

Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District
29 Sunset Drive, Suite 5
Morrisville, VT 05661

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' BUSINESS MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023
CONDUCTED BY ZOOM

SUPERVISORS

Cathy Mander-Adams	Belvidere	Dana Sweet	Cambridge
Penelope Doherty	Craftsbury	David Whitcomb	Eden
Jane Oliphant	Elmore	Vacant	Hyde Park
Absent	Johnson	Charles Cooley	Morristown
Willie Noyes	Stowe	Lucas Tilton	Waterville
Phillip Wilson	Wolcott	Carl Witke	Worcester

STAFF

Susan Alexander	District Manager	Donna Griffiths	Clerk
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Willie Noyes called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were present.

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2023 MEETING

Cathy moved and David seconded to approve the minutes of May 9, 2023. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. FY2023 FINANCIALS

a. *Approve April 2023 Financial Reports*

Susan said we are close to \$100K in the red. The reasons include increases to payroll and HHW costs, as well as the new boxes we bought for \$17K and the paving we did at Stowe for \$14K. The good news (not reflected in these financials, which only go through April) is that we had a very successful compost sales season. Our budget goal for compost sales was \$17,500 and we are at almost \$22,000. We have sold almost 300 cubic yards and sales continue. Sales included around 2300 \$3 bucket refills. The price per cubic yard for refills is \$120 vs. \$75 when we sell by the cubic yard. One fairly large customer, a landscaping company, has bought 60 cubic yards. Next year we may think about raising the price of a bucket refill to \$4 and possibly raising the per cubic yard price. Or maybe we could just sell all our compost to the landscaping company. (*Carl joined the meeting at 6:38.*) We have some compost still available. About 30 cubic yards will become available every couple of months, except during the winter when the curing process is slower. Black Dirt Farm is starting a new route to Stowe and we agreed to them coming to our facility for drop off a second day

each week. Large recent expenses include \$35K for the household hazardous waste event and our quarterly PACIF insurance payment, but we have a fairly healthy bank account and our new rates will start July 1. The rate change has been advertised in the newspaper, on Front Porch Forum and Facebook and using our email list. The surcharge is also going up July 1.

Charles said C & D disposal is coming back to last year's level. The big differences in cost are health insurance and labor. Susan said she doesn't begrudge the fact that employees are getting a boost in pay. They are hard workers and they worked all through COVID. One issue with health insurance is that it operates on a calendar year and we operate on a fiscal year so in any one fiscal year we can get hit with two full deductibles. That happened with two employees this past year. We were hit with almost two full deductibles in one fiscal year.

Susan said the HHW bill passed and the governor signed it.

Dana asked when we have to pay the Town of Johnson. Susan said we are supposed to be paying them a per-ton fee for food scraps we bring to the compost facility. We have been sending them tonnages for four or five years and we have gotten a bill once. We have to renegotiate that contract in 2026. The Village of Johnson has a contract with the town because the Town of Johnson owns the property and the village owns the facility. That contract expires in 2026 and our contract has the same end date. The town and village have to renegotiate their agreement and then we have to have an agreement with the village. The village doesn't want any money from us. The town has wanted money and they also don't plow for us.

Willie asked, isn't there some risk that we might have to process their sludge? Susan said our agreement has been that if they want to compost their biosolids we will help them explore options for doing that. She could not see us ever taking biosolids. Charles agreed. He thinks we would charge more than what it would cost them to landfill it.

Charles moved and Lucas seconded to approve the April 2023 financial reports. The motion was passed unanimously.

b. Ratification of Check Register

Cathy moved and Jane seconded to ratify the check register. The motion was passed unanimously.

c. Pre-payment Authorizations for Large Checks

Dana moved and Cathy seconded to authorize pending payments in the amount of \$69,353.22.

One of the pending payments is for the recent HHW event. Susan said the setup fee alone was \$14,600, up from \$6800. H.67 has been passed and will take 18 months to take effect. It will require manufacturers of household hazardous

materials to form an organization to handle collection and disposal of waste in Vermont. That won't have much effect on the purchase price of the materials.

The motion was passed unanimously

4. UPDATES

Susan said H.158 (the bottle bill) got through the house and senate, but there is a committee that decides which bills to send for the governor's signature and H.158 was not sent on by that committee. A future version of this bill may include packaging as well. Susan's complaint about the bottle bill is that the fee we get has been 3.5 cents for 20 years. The State of Maine just passed a new per unit handling fee of 6 cents. At that rate it starts to make sense to have an employee with benefits running a redemption center.

