

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

**DATE:** January 17, 2019

**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**  
Tony DiPuccio, Generator Representative  
Karen Hurley, General Interest Member  
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative  
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative  
Raj Rajagopal, Township Representative  
Larry Riddle, Rumpke

**Staff**

Michelle Balz, Solid Waste Manager  
Ali Khodadad, Operations Manager  
Jenny Lohmann, Program Specialist  
Brad Miller, Interim Director  
Cher Mohring, Program Specialist  
Angela Rivera, Outreach Specialist  
Susan Schumacher, Assistant Solid Waste Specialist, Clerk  
Mary Sticklen, Business Specialist

**Others in Attendance**

Lisa Anderson, BSI  
Keoki Buell, Cincinnati State  
John Butler, Rumpke  
Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health  
Katie Evans, Best Way Disposal  
Ann Fallon, Cincinnati State  
Dean Ferrier, Rumpke  
Katrina Ferry, Cincinnati State  
Nate Freed, Cincinnati State  
Tyler Gatieun, Cincinnati State  
Haley Golsch, Cincinnati State  
Katie Golsch, Cincinnati State  
Mike Karmel, Cincinnati State  
Greg Kesterman, Hamilton County Public Health  
Ruby Mumphrey, Village of Lincoln Heights  
Kevin Nunner, Cincinnati State  
Deputy Bryan Peak, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office  
Ben Relinsen, Cincinnati State  
Tyler Rose, Cincinnati State  
Gabby Stepaniak, Rumpke  
Molly Yeager, Rumpke

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**ABSENT: Policy Committee Members**

Todd Portune, Hamilton County Commissioner, Chair  
Sydney Sauer, Student Representative

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Ingram introduced himself and stated that Commissioner Portune was unable to attend today's meeting. Mr. Ingram stated that he would be filling in as Chair and called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Mr. Ingram asked the Committee to introduce themselves.

**2. CLERK'S REPORT**

**A. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2018 Policy Committee Meeting**

Mr. Ingram asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes. Mr. Ingram entertained a motion to approve the November 15, 2018 minutes. Ms. Magness moved approval. Mr. Rajagopal 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. Balz stated that Ms. Schumacher provided an updated revenue sheet as there was an error in the original one sent.

Ms. Balz stated that through November, 2018, revenue is up by \$316,000 compared to 2017 which is about a 12 percent increase.

Mr. Ingram stated that the increased revenue may be due to the economy being stronger than a few years ago but also the expansion of some waste from Montgomery County coming in to Rumpke Sanitary Landfill.

Mr. Riddle stated that Rumpke picked up that volume and Rumpke has picked up some special waste projects that added considerably. Montgomery County waste is out-of-district. Mr. Ingram stated that this is a larger tipping fee. Mr. Riddle stated that it was about 67 percent of the total revenue and that some years ago it was probably in the 51 and 52 percent range.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if the special waste projects were generally in Hamilton County or outside the county. Mr. Riddle stated that they were mixed.

**4. POLICY ITEMS**

**A. Public Member Representative Recommendation**

Ms. Balz stated that five applications were received. Mr. Turchiano and Ms. Magness assisted in the interviewing process in which two applicants were interviewed. Ms. Balz stated that the interview committee is recommending Bob Gedert for the Public Member and gave background information about him.

Mr. Ingram entertained a motion to approve Bob Gedert as the Public Member and stated that only the statutory members could vote. Ms. Magness moved; Mr. Rajagopal seconded. Mr. Ingram, Ms. Magness, and Mr. Rajagopal, being the statutory members, were in favor and the motion was approved.

**5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Update on Expansion at Rumpke Sanitary Landfill**

Ms. Yeager, Mr. Butler, Mr. DeJonckheere, and Mr. Miller provided an update on the Rumpke eastern expansion.

Mr. Rajagopal inquired about zoning approval from 2015, consent decree, permitting process, and the public hearing. Mr. Ingram asked if the consent decree agreement between Rumpke and Colerain Township was a public document. Mr. DeJonckheere stated it was on Colerain Township's website.

