

SOLID WASTE ALTERNATIVES FUNDING TASK FORCE

MAY 23, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Curtis Binney (Chairman)
Mr. Richard Grier (arrived at 9:15 a.m.)
Mr. Dan Gorden
Mr. Donald Taylor
Ms. Brenda Boggs
Ms. Chloe Gentry (arrived at 9:20 a.m.)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Commissioner Jennifer Hill
Mr. Lindell Dorsett
Mr. Peter Tarby

OTHERS PRESENT

Ms. Wendy Taylor, Executive Office Manager, County Manager's Office
Mr. Jim Stivender, Public Works Director
Ms. Melanie Marsh, Deputy County Attorney
Ms. Susan Boyajan, Recording Secretary
Jeff Cooper, Financial Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER, ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM,

Mr. Curt Binney, Chairman, called the meeting to order and announced that they had properly noticed the meeting and that a quorum was established with four members present at the start of the meeting.

MINUTE APPROVAL

On a motion by Mr. Gorden, seconded by Ms. Boggs and carried unanimously by a vote of 4-0, the SWATF approved the minutes of April 11, 2011.

Mr. Binney explained that since this was their last SWATF meeting, there would be minutes from previous meetings and this meeting that would be done by the Clerk of the Courts in the future, and Mr. Minkoff has recommended that the task force authorize him to approve those future sets of minutes.

On a motion by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Boggs and carried unanimously by a vote of 4-0, the SWATF approved giving authority to the Chairman to approve any future outstanding minutes.

CONTINUATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORT

Mr. Binney recapped that last week they made a few changes to the first five recommendations under collection, with the most notable thing being that they inserted the word "mechanized" for the word

“automated,” and he made sure that everyone agreed with the revised handout reflecting those changes. He also recapped that last week they voted to move items 6 through 9 around, which were the remainder of the collection portion. He noted that they did not have discussion regarding the disposal recommendations, because they had asked staff to make some changes to the way it was formatted. He read and went over item 10.

Dr. Ney asked how the County Commissioners would know what options were out there if they have never been presented with that information before.

Mr. Stivender responded that he would make a presentation to the Board which would list all of the options that were in the report and give the background information associated with it sometime in the fall, so that he could move forward with working on contracts in January or February of next year.

Mr. Binney asked if they need to include a fifth area in item 10 for alternative disposal methods such as plasma as part of the analysis process.

Mr. Gorden opined that he did not think so, and he believed that there were only two viable options, which were to burn or bury it, since plasma was not really a viable option at this point.

Ms. Boggs pointed out that they were looking ahead 30 years, and there could possibly be other options that were being researched that could be available in the future.

Mr. Binney asked if that should be a separate bullet recommending that the County stay attuned to future options.

Mr. Doug McCoy from Waste Management pointed out that items 13 and 14 addressed that point.

Mr. Grier opined that this document is substantial, though not complete for 2014, but it lacks vision, and he believed that they should talk more about future options for 10 to 20 years out.

Mr. Stivender commented that if they add something, it would be a broad statement about future technologies as they become financially feasible, and they were deterred from some options because of the substantial financial investment and unknown success of those options.

Mr. Binney suggested that there should be some delineation in there as an item 19 for the reader that there were new technologies, but they are not viable at this point in time to close the loop on this issue.

Mr. Grier suggested that they put it in the executive summary rather than making it a bullet point.

Ms. Boggs suggested putting that under item 12.

Mr. Binney commented that he believed Mr. Grier’s suggestion was good to add something in his general overview.

Mr. Stivender clarified that they wanted to state that they embrace new technologies that may exist over the next 30 years and recognize the viability of emerging technologies for disposal systems over the planning horizon as they become viable and financially feasible.

Mr. Grier opined that he believed they were there to recommend those options without worrying about the cost, and they were so focused on small things that they were missing the vision. He then apologized for not realizing that the task force had not discussed disposal options yet.

Mr. Stivender explained that there was a ranking in this that came from Mr. Dorsett's earlier comments, such as first removing hazardous waste, then focusing on all possible ways for reduction of volume, and after that working something out with the cities on improving efficiency in the unincorporated areas, also including recycling, disposal, and minimizing the landfill. He stated that they would put something out on those four-pronged approaches trying to find disposal sites which included Covanta, but their goal was also to get rid of a lot of the undesirable waste quickly to reduce the volume.

Mr. Binney read aloud a list of priorities that Mr. Dorsett provided to them at the last meeting, which were volume reduction through recycling and reuse of yard waste; establishing agreements to improve efficiency and reduce costs of collection, recycling, and disposal; negotiate a contract with Covanta that is favorable to the County; and minimize the use of the landfill to maximize its useful life. He suggested that they leave 11 through 18 the way they are and just tweak item 10 to list the priorities with the subsequent items to let them know what the task force thinks the Board should be accomplishing in that order.

