

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC WORKS - SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

DATE: MARCH 16, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS BELDEN  
BENTLEY  
MERLINO  
CHAMPAGNE  
MONROE  
MCCOY  
CONOVER  
WOOD  
TAYLOR

OTHERS PRESENT:

JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
TODD BEADNELL, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS  
DANIEL G. STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISORS KENNY  
MCDEVITT  
SOKOL  
STRAINER  
THOMAS  
VANNESS  
JULIE PACYNA, PURCHASING AGENT  
DON LEHMAN, THE POST STAR  
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Belden called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. McCoy and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2011 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Mr. Belden announced that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of bidding trash pickup and disposal services upon the conclusion of the County's obligations to the Burn Plant facility in November of 2011. Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, interjected that the associated bidding process would be handled in a nature similar to many other bids in that the County would establish and release the bid for services, following which the individual Towns would have the option of partaking in the services available or seeking them elsewhere independently.

Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, said the main objective of the meeting was to continue discussions on the trash disposal options available in light of the County's expiring Burn Plant contract, as well as to move forward in determining the feelings of each individual Town respective to whether or not they were interested in banding together as a group in order to seek the most cost prohibitive means for trash removal and disposal. He noted that historically, the County had been interested in forwarding as much waste as possible to the Burn Plant in order to offset the operational costs incurred; however, he added, this factor would no longer be a concern in November when the current contract expired. Mr. Dusek advised there were a number of options available for waste pick up and disposal to be considered, including whether to seek out hauling and disposal services on an individual or collective basis; obtain a collective quotation solely for disposal services; or essentially taking no action and allowing the individual Municipalities to seek out these services independently. He said that more elaborate programs had been considered in the past to include districting procedures which would create opportunities for the Municipalities to control the flow of waste to a certain facility and allowing for better disposal rates, but noted that he did not feel a program of this type could be successfully prepared for implementation by the time the County's involvement with the Burn Plant facility ended. Mr. Dusek concluded that he perceived the first step in this process was to determine which Towns were interested in participating in a group bid process and the extent of the services

to be sought and he invited the Committee to comment on the matter.

Mr. Monroe stated there was a definite cost advantage to seeking waste disposal services as a group, as well as a benefit to the Towns by allowing the County to administer the program, rather than seeking services on an independent basis. He noted that a recent State Comptroller's report had showed that four towns in the Syracuse, NY area had franchised together in order to eliminate the inefficiencies caused by various independent trash collection companies operating in the same area and had saved a substantial amount of money in doing so. Mr. Monroe said the Town of Chester was interested in joining a collective bidding group and he suggested they might also consider banding together with Washington County to form an even larger Municipal entity to further decrease collection and disposal costs. Mr. Champagne responded that Washington County was currently in favor of removing itself from the waste disposal operation, leaving the selection and securing of such services to be determined at the town level. He added that he did not feel they could reasonably approach Washington County on the matter until a definitive procedure had been established for presentation.

Mr. Belden advised that the Town of Hague would refrain from joining the bargaining group as they preferred their current waste management practices and felt that a change would lead to increased costs.

Mr. Merlino noted that about a third of the property owners in the Town of Lake Luzerne were summer residents who paid the same amount for trash and recycling pick-up provided by the Town as year-round residents through their annual tax bill. He added that the contribution for each resident was approximately \$100 per year and for summer residents, this equated to approximately the same amount that would be paid to a private trash collection company for similar services. Mrs. Wood advised that the Town of Thurman also provided municipal trash and recycling pick-up. She said that although she would be interested to see if there were other less expensive options for waste removal available, Thurman residents seemed very happy with the procedures already in place. When questioned as to how the waste removal services were facilitated, both Mrs. Wood and Mr. Merlino responded that their Towns each owned a garbage truck which was used for the trash pick-up.

Mr. McDevitt said it would seem that collective bidding for waste disposal services was preferable and would be transparent to the average homeowner. However, he added, the collection issue was another matter entirely as although having a number of different collection companies working on the same street might seem inefficient, some residents were very protective of the freedom of choice available to them and any change might cause a fair amount of controversy. Mr. McDevitt noted that Franklin County officials were currently reviewing the matter of plastic bags, which took a considerable amount of time to deteriorate, and measures that would potentially keep them from being placed in landfills. He said that most supermarkets offered either paper or plastic bags and they were considering measures to place a deposit on plastic bags to keep them from being thrown away. Mr. McDevitt said he would gather more information on the issue for presentation at a future meeting for further consideration. Returning to the topic of the collective bid for trash collection, he opined that further education on practices and costs would be necessary before decisions could be made.

A lengthy discussion ensued.

Mr. Conover noted that another issue for consideration was the disposal of household hazardous waste items which they currently had no outlet for, and he questioned whether this facet might be accounted for in the disposal bid process.

Mr. Champagne said he felt consideration of the matter had appropriately begun with discussions at the current meeting and the next step would be for someone at the County level to analyze the decisions made by the

Committee in coordination with the Solid Waste Management Plan and determine how to proceed with implementation. He then questioned whether it was necessary to have a new procedure in place prior to the November 2011 expiration of the Burn Plant contract, or if a January 1, 2012 start date would be sufficient, to which Mr. Dusek replied that if they intended to release a bid for trash disposal services, a November 2011 start date would be preferable. Mr. Dusek added that the bid could be formulated to include specifications for disposal only, as well as for disposal of solid waste, recycling, construction and demolition materials and household hazardous waste, offering a number of variables to bidders for response according to the services each was able to provide.

Following further discussion on the matter, motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to authorize the development of bid specifications for solid waste disposal services and requesting that each town adopt a resolution indicating whether or not they preferred to participate in the bid scenario, as well as opinions on whether the towns would be interested in districting or franchising, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Mr. McCoy asked if a generic resolution could be forwarded to each of the towns regarding participation in the waste disposal bid and Mr. Dusek replied affirmatively; additionally, Mr. Dusek noted he would provide further information on districting and franchising for their consideration.

As there was no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. McCoy and seconded by Mrs. Wood, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist