

**APPROVED MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
HAMILTON COUNTY RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE DISTRICT
POLICY COMMITTEE**

DATE: July 20, 2017

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services
250 William Howard Taft Road - First Floor
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

PRESENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Elizabeth Bruggeman, General Interest Member
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative
Jeff Luehrmann, Generator Representative
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative
Todd Portune, Hamilton County Commissioner, Chair
Larry Riddle, Rumpke
Tom Turchiano, Public Member

Staff

Michelle Balz, Assistant Solid Waste Manager
Holly Christmann, Director
Ali Khodadad, Operations Manager
Joy Landry, Public Relations Specialist
Jenny Lohmann, Program Specialist
Cher Mohring, Program Specialist
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk

Others in Attendance

Dean Ferrier, Rumpke
Greg Kesterman, Hamilton County Public Health
Isabella Mazza, Student

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Jeff Ritter, Township Representative, Vice-Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 1:42p.m. and welcomed everyone.

2. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – May 18, 2017 Policy Committee Meeting

Mr. Portune asked if there were any changes, etc. to the minutes. Mr. Portune stated that he was not present so he would abstain from the vote. Mr. Portune asked if the Committee was ready to act on the minutes and stated that he would ask for a motion to approve. Mr. Ingram moved approval of the May 18, 2017 minutes. Mr. Turchiano seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

3. DISTRICT REVENUE UPDATES/ANALYSIS

Ms. Christmann stated that included in Attachment B was revenue from 2017 comparing 2016. Revenue is right on target and is roughly \$30,000 more than where it was last year. The District is still projecting about \$2.6 million in revenue and stated that there has been some recent information about some increased in waste coming to Rumpke Sanitary Landfill. Mr. Riddle stated that Montgomery County had a situation where they were having trouble getting their volume moved out of the transfer station on a daily basis and have asked Rumpke to take some of that load which is about 400-500 tons per day. This increase should go on for a little while.

A brief discussion ensued regarding sewer sludge.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the revenue report. Ms. Magness moved. Ms. Bruggeman seconded; all were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. POLICY ITEMS

A. 2018 Proposed Budget

Ms. Christmann stated that in early July, the Committee received the recommended budget for 2018 and hoped each had a chance to review it.

Ms. Christmann stated that there were a lot of changes compared to the 2017 budget which were all based on decisions that were made during the recent Plan Update.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District is projecting \$2.65 million in revenue which is higher than what was projected in the Plan Update (\$2.5 million). Expenditures are expected to be at roughly \$2.68 million.

Ms. Christmann stated that some of the major changes as compared to the 2017 budget were:

- The Residential Recycling Incentive (RRI) program which historically is budgeted at \$1,050,000 will be \$900,000.
- The District Priority Grant has been eliminated which was \$75,000. Ms. Christmann stated that at the last meeting, Ms. Magness brought up that eliminating the grant might cause a gap in service and may cause concern for public areas that want recycling containers (public parks, golf courses, etc.). Ms. Christmann stated that this feedback was taken seriously so in the budget, \$7,000 was added to the District's commercial business program to allow for the purchase of some containers for outdoor areas. The District will be able to provide a limited number of a style that is used in many public places.
- Ms. Christmann stated that there is a reduction to Health Departments based on historical spending levels which is \$48,000 between Cincinnati and Hamilton County.
- The litter collection program has been eliminated.

Ms. Christmann stated that tire dumping has been an issue for years and staff is working with the Hamilton County Sheriff on the scope of work to have a Deputy focus on investigating illegal dumping, primarily tire dumping, working closely with Hamilton County Public Health and Cincinnati Health Department to find out who is causing these dumping issues. This addition to the budget is \$108,000.

Mr. Portune stated that while the litter collection program with the Sheriff and inmates is being eliminated, we are at about five times the budget actually working with the Sheriff to address the issue of illegal dumping which is a major public health concern. If this program does what we think it will do, it is going to lead to an overall improvement in the county that will be very noticeable; not that the litter clean-up was not but regrettably, that is temporary and ongoing. This program has the potential of playing a much more important role in having a much

greater impact on Hamilton County across the board we were making through, as popular as it was the litter collection program. This new program is more in tune with District policies and the mission than litter collection was as well.

Mr. Portune stated that if anyone is asked, relative to the elimination of the litter collection program, you can transition the conversation quickly to pivot over to that it is gone but the District is funding a new initiative with the Sheriff regarding illegal dumps all over the county at roughly five times the funding that was available through the District and it will have a much greater impact.