A brief question and answer session ensued.

Mr. Ingram stated that if anyone was interested in attending the public hearing, it was scheduled for February 21, 2019 at the Colerain Township Senior Center.

**B. Overview of Closed ELDA Landfill Air Emissions**

Mr. Ingram stated that the closed ELDA Landfill was located by the Spring Grove area of town and it was once operated by Waste Management.

Mr. Miller stated that Commissioner Portune wanted the Policy Committee to receive an update about what is going on in the Winton Terrace/Spring Grove Village/Winton Hills area.

There was an article in the Enquirer back in December in the Sunday paper, talking about odors, health effects, and quality of life for the citizens specifically in the Winton Terrace area.

Mr. Miller stated that he wanted to provide a little background on previous air monitoring at the ELDA landfill, and a summary of what steps the Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency (Agency) is taking.

Mr. Miller stated that the article talked about air toxics and health effects. Mr. Miller stated the Agency has been doing air toxics monitoring in the Winton Terrace/Winton Hills/Spring Grove Village areas from 1991 – 2014. During that time period, over 600 24-hour canister samples were taken and analyzed for over 50 volatile organic compounds/air toxics by a third party lab since the Agency's instruments cannot measure specific organic compounds.

Mr. Miller stated that U.S. EPA and Ohio EPA reviewed all of that monitoring data for 23 years and agreed that the Agency could discontinue that monitoring in 2014 because the concentrations were below levels of concern.

Mr. Miller stated that there was a lot of concern in this area back in 1997-1998. U.S.EPA did a special monitoring project in which they were using state-of-the-art monitoring equipment. Some of it was more experimental but they had four monitoring sites throughout the community where they took over 50 samples. U.S. EPA looked at air toxics, metals, acid gases, particulate matter, ammonia, etc. U.S. EPA found that the concentrations were below levels of concern. U.S. EPA stated that, regarding the report, it was also important to understand that the concentrations in the Winton Hills/Winton Place communities are not uncommon to other urban communities.

Mr. Miller asked how was the air quality in Winton Terrace/Winton Hills/Winton Place compared to other communities. In 2007, the Agency hired an independent toxicologist to review the Agency's air toxics data. In 2007, the Agency had five monitoring sites which were located in Addyston, Carthage, Lower Price Hill, Reading, and Winton Place. Once the review was complete, it was found that the Winton Place area had the lowest total risk of the five sites from an air toxics standpoint.

Mr. Miller stated that currently, in Hamilton County, the Lower Price Hill, Reading, and Winton Place sites have been shut down due to the low concentrations with the remaining sites being Carthage and Addyston that are still being operated. Carthage is only a couple miles away from the Winton Terrace area which is located at a firehouse.

Mr. Miller stated a lot of the air toxics now are caused by mobile sources (cars, trucks, etc.) and not industry anymore.

Mr. Miller stated that the Agency also operates a couple of sites in Butler County for air toxics monitoring but they are permit required.

Mr. Miller stated that there have been issues in the past concerning the ELDA Landfill with gas migration in the late 1980's in the neighborhood.

Mr. Miller stated that the landfill is located at the corner of Este Avenue and Center Hill and is closed. The landfill stopped accepting waste February 5, 1998 so the landfill has been shut down from a solid waste standpoint since 1998.

Mr. Miller stated that there has been a concern from neighbors that they are seeing a blue flame now which was not seen before. In 2014, the ELDA Landfill switched from an enclosed flare to an open flare. An enclosed flare looks like a stack and the flame is on the inside of the stack and can't be seen. In 2014, an open flare was started because the gas flow was so low that it could not support the enclosed flare. The blue flame is visible at night and sometimes during the day.

Mr. Miller stated that the Cincinnati Health Department conducted quarterly inspections in 2018 which is part of the District's agreement with the Health Department as part of a services contract. The Cincinnati Health Department found no violations during their inspections in 2018.

