

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Solid Waste Operations Conference Room Minutes of the Meeting February 25, 2004

The meeting of the Solid Waste Technical Management Committee was held at the Department of Solid Waste Operations Conference Room at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2004, with the following persons in attendance:

TMC Committee Attendance:

City of Clearwater	Robert Brumback
City of Dunedin	Randy Rudd
City Group A	Bob Cyr
City Group B	Allen Godfrey
City Group C	Richard Raus
City of Largo	Bennie Boyd
City of Pinellas Park	James Walker
City of St. Pete Beach	Connie Kest
City of St. Petersburg	Chuck Schauer
City of St. Petersburg	Steven Smith
City of Tarpon Springs	Barbara Hugg
Private Sector	Sandy Sanders
Pinellas County	Mike Sweet

Also Present:

PCU Utilities	Pick Talley
PCU Finance	Lisa Ledoux
PCU Finance	Melanie Ventimeglia
Solid Waste Operations	Warren Smith
Solid Waste Operations	Bob Hauser
Solid Waste Operations	Judy Lund
Solid Waste Operations	Deb Bush
Solid Waste Operations	Sam Parker
Solid Waste Operations	Kelsi Oswald
SWO Recycling	Marie Jacobs
PC Planning Department	Martha Gray
Utilities Customer Service	Tim Wiley
LJK Consultants, Inc.	Luke Koon
Pinellas County Attorney	Don Crowell

Waste Management
Wheelabrator Pinellas, Inc.
Wheelabrator Pinellas, Inc.
Wheelabrator Pinellas, Inc.
Angeles Recycled Materials

Holland Mangum
Mark Santella
Mike Irwin
Tom Koeppel
Robert Kasper

Call to Order/Opening Remarks - Chairman Bob Brumback called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Bob introduced Pick Talley, Utilities Director, and stated that we have been working on an important legislative issue and Pick is here today to comment on that issue. Pick spoke to the TMC with respect to the County's proposed setback ordinance for new residential development near the solid waste facilities. Pick stated by way of background on this issue that Pinellas County tried, but was not able to purchase the St. Pete Sod Farm property. It was sold to a developer, who is planning a mixed industrial/residential development on the site. The Board of County Commissioners felt that, in some cases in some correct locations, industrial and residential mixed is appropriate, so they have agreed to change the Countywide Landuse Ordinance to allow that. They also determined that they needed to develop an ordinance to protect our solid waste facility. What is presently on the table to be heard at the public hearing before the BCC is to adopt a Solid Waste Ordinance to provide certain setbacks around the facility. The particular issue at this time, is what is a reasonable distance for the setback for residential from our facility? February 17, 2004, was the first reading for that ordinance and the second reading and final action will be voted on at the BCC meeting scheduled for March 9, 2004.

Pick stated that he spoke at the BCC meeting on behalf of all of us to suggest that 2,000 feet would be the right setback for residential. The ordinance does allow the Board, in specific cases, to grant a variance to that. The issues are whether or not there should be a setback, or should the setback be at 1,000 - 2,000 feet setback distance with a variance? Pick stated that the concern for us is that we are not going to be in that area for another fifteen plus years and the development will have been built out by then. The homeowners will be in place prior to a landfill being operated near their homes. At that time, the homeowners can complain to local government and say when we bought our condo, there wasn't anything here, they had no idea the County was going to build this kind of thing – and you need to close it and move it somewhere else.

Pick asked the members of the TMC for any comments or any positions that he may reference when he speaks at the next BCC Public Hearing on March 9th. Pick stated that Bob Brumback spoke very well on behalf of the TMC based on the prior discussions on this subject. Pick wanted to extend the courtesy to present the TMC's comments to the BCC. Pick stated that he knew there is an issue with the City of St. Petersburg members because St. Petersburg is in favor of the project and that he didn't know, if that has impacted the St. Petersburg TMC members or not, but that was brought up at the public hearing.

Pick stated that he came to the TMC meeting to answer any questions that anyone might have and listen to whatever comments you want to make.