Mr. Portune stated that he hoped people will both understand but will also be persuaded that this is a much better use and will have a much better effect on the quality of life in our neighborhoods and our broader environmental concerns county-wide.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District heard a lot about increased advertising during the Plan Update about recycling in general; people need to see and hear that message on a regular basis so the advertising budget has increased to slightly over \$100,000. \$30,000 will also be spent in lower performing communities to boost their recycling participation.

Ms. Christmann stated that another new item is \$85,000 that will be spent on the District's priority waste stream which is going to be food. Food is the number one material going to landfill as everyone has heard and the District is excited to work with some new partners to help leverage the message on reducing the amount of food going to landfills, primarily focusing on food recovery and donation. Ms. Christmann stated that you have heard the statistic; the number one material going to landfill is food yet one in six in Hamilton County is food insecure. Ms. Christmann thinks the District has a very important role to play and staff is really looking forward to that.

Ms. Christmann stated that \$75,000 will be put toward an increase in personnel and that staff plans on hiring an additional team member next year to primarily focus on setting up programs for businesses and institutions. There also have been some increases in medical assumptions and funds earmarked in case raises are approved.

Ms. Christmann stated that \$40,000 will be used for the Commercial Assistance program which is the assistance staff gives to businesses for recycling and waste reduction programs.

Ms. Christmann stated that this item was not in the Plan Update but there was a \$38,674 increase in the Yard Trimmings Drop-off program due to the re-bidding process.

Ms. Christmann asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Turchiano asked if the Sheriff Deputy was like a resource officer who is assigned for specific job. Ms. Christmann stated that staff is working on that now; initially when staff met with the Sheriff, it was going to be a Deputy but the Sheriff is talking about having a detective given the nature of this program. The Committee concurred with this. Ms. Christmann stated that right now, staff is in the initial conversations of is \$108,000 enough for a full time Deputy. Is the District going to have 100% that is dedicated or is it only 75%?

Mr. Ingram asked if the Prosecutor's Office was on board. Ms. Christmann stated yes and that Nee Fong Chin is involved and there is a team of people working on this; not just the County but Cincinnati Law Department, Cincinnati Health Department, and Hamilton County Public Health. All of these departments have seen the scope of work that was proposed to the Sheriff.

Mr. Portune stated that the idea has been, to the Prosecutor's Office as well, to develop almost an environmental crimes taskforce and so it is within the context of that vision that this is going to be evolving and working. Ms. Christmann stated that the Deputy/Detective is going to be required to attend meetings of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, the group that was formed, to better understand where the hot spots are and this was put in the scope of work that was proposed.

Ms. Christmann stated that regarding the carry-over balance, the policy is to have eight months operating at all times. The District is exceeding that amount and are almost at, roughly, \$2.5 million which is about a year operating.

Mr. Ingram asked, regarding the chart on page 5, District Expenses, if Illegal Dumping should be \$108,000. Ms. Christmann stated that the chart is compared to what was projected in the Plan Update so the Plan Update projected \$100,000 and it is actually being budgeted at \$108,000.

Ms. Christmann stated that the chart shows what was projected in the Plan Update versus what has been budgeted and it shows the Residential Recycling Incentive program is coming in at over \$100,000 what was stated in the Plan Update. This is because revenue is now being projected at \$2.6 million; the Plan Update states that if revenue is \$2.6 million, \$100,000 will be added to the RRI.

Mr. Portune asked who was going to make the motion to approve the 2018 budget. Mr. Ingram stated that he needed to recuse himself on the health department funding and stated that he supposes he could make the motion and recuse himself.

Mr. Portune stated that anyone has the right to call for a separation of the motion.

Mr. Portune stated that at least at the Committee's level, they are allowed to separate one thing out and to that end, especially in a case where one is not voting against something but there is a conflict of interest and so you abstain.

Mr. Portune moved that in the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District 2018 District budget the separation of funding for activities pertaining to and involving the Hamilton County General Health District. Ms. Bruggeman seconded. Mr. Portune stated that the above motion was just for the separation and not the approval of the budget. All in favor and the motion was approved.

Mr. Portune moved adoption of the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District 2018 District budget with respect to all items except funding for the activities in connection with the Hamilton County General Health District. Mr. Ingram seconded. All in favor and the motion was approved.