Mr. Miller stated that the Agency visited ELDA earlier today checking to make sure they are in compliance. The Agency brought along a FLIR camera, which is like an infra-red camera that can look and see organics and the open flare looked fine; it looked like it was destroying the organics and no permit violations were found.

Mr. Miller stated that moving forward, the Agency is doing additional air quality monitoring in the Winton Terrace/Spring Grove Village area to ensure there is no health risk. This portable air quality monitoring started on December 17, 2018 and measures total volatile organic compounds in the air. There are 20 locations in Winton Terrace, Winton Hills, Spring Grove Village, Elmwood Place, and St. Bernard that are being monitored for total VOCs. Mr. Miller stated that if the instrument has a reading of 0.5 ppm for at least one minute, an instantaneous canister sample will be taken and will be sent to a lab to be analyzed. To date, no concentrations above 0.5 ppm have been seen during that loop monitoring.

Mr. Miller showed a map of the 20 stop monitoring route and went through the map of the route around Winton Terrace, Winton Hills, Spring Grove Village, Elmwood Place, and St. Bernard.

Mr. Miller stated that the Agency is also taking 24-hour canister samples at two locations which are in Winton Terrace on Craft Street and at the Fire House in Spring Grove Village. The reason it is being taken at the Fire House is because the Agency operated an air toxics site there for a long period of time so it will be comparable data.

Mr. Ingram asked if there was any monitoring at the sedimentation pond at the base of the landfill for leachate. Mr. Miller stated that he would need to check with the Cincinnati Health Department and stated that he did not

know if there was or not anymore. Mr. Miller stated that he could reach out to the Cincinnati Health Department if needed.

Mr. Miller stated that the Agency was going to take four, 24-hour air samples in Winton Terrace and Spring Grove Village. So far, two samples have been collected. The sampling is weather dependent because the Agency wants the winds blowing towards the communities from the facilities of concern and that requires easterly winds. This area does not commonly have easterly winds in the winter; there are more northwesterly and westerly winds which is why only two samples have been taken. Mr. Miller stated that the loop monitoring is being done twice a week through January.

Ms. Magness asked if odor complaints are received during easterly wind days. Mr. Miller stated yes at times and that four complaints were received each of the last two years and briefly gave background on complaints received in previous years. Mr. Miller stated that companies in this area have taken steps to reduce odors in the past.

Mr. Miller stated that the biggest reduction in emissions have been from coal fired boilers and that two facilities have shut their coal fired boilers down which were the largest source of emissions. The sulfur dioxide emissions have dropped by 99.5 percent over the last ten years which is a significant reduction.

Ms. Magness asked Mr. Miller what he thought triggered the news story. Mr. Miller stated that he could not answer for the Enquirer but they reached out to the Agency back in August. He is not sure what triggered them looking into it.

Mr. Miller stated that in Addyston, there was concern about a facility there and Hamilton County Public Health did a large cancer study and one of the cancer items that came out was lung cancer which is related to smoking so some of it is lifestyle, etc. and there are a variety of things.

A brief discussion ensued related to the cancer study in Addyston and the ELDA Landfill area years ago and other studies that have been conducted.

Ms. Magness stated that she was thinking that these were more industrial sources and not the landfill.

Mr. DiPuccio asked Mr. Miller if he could comment on the area around there because there is another closed landfill and he mentioned industries. Ms. Magness mentioned the City of Cincinnati Landfill.

A brief discussion ensued on the surrounding industries.

Mr. Miller stated that there were multiple facilities in this area. Mr. Ingram stated that what he thinks Mr. Miller is saying and not to make light of any concern because obviously there is citizen concern and their concerns are very genuine, he would just say to Mr. Miller that place does matter. When you live in these industrial corridors, exposure occurs. None of these facilities are perfect and things happen. There are these air permits and so forth but stuff does happen. We have all been around it and we all see it but the question is how quickly you move so you minimize the damage; especially how long the exposure continues to occur. Ms. Magness stated that new chemical compounds are being developed all the time.