Sandy Sanders stated that across the country, in similar situations regarding residential encroachment upon the landfills, the landfills traditionally always loose. The 2,000 foot setback is generally accepted as the norm.

Pick responded that he would take that comment back to the Commission. In talking with the developer's attorneys, Pick said he asked the question, "Well, what if you were there first and we brought the landfill in? Their response was, "We'd sue you." Pick stated that if you tried to locate a landfill within 2,000 feet of an existing residential neighborhood, you wouldn't get away with it. I have been involved a couple of landfill locations over in Hillsborough County and I know you haven't had to do that here, but it wasn't pretty and when we finally located the Picnic Landfill, there was nobody around, but people came from two miles away to protest that facility.

Warren noted that the Board of County Commissioners seemed to be very interested in feedback from the TMC. They are looking to hear from this committee. Warren stated that we have been discussing this since October 2003 and that the TMC has had an opportunity to go back and talk to your chain of command, but wondered if there was anything within your cities that you might share with us - how the different cities might feel about this issue. There is one city that may be directly affected by this and of course, St. Petersburg and Pinellas Park have joined in the request for the comp plan change. Warren asked if anyone had anything to share on this that they have discussed with their City Manager or Mayor?

James Walker stated that he had not discussed this with the Mayor, but stated that he believed we knew what the City Manager's position is.

Bob Brumback reported that we have supported the 2,000 foot setback, and anything less than that will shorten the life of the landfill. We hope that people in good faith will try and protect the landfill because we will have to go to 150 feet before the 50 years are up and if you build 110 foot high condos and 150 foot dump, the scenery won't be too good.

Warren stated that it would mean a lot if your City Managers or your Mayors, if they have a position on this, would call the County Commissioners and share that position with them – I would hope that it is in favor of the 2,000 foot setback.

Barbara Hugg reported that the City of Tarpon Springs yard trash facility, which was doing grinding, was a great recycling effort. The facility was a quarter of a mile from the nearest condo complex, and it is now a transfer station because the residents objected to the dust of the yard waste - so, 2,000 feet is not a lot to ask.

Pick stated that we have until March 9th, if you have anything that you want to express or share with him; that he can represent to the Board on your behalf or your City's behalf, you can call him right up to March 9th @ 9:30am.

Bob asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the corrected minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes were approved and accepted as written.

Operations Report – Deb Bush

Deb reported that 43,996 megawatts were sold in January – boiler availability was at 99.5%. There was one scheduled diversion totaling 5.0 hours. Deb reported that there were some incorrect statements in the Operations Report and the statement about the 109th Avenue grading plan being complete is one of them.

Deb stated that the side slope regrading along 109th Avenue is near completion. Construction on that project will begin next month. Cleaning along the 28th Street ditch at the Sod Farm has been completed. Ditch work is currently being done on the Bridgeway side.

Deb reported that the permit renewal for the Toytown Landfill has been initiated and we expect the Bridgeway permit renewal shortly. We are preparing to submit a request to DEP to begin excavation at the Class III area on March 15th.

Deb stated that the total plant tons were 81,310; about 6,906 tons went to the landfill, for a total of 88,216 system tons. HEC₃ had 668 participants in the month of January, the Swap Shop had 146 participants and 43 contractor referrals were given. There were no mobile collections scheduled in January and our next mobile collection will be February 28th at Seminole Middle School. Other issues included the authorization to proceed with negotiations for procurement consultant and the engineer-of-record. We conducted interviews for firms for the site waster master plan on February 11th and selection and authorization to proceed is expected by the end of this month.

Deb stated that the first public hearing on the ordinance to prohibit residential development near the landfill was on February 17, 2004. Deb reported March 9th will be the second public hearing on the ordinance regarding residential development near the landfill. The County has begun the procurement process to select a Waste-to-Energy (WTE) plant operator beginning May 2007.