Mr. Grier stated that he had a problem with No. 10, because he felt that they were asking the Board to do what he thought the task force was mandated to do, and although he liked Mr. Dorsett's priority list, he believed they should recommend the options as well as the order in which they were recommended.

Mr. Binney asked if they should state instead that the task force utilized a four-prong analysis and then came up with a conclusion. He clarified that they would delete the words "BCC" and insert the words "task force" as well as delete the word "should," to read "The task force utilized a four-prong analysis of the disposal methods..." and delete all of the words after "and choose" to insert language that is more acceptable.

Mr. Stivender recommended that they prioritize the words in parentheses to reflect the order of those priorities, putting volume reduction/reuse/recycling first.

Mr. Binney clarified that the task force felt that the County should retain the landfill for its own use rather than sell that asset.

Mr. Grier commented that they should suggest that the County analyze the possibility of purchasing the contiguous 80 acres to the landfill that are for sale.

Mr. Gorden opined that burning the waste would be the most expensive option, and he thought the priorities should be in order of cost.

Mr. Grier stated that he believed the most expensive option would be to haul it out of the area, and the cheapest option would be to use their own landfill.

Mr. Mike Stutz from Waste Management opined that burning the garbage would be the most expensive option.

Mr. Gorden pointed out that one of the problems is that they do not have any cost information for those options at this point.

Mr. Binney stated that he would make it clear in the executive summary to the Commissioners that they do not know a lot of those numbers, which have yet to be negotiated.

Ms. Boggs suggested that they state in number 10, "These are our priorities based on the facts that they know; however, once negotiations begin with the different companies, they might have to change some of those priorities, which is why they have listed other priorities."

Mr. Binney pointed out that volume reduction could also be accomplished through burning, so they could change it to a) primary goal is volume reduction with recycling and reuse of yard waste, b) volume reduction through other means such as waste to energy, education, and legislation.

Mr. Stivender commented that they want to separate the waste so that they could take the yard waste, recyclables, and other waste to different locations, and Covanta becomes one of those steps after that volume reduction, because it becomes a destination, although it does reduce volume afterwards. He explained that the Board would make the decision about whether the options presented were financially feasible and viable for them.

Ms. Gentry opined that she thought they should highlight that the first step in their proposal was the separation of trash, since they were recommending something dramatically different than what the County has been doing in the past, and then they could financially and environmentally make the decision of where those separate entities should go for disposal.

Mr. Binney suggested that they lay out their priorities and write them on the board, which he believed would help things to fall in order.

Mr. Stivender related that the incinerator resulted in their recycling going from 13 percent to 84 percent according to the state numbers, but they wanted to get that 13 percent a lot higher before taking the waste to the incinerator.

Mr. Binney stated that he believed the priority for the task force was a) to reduce volume at the curb by going to a single-stream and getting more into the recycling and reuse, and that is why the committee voted for the one day per week compost pickup. He believed they could prioritize only what they can control, and the interlocal agreements with the cities are an unknown at this point. Also, he opined that before they could have those agreements, they needed to have a good contract with the haulers that the cities would want to be on board with.

Mr. Jeff Cooper opined that the most important thing was to get the hazardous waste out of the waste stream first, which would leave a smaller amount of waste, and then they wanted to recycle.

Mr. Grier commented that they should try to reduce overall volume for preservation of resources, which is why education becomes a component of their recommendation.

Mr. Debo explained that before Governor Scott came into office, it was the intent of the DEP to reduce waste, which was part of the energy bill that set the 75 percent goal. However, the mandate was not funded and could not impose any penalties. He added that waste to energy was a process in that waste stream, but not the ultimate disposal location, since they generate an incinerator ash that has to go to the landfill, although the MSW is physically reduced to ash.

Mr. Binney commented that he was more concerned with what they write and convey to the Board about what they mean by volume reduction.

Mr. Stivender clarified that the objective over the last several years has been to find an alternative to landfills to minimize waste's occupation of space underground.

Mr. Binney suggested that they state that the number one priority is to reduce the amount of volume that goes into the landfill primarily through recycling and reuse of yard waste, and subsequently through other means such as waste to energy.

Ms. Gentry suggested adding "and byproducts" after volume to refer to the ash generated by Covanta.

Ms. Boggs read a culmination of the committee's ideas she had written on the board, which stated "a) Reduce amount of volume and byproduct disposal through recycling of MSW, household hazardous waste, e-waste, and reuse of yard waste" and "b) alternative disposal to further reduce volume through 1) waste to energy, 2) bioreactor landfill, and 3) future technologies to further reduce volume."