Mr. Miller reiterated what the Agency is doing in terms of monitoring in the neighborhood hopefully by the end of January, if the weather is favorable, to get a few more canister samples and then have all that data reviewed by Ohio EPA's toxicologist. The Agency will get all that information out.

Mr. Miller stated that the Agency had done presentations to the Winton Terrace and Spring Grove community councils last week.

Mr. Miller stated that Commissioner Driehaus, Councilmember Dennard, and Councilmember Landsman have been involved.

Mr. Miller stated that the City does have their own Title X regulations which they can enforce for odors only but have not taken any action in a while but the option is there.

Mr. Miller stated that if the toxicologist report comes back from Ohio EPA, the City can take action just on odors alone. Mr. Ingram stated that Mr. Miller has been very proactive.

Mr. Ingram asked if there were any final questions from the Policy Committee regarding the concerns that were just heard about the community in and around the closed ELDA Landfill or the odors.

Mr. Rajagopal stated that the Agency is doing a great job in monitoring this and being transparent with the public and informing them what is going on. Mr. Miller thanked him and stated that there were a lot of dedicated people on our staff working on it with a lot of different resources with each portion of it; he just gets to present the information.

Ms. Magness stated that she remembers back in the 1990s that it was being estimated that after a landfill closes it generates methane for about 30 years and asked if those projections have changed. Does Mr. Miller think this is about the end or is it in reality 40-50 years. Mr. Miller stated that the gas levels have gone down in 20 years to a point where they just have an open flare. He would say that at least 30 years is still pretty accurate.

Ms. Magness stated that this same thing is also happening at Center Hill. Mr. Miller stated that this was correct and that the City owns the Center Hill Landfill where there used to be a flare there but there is no longer a flare. Ms. Magness stated that they just put in a new system to collect the gas. Mr. Miller stated that they still have some gas but not enough to flare.

Mr. Ingram thanked Mr. Miller for his presentation.

**C. 2018 Waste Composition Study**

Ms. Balz gave a brief overview of the 2018 Waste Composition Study and which will be included on our website.

Ms. Balz stated that since the final study was just received, there hasn't been time to do a whole lot of analysis but would provide some highlights.

Ms. Balz stated that staff was trying to identify what could be recycled and what could be composted with residential waste only. Two sorts were conducted with SCS Engineers; one in June and one in November. Three days were spent at each sort. Twelve trucks from the City of Cincinnati and 18 trucks from communities outside of the City of Cincinnati which is representative of the population.

Ms. Balz stated that there were a total of 60 samples and SCS Engineers said that Mr. Riddle and his crew at RSL were very accommodating.

Ms. Balz stated that 44 material categories were looked at during the study which are listed in the report. Mainly we were looking at what could be recycled, composted and also things that can't be recycled like rigid plastics just to see how much there was.

Ms. Balz discussed the seasonal comparisons. More wood, soil, dirt, and grass in June. Staff was not expecting yard trimmings to be higher in June than November but it was. There were more leaves in November.

Ms. Balz showed the aggregate pie chart and stated that the highest percentage was paper although this has gone down since the sort in 2012. Food waste is still a major component of residential waste which is higher than 2012 but Ms. Balz stated that this chart was looking at percentage by weight.

Ms. Balz stated that in looking at the chart for what could have been diverted, the recycling and compostables are about the same chunks of the pie as garbage meaning about 63 percent could have diverted with the current infrastructure and gave examples. The next slide broke down the compostables into categories such as vegetative food, grass, leaves, brush, compostable paper, wood, and other compostables and gave examples of the infrastructure.

Ms. Balz went through the next slide by breaking down what could have been recycled with the County's current infrastructure such as paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles, and other.

Ms. Balz showed what was found in the trash such as films, non-vegetative food, trays and tubs, rigid plastics, other plastics, C & D debris, diapers, mattresses, and other uncharacterized waste all of which cannot be recycled or composted.