The facility Master Plan is continuing. The new landfill contractor's building is at the 60% design level. We are also continuing work on the new hand unload facility – we are still in the design phase. Contracts are being awarded for the construction of two underdrain sections to correct gradient problems. An RFP is being prepared to relocate the main lift station; in addition to dredge Pond A. The bids from the contractors to remove the Martin Borrow Pit dirt and take it to Toytown have been rejected. We are investigating the cost to buy dirt or use what we have on site to meet the grading needs that we have at Toytown.

On WTE plant issues, Deb stated that work is proceeding to procure a spare switchyard circuit breaker for the WTE facility. In December we sent a letter out to all the haulers and cities stating that we were going to use Bay 8 of the tipping floor as blade cleanout area. The plant operator thought that he could have that area secured safely; there have been a couple of issues including an accident where a driver slipped and fell and there was another accident which included a van and a pay loader. These events made us take a closer look at what we are doing on the tipping floor and it has really driven home the importance of reducing the amount of vehicles that we have up there unnecessarily. We will no longer allow that Bay 8 to be used as blade cleanout. We will be sending a letter out tomorrow rescinding the original letter and stating that the Class I working face will be the blade cleanout area. Warren stated that it was our hope to have blade cleanout back at your yards and that would help us greatly.

Warren stated that on the tipping floor apparently some of the trucks that were trying to get to Bay 8 were cutting through the tipping building - which is very dangerous. When the drivers were using the landfill, they were going wherever they felt like going and that doesn't work either because we have to cover the garbage everyday and with all the piles all over we can't fulfill our requirements to cover the garbage daily, which is required by DEP. Drivers performing blade cleanout at locations other than the working face will have that right removed.

Recycling Update – Kelsi Oswald

Kelsi stated that the written recycling update is available for anyone interested. We are moving forward on the various projects – there's nothing really new at this time. Kelsi introduced Marie Jacobs, who will be working on the business/commercial recycling programs and participating on the public education and special events. We are hoping to get the containers into the schools for the countywide school paper-recycling program, which will be implemented right after Spring break. We have ordered two trailers for event recycling and they will be available to any city that wants to use them. After reviewing all the tire grants reimbursements – there was \$8,000 left that the cities did not use and the Recycling Sub-committee voted to use those funds to buy recycled tire binders which will be provided to the point-of-contact at the schools. The “Trash Talk” newsletter will be going out to the schools in mid-March.

Customer Service – Tim Wiley

Tim stated that for the month of January we had 314 operating hours, scale hours were 1,256, of which there was .42 hours of lane closings, providing a 99.97% service level. The number of transactions processed during the month was 22,952. There were a total of 373 tares for the month, the net tons were 125,287.57; 49 surcharges; and 79 OPS notices for special handling.

CRP/Phase III – Luke Koon

Luke reported that all the major components for the last phase of the CRP were completed in December. The units were started up and ran through the holidays. The acceptance test required by contract was initiated the later part of January and was completed on February 1st. Wheelabrator submitted their acceptance test report to the County; the engineer-of-record has reviewed it and accepted all of the test requirements. The facility is running fairly constant, we have outstanding items that are being taken care of. The renovation of the control room is expected to be completed in April and I would encourage for each of you to make time and schedule a tour. We also have work going on at the cooling towers, installing some demisters to conserve water and keep that flow in the facility. We are looking for a close out of the complete project by June 2004.

Luke stated that the CRP project has vastly improved the operations; we have better availability, better throughput, and better electrical generation. That is not a perpetual machine; it requires maintenance, so the numbers you see now will not happen every month.

WTE Reprourement Project – Bob Hauser

Bob stated that we may all be aware that we have begun the procurement process for the contract for the operation of the waste-to-energy facility that Wheelabrator currently holds. The existing contract expires in May 2007; this is a long process to select the new contractor – or the existing contractor. We are looking at a contract that is potentially worth \$300 - \$500 million dollars over the term of the contract, so this is a very important effort. We have a working group that is primarily made up of staff, consultants, and legal advisers who are working through the process of looking at key issues and putting together contractual issues. We will be periodically reviewing the results with the TMC and we will be going to the BCC for approval. We are well into this process and our goal is to select a contractor six-nine months ahead of the expiration of the current contract.

