr. Binney explained that his understanding was that the main day of MSW would stay the same, and the second day would be eliminated and would either be replaced by yard waste if applicable or nothing if inapplicable.

Mr. Minkoff asked if it would work better if item 3 was moved to after item 5. The task force agreed to change item 3 to 5, item 4 to 3, and item 5 to 4.

Ms. Gentry advocated changing the negative bullet in number 2 which stated that there was different service quality for some customers to both a plus and minus, since some customers are happy about that.

Mr. Binney recommended changing the word “quality” to “level.”

Mr. Minkoff stated that “inconsistent” was probably a better word than “different.”

Ms. Gentry advocated the wording “potential for inconsistent service quality between haulers.”

Mr. Minkoff suggested that they also add a positive bullet which states that it makes it easier to provide different service levels.

Mr. Binney directed that they move on to item 6.

Ms. Boggs related that she believed they were going to change item 6 which recommended maintaining bulk item collection to item 7 and put in commercial recycling.

Mr. Binney commented that he believed Mr. Minkoff told them at the last meeting that they did not have the authority to mandate commercial recycling.

Mr. Minkoff clarified that he indicated that they did not have control over commercial recycling and could not mandate commercial customers to use their franchise hauler for recycling.

Ms. Boggs proposed that they recommend that the County ask the haulers to step up their efforts for commercial recycling through education.

Mr. Minkoff responded that they could require their haulers to offer commercial recycling to every customer, but they could not require the customer to use their hauler.

Mr. Binney asked if they wanted to insert a new item 6 with verbiage about encouraging commercial recycling.

On a motion by Ms. Boggs, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF added a new item 6 which stated “Haulers shall offer commercial customers recycling services and educational programs.”

Mr. Minkoff stated that they could add all of the bullets that they have under the recycling item.

Mr. Binney directed that they would move on to the old item 6, which was now the new item 7 regarding maintaining bulk item collection.

Ms. Gentry commented that they should have a negative bullet point under that item, since they should objectively try to show all of the positive and negative effects of each recommendation.

Mr. Minkoff responded that it was expensive for the hauler, but there was no additional charge to the customer.

Mr. McCoy commented that if they did not have it, though, it would cause all kinds of other problems.

On a motion by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Gentry and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF voted for verbiage in item 7 as follows: "Maintain residential bulk item collection upon request," adding a third negative bullet stating "higher cost of service" and a positive bullet which stated "helps facilitate mechanized collection."

Mr. Binney stated that they were now on the old item 7, which was the new item 8 to establish an option for household hazardous waste and prescription waste collection.

After some discussion regarding the household hazardous waste collection recommendation, Mr. Minkoff clarified that they could change the last part of that recommendation from "including 26 mobile pickups per year" to "including a minimum of 26 community collection events per year at convenient locations."

Mr. Taylor pointed out that the bullet regarding concern for public safety should be a plus as well as a minus.

Mr. Stivender noted that bullet point should be deleted.

Mr. Binney asked why the wording for that recommendation starts out "Establish option for hazardous waste…"

Mr. Stivender stated that they would take that part out, and he also noted that they would not be taking prescription drugs at the drop off center, because they would need a law enforcement factor for that. After some discussion regarding individual on-call pickup of those items, he indicated that could be put in as an option in the contract with the haulers. He explained that things in this document may change and evolve and that everything in it is a starting point for 2014.

Mr. McCoy commented that a lot of government agencies are looking at what they budget for handling hazardous waste and what they are spending versus what an at-your-door program could do, and he opined that they could spend significantly less taxpayer money in a lot of cases on that program. In addition, one of the other advantages he had heard was that the amount of household hazardous waste collected through drop-off centers and community events is only about two percent of what is out there, but the at-your-door could result in as high as 20 percent of that material being collected.

Mr. Taylor reiterated that education would have to be used as well.

Mr. Stivender responded to a question from Ms. Gentry about the cost of this kind of collection by relating that they would use existing staff and replacing an existing truck that was 20 years old.

Mr. Minkoff clarified that the $5 to $10 per household cost per year would include disposal as well.

Mr. McCoy pointed out that this service did not have to be part of the collection agreement.

Mr. Minkoff proposed wording for that recommendation which stated, "Establish household hazardous waste and prescription waste collection for residential and small-quantity generators, including a minimum of 26 community collection events per year at convenient locations. Evaluate whether curbside pickup of household hazardous waste is economically feasible and switch to a curbside system if it proves to be economically feasible."

Dr. Ney suggested that they change "prescription drug waste" to "pharmaceutical waste," which would include over the counter drugs and vitamins.

Mr. Binney proposed that they change the word "establish" to "continue," which met with approval.

Ms. Boggs suggested that they change the word "prescription waste" to "pharmaceutical waste" in the bullet point that states "Removes prescription waste from the waste stream," and she advocated adding another positive bullet point stating that it protects the hauler employees who pick up the waste.