Susan said some but not all of the LRSWMD towns produce biosolids – sludges and solids from wastewater treatment plants. Once they were treated it used to be considered a beneficial reuse to apply them to agricultural lands and the state still asks solid waste districts to promote the beneficial reuse aspect of biosolids, but there are many concerns nowadays about PFAS chemicals in biosolids. In the past 3 weeks Susan has had conversations about biosolids with both Scott Johnstone of Morrisville Water & Light and Harry Shepard, who manages Stowe's wastewater treatment facility. They are highly concerned with the situation they are being faced with. Stowe use to make a Class A biosolid, considered so clean its use was not regulated. Then it turned into Class B. They have been sampling groundwater where they have been applying Class B biosolids and they found they were close to state standards so they can no longer apply their biosolids to the land. They have been sending biosolids to Canada, but Canada is now saying they won't take biosolids from Vermont anymore. Now their only remaining option is to landfill it. Morrisville is not in such a dire situation but they are concerned about how much more biosolids they are acquiring. They have some big breweries.

Susan reached out to the state about this issue because even though biosolids are considered solid waste, wastewater facilities are managed by the state through a very different system. The state will soon hold some public meetings on the biosolids situation. The landfill can only accept so much biosolids. A certain ratio of biosolids to MSW must be met to maintain structural integrity of the cell.

Biosolids are excluded from our surcharge. That may be something we look at in the future. The EPA is currently reviewing their standards for PFAS chemicals. They are expected to reduce the allowable parts per trillion, which means Vermont's standard, which is already lower, probably will also be reduced. That is the groundwater standard. There is no soil standard at this point. In the future there could be a PFAS standard applied to compost. If that happens we should be in good shape because we have very tightly controlled feedstock, but there are studies being done about what PFAS chemicals are in material from depackaging plants after it goes through an anaerobic digester.

Susan will send out the letter Harry Shepard sent to her and to a statewide water foundation about this problem. The Agency of Natural Resources could decide that the biosolids problem is big enough and different enough from other solid waste issues that they will not make solid waste districts responsible for it but will manage it through a different entity, like wastewater plant operators and their trade association.

Tomorrow night Sarah will be going to Future Fest, an event put on by a student-managed organization. They are going to be having discussions about environmental issues, climate change, etc.

Sarah will do a backyard composting session at the Craftsbury Library at noon on June 24. She will spend some time that morning at our Craftsbury facility. She is going to be on WLVB every Wednesday for 10 minutes starting at 11:50.

Howard Romero is getting a Marvin Award tonight for his work on Tuesday Night Live. He is a committed volunteer to his community. He has worked with LRSWMD quite a bit at TNL to handle recycling and food scrap composting.

Willie asked if biosolids produce methane in landfills. Susan said they create methane at wastewater treatment plants and the methane has to be captured there. Some older plants flare it. Some do anaerobic digestion. She noted that “biosolids” is the term the state uses if it is going to be recycled; otherwise the term is “sludge.” Willie asked if sludge can replace some of the methane that used to be produced by food scraps. Susan said sludge can produce some more methane once it is in the landfill. Some is not fully digested.

Susan said Harry Shepard was quoted a number for sludge disposal at the landfill that included a surcharge, so she needs to check that Casella has not been charging a surcharge for sludge, which is supposed to be exempt. If we wanted to start charging a surcharge for sludge, it would require an ordinance change.

Susan said she started a conversation with the Stowe Electric Department about the Municipal Energy Resilience Program, which will provide grants of up to half a million dollars with no match required for energy efficiency upgrades to municipal buildings. The Stowe Electric Department has a new director. Susan met with her and their head of regulatory affairs. They are open to discussing all options – continuing the lease, ending the lease, or LRSWMD purchasing the building. Susan and Jon would like to engage a few board members in discussions on future plans for Stowe. If we could get MERP grant money that would help make it possible to upgrade the building so we could move our offices there. Susan will talk to Charles Stafford next because she understands that the Town of Stowe and Stowe Electric also plan to apply for some of the money. The regional planning commission has some money to help us with the grant process.

Cathy moved and Lucas seconded to adjourn. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chair Willie Noyes adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Griffiths, District Clerk

Date

Willie Noyes, Chair

Date