Mr. Stivender commented that there were two principles involved, which were the principal of solid waste management in eliminating it going to the landfill and the economics of it.

Ms. Boggs read the next point after discussion from the task force which was, "c) transfer remaining waste to a state-permitted location to maximize the useful life of the central facility (landfill)."

Mr. Debo pointed out that there is no Class 3 landfill currently in Lake County, and the County was utilizing outside landfills to dispose of their Class 3 waste, including pressure-treated lumber.

After further discussion, Ms. Boggs read the updated recommendation, which stated "The task force utilized a four-prong analysis of disposal methods to maximize the useful life of the County's central facility."

Mr. Binney stated that after that they would insert those three bullet points as a, b, and c.

Mr. Grier recommended adding a subheading d) to consider purchasing the available 80 contiguous acres at the landfill. He asked, however, whether the priority was to maximize the useful life of the landfill or to reduce solid waste.

Mr. Binney commented that they were all-encompassing, since if they reduce solid waste, the landfill would last longer, but he believed the priority was to reduce volume. After discussion, he noted that there was consensus to mention the purchase of the additional acres of landfill property in another part of the recommendation document. He asked whether they should keep the plus and minus points under item number 10, and there was discussion regarding that.

Mr. Stivender commented that he believed that they have already addressed the two positives in bullet points a through c under that item.

There was consensus to remove those positive bullets under that item.

Mr. Binney opined that that they should move item 15 up to follow item 10 in order to follow the priorities that they have identified, and items 15 and 16 would then become items 11 and 12. He added that item 18 regarding the landfill should become item 13, and those three items would cover the bullets that are under item 10. He asked Ms. Cindy Heffler, Assessment and Customer Service Supervisor, to read back the wording for recommendation item 10.

Ms. Heffler read, "The task force looked at various disposal methods over the past year, and their priority is volume reduction, which will result in maximizing the useful life of the central facility."

Mr. Binney added that the three bullets on the board will be under that.

On a motion by Ms. Gentry, seconded by Mr. Grier and carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0, the task force moved to accept the language read by Ms. Heffler for item number 10.

Mr. Binney continued to explain that item 17 would move to the financial part of the recommendation, and item 18 would become item 13. He read the new item 11 as "The County should place emphasis on removing hazardous and electronic waste from the waste stream."

Mr. Grier stated that they have discussed recommending having a regular curb pickup for those kinds of wastes, and he did not think the wording was strong enough.

Mr. Stivender explained that this item just repeated what was already stated in detail in item 8 under the collection section.

Ms. Gentry asked whether the Board was expecting the task force to tell them how it was going to be disposed of and if they were going to be using outside contractors to dispose of that waste for them.

Mr. Binney responded that he believed it was implicit that it was going to be part of the negotiated contract, since all enhancements would have to be privatized and contracted.

Mr. Stivender related that the County has been discussing utilizing a County program or campaign to educate the community about the hazardous waste, but the disposal would go to some kind of private sector site. He asked whether it was redundant to have this item in there.

Mr. Binney responded that one of the reasons for having this item is to support what they stated in a, b, and c. He suggested that the wording can relay that they continue to place emphasis on removing hazardous and electronic waste from the waste stream through privatization or enhanced bidding.

Mr. Stivender stated that the only way to expand that program would be to go private with it.

Mr. Binney suggested the wording "The County should enhance its program of removing hazardous waste and electronic waste from the waste stream through privatization."

Ms. Boggs opined that she believed privatization would refer to finance rather than disposal.

Mr. Binney pointed out that item 21 refers to the funding of hazardous waste and electronic collection, and he suggested that they include the privatization in item 21 under funding, since items 11 and 12 flow well together and follow their priorities.

Mr. Stivender added that they were looking at funding hazardous out of the general fund so that both city and county residents could all use the same service.

Ms. Gentry opined that this item does not address disposal of hazardous waste.

Mr. Jeff Cooper pointed out that the only thing that gets expanded is the collection, but the disposal stays the same.

On a motion by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Grier and carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0, the SWATF approved the verbiage ""The County should enhance its current program of disposing of hazardous waste and electronic waste from the waste stream through a state approved facility" for item 11.

Mr. Stivender suggested changing the wording for item 12 to "The County should reduce volume through increased recycling and reuse of yard waste."

Ms. Gentry suggested separating the recommendation for disposal of recycled materials from the disposal of yard waste and give clear direction as to where all of the waste would be going.