On a motion by Mr. Gorden, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF moved to accept the wording for the hazardous waste collection as follows: "Continue household hazardous waste and pharmaceutical waste collection for residential and small quantity generators, including a minimum of 26 community collection events per year at convenient locations. Evaluate residential curbside pickup of household hazardous waste and implement such curbside pickup if economically feasible," including changing "prescription" to "pharmaceutical" in the bullet point and adding the two bullets regarding protecting workers and the underground water supply. Also, it included deleting the bullet regarding concern for public safety.

Ms. Gentry asked if they would have to require having yard waste bagged in brown bags for the old item #3, which was the new #5.

Mr. McCoy answered that it would have to be bagged in those types of bags if it was going to be processed, but a bagging operation at the site would drive up the costs.

Mr. Binney pointed out that they had discussed whether or not they would have a container for yard waste.

Mr. Taylor added that they were discouraging bagging.

Mr. McCoy responded that some piles of yard waste would not be able to be containerized, which would be manually loaded without a container.

Mr. Minkoff proposed that one bullet state that they would have to use a biodegradable container, which would have to be a paper bag or cardboard box for yard waste pickup, or they could just state that they would not be able to use plastic bags.

Dr. Ney pointed out that there was a new plastic bag coming out that was biodegradable, although it might not be called plastic.

Mr. McCoy explained that it was a bag that will break down in an MSW landfill, but it is still a type of bag that will cause problems during processing compost.

Mr. Minkoff stated that they would just add a negative bullet stating "Cannot use plastic bags for yard waste."

Mr. Binney directed the committee's attention to the next recommendation, which was the old #8 and the new #9 regarding operation of the drop-off centers, commenting that the drop-off center concept is a good idea, but he opined that they needed to add some verbiage in there to evaluate the feasibility of privatization of those centers.

Mr. Stivender commented that he believed they could be run a lot more efficiently than they have been and provide better customer service, and he related they were currently in the middle of doing that and looking at the best way of optimizing the sites.

Mr. Binney suggested that that recommendation should read "Continue operating drop-off centers with days and hours of operation based on demand, with consideration given to privatization."

Ms. Gentry advocated substituting the word "offering" for "operating." She also commented that one of the main pluses they were missing is that it would minimize unlawful dumping.

On a motion Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Gentry and carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0, the SWATF approved the wording of the recommendation as follows: "Continue offering drop off centers and days and hours of operation based on demand, with consideration given to privatization."

<u>Disposal recommendations</u>

Mr. Minkoff noted that they had Mr. Dorsett's comments.

Mr. Binney related that Mr. Dorsett recommended deleting the words "outside facilities" on the second line of the old #9 and insert the term "regional disposal options." He noted that this recommendation was to keep the landfill open, entertain Covanta through the contract process, and continue to use volume reduction through recycling. He also read the rest of the item #9 relating that the final decision on how to dispose of waste should be made on an entirely of factors and that the Board shall make this decision considering the solution over a period of time of at least 20 years.

Ms. Boggs expressed concern that 20 years would be too long a time period and that new technologies would be available during that time.

Mr. Debo explained that the permitting cycle for operating landfills presently is five years, and every five years they would have to renew their permit, which would be four permit cycles in a 20-year period.

Mr. Minkoff pointed out that this did not mean that they would have to do 20-year agreements, but that the planning would need to be 20 years out, and maybe that should be clarified. He recommended adding "Such decisions shall be flexible enough to accommodate changes in economic conditions and new technologies."

Mr. Binney stated that he was not comfortable putting all of disposal under one bullet, and he believed they needed to talk at least about Covanta as a separate item, including whether it would be beneficial to renegotiate with them and that there should be no put or pay. He also opined that recycling and the landfill should each have their own bullets.

Mr. Minkoff noted that Mr. Dorsett also mentioned the same thing in his comments.

Mr. Stivender advocated breaking up the factors mentioned in #9 and putting them in some kind of order.

Mr. Taylor stated that he was not sure about the priorities, but he believed he would put Covanta as #1, and he asked if it was the task force's place to prioritize.

Ms. Gentry thought it was, and she believed they should encourage recycling and then go towards Covanta and know exactly what they want to happen with Covanta, using the landfill as their backup and negotiation tool. She proposed that they put the pros and cons of each disposal method, what their preferences were, and whether they were economically feasible and to give the Board a summary the task force has learned this past year.

Dr. Ney related that he sent the committee members an e-mail listing all of the disposal techniques along with the pros and cons of them, and he opined that there were only two available entities that could take the waste, which were Covanta and the landfill.

Mr. Treshler opined that right now the first sentence was in contradiction with the rest of the sentence, because it states that their decision is going to be based on entirety of facts, including cost and environmental, but the first sentence is saying economically best, and he suggested striking the word "economically" from the first sentence. He also suggested that instead of "at least 20 years" in the parenthesis, they could have the words "to reflect a planning strategy of at least 20 years" there instead.