Mr. Portune moved adoption of the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District 2018 District budget elements that pertain to funding of activities in connection with the Hamilton County General Health District. Mr. Turchiano seconded. Mr. Ingram abstained. All others in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Student Representative

Ms. Christmann stated that the District received applications for the student representative and she is in the audience today, Isabella Mazza. The Committee welcomed Ms. Mazza. Ms. Mazza will be a senior at Seton High School and staff is highly recommending her for this position

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Mazza if there was anything she would like to say before the Committee voted. Ms. Mazza stated that she was very excited to learn a lot and be a part of this group.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee is thrilled that she has such an interest in the work around environment, recycling, solid waste, and everything connected with it. The Committee has had such a great run of student reps whose contributions have been extraordinary and the ideas have been received and put into action. Beginning in September Ms. Mazza will be in a position where what she presents to the Committee has the ability of affecting the entire county and in fact, people throughout this entire region which is an awesome responsibility.

Mr. Portune stated that the Committee knows that she will handle it extremely well. It is something that she should take great pride in because her work will have an impact on a lot of people in this region and thanked her for her interest.

Mr. Portune moved that the Committee appoint Ms. Isabella Mazza to serve as the student representative on behalf of the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District Policy Committee. Ms. Bruggeman seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. School Food Sharing Tables

Ms. Christmann stated that back in January, Ms. Mohring did a presentation about a pilot project that she oversaw at Amity Elementary School where there was a food sharing table. A food sharing table is where kids can put unopened yogurt, unopened milk, bananas, etc. that they do not want and kids who are still hungry can take these items. What is leftover is donated to a food pantry in that neighborhood.

Ms. Christmann stated that this was a huge success and staff was so excited to promote this. One of the barriers was that one health department did not feel they had enough guidance from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to fully promote the program in the City of Cincinnati.

Ms. Christmann gave credit to Ms. Mohring, Ms. Lohmann, and Ms. Balz for working with ODH. ODH has recently come out with guidance that clarifies that schools can do this. In two weeks staff has a meeting with Cincinnati Public Schools to talk about food sharing tables.

Ms. Christmann stated that this will have a huge impact in Hamilton County.

Ms. Christmann stated that we are really proud of our team.

A brief discussion ensued.

B. Annual District Report

Ms. Christmann stated that the Policy Committee is required to review staff's progress annually but this Committee reviews it every other month. Staff did submit its annual district report to Ohio EPA on June 1, 2017. This report included how many tons were recycled and results of all of the District's programs. The program results are included in Attachment D.

Ms. Christmann stated that in terms of the recycling numbers that were presented to Ohio EPA, they are very similar to the tonnages from the year prior. There are slight decreases based on some manufacturing that went away that was generating a lot of cardboard.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District will receive final approval on the annual district report in late fall and that the District's recycling rates will come later this year.

Mr. Portune asked if there were any questions and stated it was a great report. Ms. Christmann stated that it is a lot from a very small group. Mr. Portune stated that staff exceeds what is required which is a great testimony to the good work that is being done by staff.

6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Portune stated that there is going to be an opportunity to get a presentation here about a potential public, private, pilot project with respect to anaerobic digestion. The University of Cincinnati is actively involved in this and want to meet with the District to talk about it.

Mr. Portune stated that it can't be decided today as to which upcoming meeting that this should be scheduled at but it needs to happen and the individuals involved with respect to the potential pilot at the University of Cincinnati very much want to meet with this Committee to discuss and present on where this could go.

7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ms. Bruggeman stated that she is interested in if there are any changes in the future in regards to recycling at Rumpke. While there are a lot of things that cannot be recycled at Rumpke, would like to know if there are going to be any future changes in types of materials that are acceptable.

Ms. Bruggeman stated that she has been hearing a lot of report about how recycling plastics is a pain and she is interested in the business of recycling.

A brief discussion ensued on who at Rumpke Recycling would give a recycling update.

Ms. Magness stated that in the City's first four months, Simple Recycling has recycled about 80 tons and have diverted damaged textiles and housewares. On average, about 1,700 households per month are participating in the program.

Ms. Bruggeman asked if this is what was projected. Ms. Magness stated that it was a little below than the projections but it is summertime. Ms. Magness stated that there will be another meeting in the fall to talk about another communication campaign to help give the program another boost.

Ms. Bruggeman asked if there has been any pushback. Ms. Magness stated no and she is waiting to hear from any non-profits to see if they have any data on any loss. She has been monitoring the Ohio Mills donations box for clothing and shoes and she has not seen a drop.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

9. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS

The next Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste Policy Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2017. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. at Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services located at 250 William Howard Taft Road - First Floor, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 2:17 p.m.