Ms. Balz stated that in looking at this compared to 2012, the 2012 piece of the recyclables is much larger than the 2018 piece (41% versus 31%). The recycling percentage by weight has gone down which most likely has a couple of reasons; the infrastructure, compared to 2012 for curbside recycling in Hamilton county, is better so a lot more residents have access to easy, curbside recycling, the recyclables themselves are getting lighter and gave examples. More analysis will be required to figure out why the percentage of compostables is growing.

Ms. Balz stated that staff will be looking more closely at what material changes have been seen between 2018 and 2012. Staff will also be conducting a desktop capture rate analysis which is looking at the materials, once the 2018 residential recycling data is available and how much of each type of material is being captured and gave an examples.

**D. Environmental Enforcement Program Update**

Ms. Balz stated that Attachment C is an overview, in chart form, of 2018 since the inception of the program in April. There is a peak in July which is when the press conference was held which increased the number of complaints and investigations.

Ms. Balz passed around the palm card that was created that Deputy Peak can bring to police officer meetings, etc. which explains some of the Ohio Revised Codes that he is enforcing. There is also an area for him to include his contact information.

Deputy Peak stated that there was a little lull but it has picked up and he was mostly seeing solid waste and construction debris dumpings. There are a couple of tire cases that are going to the grand jury in February and a lot of his work is within the City of Cincinnati.

**E. 2019 Work Plan**

Ms. Balz stated that staff put together a plan that captured most of the District's larger programs and explained the colors with the darker blue being more staff time and white being quarters when not a lot of time is being spent on the program.

Ms. Balz stated that performance measures have been set for most programs but some have not yet been developed and gave examples.

**6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no future agenda items.

**7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Rajagopal stated that he would like to see more transparency for public awareness especially regarding the Ohio EPA hearing that is coming up to reach out to the media and let people know.

Ms. Hurley stated that to follow up on Mr. Rajagopal's comment, she personally would be very interested in knowing how what is happening at the national level with the EPA and the deregulation, the cutting back, etc. is that having any local impact and is that anything that is affecting our region in terms of air quality, water quality. Ms. Hurley stated that it is not something easy to answer but to the extent that we could begin to even look into it. Mr. Ingram stated that he wondered if the Committee could get a brief on this. Surely, there are organizations that are following this in the not-for-profit sector or other grass roots organizations might be able to be accessed?

Mr. Ingram stated that perhaps some of staff's peers across the state; the great question and he thinks it is just trying to keep our fingers on the pulse of what is going on nationally. He knows U.S. EPA has lots of authority, especially in the area of research too.

Mr. Riddle stated that getting a non-biased answer is the difficulty. Mr. Ingram stated that is why he would trust staff to find an objective analysis of what is going on.

Ms. Magness stated that she read that our state does not actually have a whole lot of federal employees; about 150 compared to Alaska which has 1,000. Ms. Hurley asked if she was referring to the shutdown and stated that she was not referring to that and was talking about the role of U.S. EPA deregulation, etc.

Ms. Balz asked if the focus should be solid waste issues. Mr. Ingram stated that obviously, we are a solid waste Policy Committee that being the main theme but it would be nice to know the impact on any type of industrial waste, special waste, CD& D, etc. and asked if staff could look across the state for this.

Ms. Balz stated that she would look into it and that most of the District's reporting is through Ohio EPA. Most of the rules the District follow are Ohio Revised Code so there is not much on the national level. Ms. Hurley stated that so what is happening at the national EPA, Ms. Balz is saying, does not have such an impact because Ohio EPA is its own and did not think most people were aware of that.

Ms. Magness stated that it was interesting that a new movie about the Dry Run landfill, called Dry Run, is going to be filmed in Cincinnati which is about a local Cincinnati lawyer that took on DuPont.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were a few questions from the students from Cincinnati State that were answered.

**9. UPCOMING DISTRICT MEETINGS**

The next Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste Policy Committee meeting will be held on Thursday March 21, 2019. 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.

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**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Ingram entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Magness moved; Mr. DiPuccio seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

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