Mr. Taylor stated that he agreed with that and mentioned the words "comprehensive planning."

Mr. Stivender added that the system would maintain some flexibility where they would look at the options recommended by the task force and weigh them based on certain factors, such as cost and hauling distance for the cities.

Mr. Gorden opined that the decision would hinge mainly on economics and cost per ton.

Mr. Binney asked Mr. Stivender and staff to come back and retool the old #9 which was the new #10, breaking them down into four components, and they would discuss that at the next meeting.

Mr. Stivender mentioned that he would balance economic and environmental factors, since both were important. He summarized that they were all in favor of encouraging recycling and volume reduction, with consideration given to privatization. He believed that the task force felt they should consider the use of Covanta and that it was a viable option given no put or pay and through negotiation.

Ms. Boggs mentioned that they know they definitely want increased recycling and continued regional relationships with the cities.

Mr. Minkoff added that they want the use of the Lake County landfill to be last, with everything else being in the middle.

Mr. Stivender commented that he wanted the disposal of hazardous waste to be in there also.

Mr. Binney asked Mr. Stivender to put each prong in there that is mentioned in that item.

Financial

Mr. Binney asked the task force members to scan the items under the financial portion to see if there is anything in there that they could give to staff to work on this week.

Ms. Boggs noted that for the general fund, costs that are used by all of the residents are the drop-off facilities, small quantity generators, collection after storms, and education.

Mr. Stivender responded that they probably do not want to include anything regarding storm events, since it would be taken care of by FEMA as long as it met the threshold.

Ms. Boggs noted that they want to make sure that the special assessment is still on the tax bill.

Ms. Gentry stated that the financial section might be the perfect place to discuss the potential of converting to a pay as you go type program for the residents in terms of the different sized bins.

Mr. Gorden stated that he thought they decided that a 64-gallon sized container would be best and that residents would pay more if they needed another container.

Mr. McCoy added unless there was need on a case by case basis for a smaller container for elderly or infirm residents.

Mr. Gorden left the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Binney stated that they did not have to get into the detail of the size of the container.

Ms. Gentry opined that item #10 and #11 contradicted each other, since one of their objectives is to eliminate the need for the general fund, but the other recommendation is to use the general fund.

Ms. Boggs responded that it was referring to certain programs for people who did not live in the unincorporated areas.

Mr. Stivender explained that currently there is a lot more money coming into the fund than it costs to run those programs, but they would still use the general fund for the services they want to provide to the incorporated residents,.

Mr. Binney proposed that they move the solid waste assessment item up above the one above it and state "ensure the solid waste assessment covers all enterprise fund costs, except as noted below."

Mr. Stivender stated that the other alternative would be to charge at drop-off centers, but he did not think that was a good option.

Ms. Gentry advocated changing the word "eliminates" to "reduces" in the bullet that states, "Eliminates the need for general fund costs for Solid Waste operations" under the recommendation to ensure the solid waste assessment covers all enterprise fund costs, since they would be using general fund dollars for hazardous waste operations. She also stated that the biggest positive was not that residents get something for free, but that they were providing a necessary environmental safety service.

On a motion by Ms. Boggs, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a vote of 4-0, the SWATF accepted the wording for the new item #11, as revised.

Mr. Binney directed the task force's attention to the old recommendation #10, which was the new #12.

Ms. Boggs wanted to add the word "all" before "education programs" to make it clear it was for more than hazardous waste, as well as a small quantity generator program.

Mr. Binney clarified the wording of that recommendation as "Fund hazardous waste, drop-off centers, and all solid-waste related education programs using the general fund." There was consensus to take off the words "for hazardous materials" in the second bullet. He also noted that Mr. Dorsett wanted to add a bullet that stated "Will likely increase participation by residents," which met with the committee's approval.

Mr. Minkoff advocated that it should state "Fund non-curbside hazardous waste," because curbside service is part of the enterprise fund. He also suggested that they could break that recommendation into three separate items, deal with them all separately, and then cater the pluses and minuses to each one.

Mr. Stivender explained that those services would be directly tied to those parts of the program, which would be more delineated and tracked than in the past.

Mr. Cooper added that it was difficult to know what they are gong to spend looking forward, but they would be able to tell in arrears. He related that they did not have the tracking mechanism this current fiscal year, but they will have the provisions in place to be able to track how much money is spent for each thing as soon their reorganization in finalized and implemented.

Ms. Gentry left the meeting at 11:26 a.m., resulting in a loss of a quorum.

Mr. Stivender related that staff would probably meet tomorrow to work though what the SWATF has asked them to do at this meeting, and they should be ready for next week's meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Binney announced that the next meeting would be Monday, May 23, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Agricultural Center.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.