Mr. Binney clarified that item 12 would state "The County should reduce volume through increased recycling," with item 13 stating that "The County should reduce volume through reuse of yard waste." After further discussion, he suggested that they could add in item 12 "through the use of private vendors."

Mr. Stivender commented that the term recyclables is open ended, so they might need to specify "traditional" or "household" recycling.

Mr. Grier stated that he believed C & D (construction and demolition) debris grouped with industrial and commercial should be a separate category and an additional recommendation, and he would like to see the County increase the variety as well as the volume of recycled materials, especially if they go to a single-stream system.

Mr. Stivender clarified they would only do that where the market is available, because they are not in a position to stockpile material.

Mr. Debo noted that C & D debris recycling is a big-time business in South Florida, but not in Central Florida; however, he believed that private businesses might start doing that in Central Florida in the future.

Mr. Binney indicated that they should expand on item 12 to say "increase recycling, reuse of yard waste, and construction materials through privatization."

Mr. Stivender suggested that they put all of that under one number with a subheading of a, b, and c as they had done previously, since he believed that less numbered items would seem like a more efficient document.

Mr. Grier did not think recycling would require more funding, because there were studies that show that well-run recycling operations are less expensive than solid waste ones.

Mr. Stivender recommended taking the mention of the cost of recycling out.

Ms. Gentry opined that they were not being explicit enough regarding what materials they were considering for recycling. She also suggested that for the disposal section they should state that they would take the streamline recyclables that were collected and dispose of them at an outside facility.

Mr. Grier pointed out that they were talking about taking it away from the County's central facility and sending it to a private single-stream facility.

Mr. Cooper explained that the recycling could also be brought to the County's facility to be sorted, but since the task force recommended disposal of the recycling through a privatization process, which was a change in the way it was currently processed, the recommendation could point that out.

Mr. Stivender mentioned that their goal was to have the vendors who collect the recyclables take it someplace else, so the County would not be the designated location for that, which would reduce the volume dramatically. He added that it would have to be phased out within the next couple of years for the County's customers such as the cities that were still bringing the recyclables to the County.

There was much discussion back and forth about the wording for item 12.

On a motion by Ms. Boggs, seconded by Ms. Gentry and carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0, the SWATF approved the following verbiage for Item 12 "The County should increase single-stream recycling of residential and commercial waste, with all recycling to be processed through a privatized vendor."

Mr. Binney asked whether they would have to tweak item 13 if they insert the word “construction” in place of the residential and commercial recycling.

Ms. Boggs suggested that they take out the words “single-stream”.

Mr. Debo indicated that C & D debris was often oversized and is not necessarily picked up by the haulers at curbside, and it is only accepted at central or private landfills. He explained that the County made a decision back in 1998 to curtail the acceptance of C & D, since the BCC was entertaining a lawsuit with Covanta because of the terms of the contract, and the County exported all of that material to other Class 3 permitted landfills. He added that their facility was at 98 percent capacity, and they wanted to save some of that capacity to accommodate a bad storm season.

Mr. Cooper added that the County’s price for C & D debris is at a high level to discourage people from taking it there. He suggested that they could state in the educational section to send out to all of the developers a list of the local LEED certified recycling C & D locations.

Mr. Debo suggested that the committee not address this issue, because the state is considering changing the long-term care period from five years to 30 years. He related that in 1998 the Board made the decision to preserve their acreage for Class 1 disposal, which was what they designed their land use for in that area.

Mr. Stivender noted that there was a private facility in the eastern part of the County which closed due to lack of volume, but it would open again if the volume picked up, and it was not the County’s main emphasis.

Mr. McCoy explained that an increase in the price of land and C & D disposal rates would make it economically feasible to recycle C & D, but currently it was more economical to just put it in the ground.

Mr. Binney brought the focus back to yard waste and asked Mr. Stivender if they would process the yard waste at their facility.

Mr. Stivender responded that they would grind it on site if they receive it there, since it was the cheapest way, and depending what the outcome of that is, it would be utilized in different ways. However, he pointed out that it would be totally cost prohibitive to haul that material, and he hoped that the haulers would be bringing that to a private facility.

The task force concurred that the wording of item 13 should be “The County should increase the reuse of yard waste.”

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Binney mentioned that they would not finish going over the recommendations today, and he asked the task force members to send their availability dates to Ms. Wendy Taylor, Executive Office Manager, County Manager's Office, so that they could meet again before giving their recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. Melanie Marsh, Deputy County Attorney, suggested that the task force vote today to ask for an extension so that the County could prepare that resolution, since they would not be meeting again until after June 1.

On a motion by Mr. Grier, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0, the SWATF voted to ask the BCC for a 60-day extension.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.