Budget Report – Lisa Ledoux

Lisa gave an update on the next fiscal year FY 04/05 budget process. The finance department finished meeting with all the department Directors in Utilities and we received their requests for their operating budgets. The finance department will now take all this information, balance it, and the completed budget is due into the Office of Management & Budget by March 9th. There will be a BCC Workshop sometime in May to review the budget. There will then be a meeting with the County Administrator and the Director of Public Works to review the CIP budget sometime in June 2004. There will be two public hearings in September – September 7th to present the completed budgets to the Board, and then on September 21st that will be the final adoption of the budget.

City of Dunedin Letter – Randy Rudd

Item One: Toytown Golf Course - Randy noted that the first issue in the letter is regarding the Toytown Golf Course and while we have discussed this on several different occasions, it appears from some of the newspapers articles that there may still be some consideration that this will become a golf course. Apparently the County Taskforce that is looking at this project is now saying they don't need a golf course, but they need a ball field or something along those lines. Our feeling is that we don't have a problem building a ball field; the issue is the funding that will be required in the preparation of that site. Is solid waste money being used to prepare that site above and beyond the normal cap maintenance – is that something we want to do? I would like some clarification on – are we going above and beyond normal cap maintenance? In my opinion, five million dollars sounds like a lot of cap replacement.

Warren noted that it was the American Assembly Taskforce that made the presentation to the Board of County Commissioners along with the Park Department and the local golf course managers regarding what could be done with the Toytown Golf Course. The golf course for Toytown is not on anybody's radar screen and what we do have in our capital budget is to move a fairly substantial amount of dirt to Toytown to re-contour the landfill and fix the cap so that it has appropriate drainage. Since removing the pepper trees, we can see areas that are low with standing water. Those are the things that we need to address first. There is no plan for any golf course to be constructed without review by this Technical Management Committee.

Warren stated that the Martin Borrow Pit bids came in and they came in very high – approximately three times than what we expected, so we are looking at other options.

Item Two: Tipping Fees – Randy reported that it was his understanding that the Recycling Grant funds - the majority of that money would be used for promotional items. He said that tipping fee money is used to fund the operation of the County's unincorporated drop-off sites. My feeling is that tipping fee funding should be used to help the municipalities along with unincorporated Pinellas County with recycling. In the long run it's going to extend the life of the plant and if there is some way we can work that out, make some of that funding available to the municipalities, it may increase recycling throughout the County.

Bob Brumback stated that tipping fee money funds all of the solid waste operation. We had talked last year about one of the nice things that has sustained the recycling program over the years was the grant money. Recycling is really not ever going to be a habit; recycling is going to take education, promotion, and maintenance. So, we need to apportion the money to the municipalities so we can continue our recycling efforts.

Don Crowell stated that this could be accomplished through the individual local governments who would be responsible for the jurisdiction you are talking about.

Warren stated that it is in the Charter to make a recommendation to the County Administrator who would then take it to the County Commission. As the TMC, you have the responsibility to look at rates, revision of policies and programs, the location and establishment of solid waste disposal and resource recovery facilities, integration of new technologies & equipment, operational policies, and grant applications. If we are going to form another committee as suggested in Randy's letter, maybe the TMC committee shouldn't meet monthly.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that the Recycling Committee should take a look at this issue, come up with some ideas and possibly form a sub-committee and continue to discuss this at the next TMC meeting

Hurricane Preparedness Report – Bob Brumback

Bob stated that the contractor is collecting input from the various municipalities and taking a look at their debris plans and trying to find a way to tie it all together along with trying to locate designated collection sites. The basic rule with FEMA is that they will pay for two haulings; they have a fiduciary responsibility with government funds. He will be working on FEMA training and plans so that we can have a functional debris clearance program.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

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