

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

DATE: July 19, 2018

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
Tim Ingram, Hamilton County Public Health Representative
Todd Portune, Hamilton County Commissioner, Chair
Raj Rajagopal, Township Representative
Larry Riddle, Rumpke

Staff

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

Others in Attendance

Chuck DeJonckheere, Hamilton County Public Health
Katie Evans, Best Way Disposal
Dean Ferrier, Rumpke

ABSENT: **Policy Committee Members**
Sue Magness, Largest Municipality Representative
Tom Turchiano, Public Member

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Portune called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Portune stated that the public event and briefing the District had concerning the illegal dumping issue was wonderful. The Sheriff's program has been funded through decisions of the Policy Committee and with the District's tipping fee revenues so no general funds are being used.

Mr. Portune stated that it was a wonderful event and thanked Ms. Christmann and everyone responsible, the Committee's collective thanks and congratulations for working it all out. Ms. Christmann thanked the staff in the audience.

A brief discussion ensued about the great significance this program will bring to Hamilton County.

Mr. Portune commended everyone regarding the Policy Committee in May and reading through the minutes showed it was a good meeting.

2. CLERK'S REPORT

A. Approval of Minutes – May 17, 2018 Policy Committee Meeting

Mr. Portune stated that he will not vote due to his absence but he will call for the action of approving the May 17, 2018 minutes. Mr. Ingram moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. The remaining member, Mr. DiPuccio, was 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 Attachment B included the revenue reports comparing 2017 to 2018. Continuing the trend that has been discussed the past several months, revenue exceeds previous year's revenue. Through May, revenue is up roughly \$174,000 compared to 2017.

Ms. Christmann stated that staff is estimating revenue will be between \$3 and \$3.1 million for 2018 which is an increase from \$2.8 million.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann at what point could considerations be made to consider items that could not be considered during the budget planning process. Mr. Portune stated he raises this due to the potential reductions that may need to be made across the board County-wide in the event that the sales tax increase that he and Commissioner Driehaus voted on is not allowed to remain on the books, the County is going to be facing a very serious reduction in budget. Mr. Portune further discussed this and gave examples of shared services with other departments.

Mr. Ingram stated that the District's funds are restricted. Ms. Christmann stated that the District's revenue can only be spent on ten items. Ms. Christmann stated that the County has formed a sustainability team of top leadership in the County looking at operations and how waste can be reduced, transportation, etc. with a list of recommendations coming very soon on what to push forward. Ms. Christmann stated that the waste reduction activities are something that are in line with the Solid Waste District and it could help in reducing costs for the County operations.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve the financial analysis. Mr. Ingram moved approval. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

4. POLICY ITEMS

A. 2019 Budget Recommendation

Ms. Christmann stated that the draft budget was sent to the Committee recently. Ms. Christmann provided a summary.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District is requesting approximately \$3 million in expenses and revenues are projected as \$3 million.

Ms. Christmann stated that the recommended budget provides funding for all the programs outlined in the Solid Waste Management Plan. In addition, it provides funding for some program expansion. Because revenues are exceeding projections made in the Solid Waste Plan, an additional \$100,000 is budgeted for the Residential Recycling Incentive Program and \$150,000 is budgeted for a household hazardous waste collection program.

Ms. Christmann stated that in addition to that, staff is recommending spending an additional \$100,000 on two programs that were discussed at the May meeting. Staff is recommending \$85,000 to bolster efforts to reduce the

largest portion of the waste stream which is organics. \$85,000 was already budgeted and staff is recommending another \$85,000 which will be used for a backyard compost bin sale and developing an organics diversion grant.

Ms. Christmann stated that the remaining \$15,000 of that \$100,000 would be used for the residential recycling awareness campaign. Annually, the District is spending \$100,000 on residential recycling and the District would like to increase this to \$115,000 for 2019.

Mr. Portune asked Ms. Christmann if she has or is she able to discern, with respect to the recommended increases in spending programmatic efforts, what that might translate into reduced costs overall; whether it is to the County as a specific jurisdiction or to local jurisdictions where programs are already in place that would be augmented. Mr. Portune stated that he is trying to think, with respect to each of the recommendations, to what extent, do they serve to reduce costs. What are those numbers if it is able to be predicted, whether it is just an initial estimate or can be narrowed down to predictions that are somewhat bankable because it is known to a reasonable degree of certainty that if this is done it will generate that.

Ms. Christmann stated with respect to the household hazardous waste program, staff has had at least three political jurisdictions contact us interested in conducting their own event. These are expensive to provide and a lot of time and labor so by the District providing an event, the burden is taken off the political jurisdiction which is a cost savings to communities that may be looking at doing this type of event.

Ms. Christmann stated that the increase in funding to the residential recycling incentive program will provide a little bit of additional revenue to communities to be used for recycling and waste reduction purposes.

Ms. Christmann stated that the organics diversion grant that was mentioned is really going to depend on what projects come in. It could save an organization or school some money in their waste disposal costs.

Ms. Christmann stated that the carry-over is well above the eight months operating that the Committee requires. It is projected to be \$3 million on January 1, 2019 which is roughly equal to one year operating. Staff anticipates before the end of the year bringing the Policy Committee some ideas for potential uses of the carry-over balance. Ms. Christmann stated these projects would most likely be one-time projects as opposed to an ongoing program.

Mr. Portune asked what the time table was in connection with the County's budget and what outreach is being planned with local jurisdictions with the budget and the carry-over. Ms. Christmann stated that historically, not much outreach is done on the annual budget. For the carry-over, internal conversations will occur to come up with some ideas to be vetted and then doing some communication depending who the stakeholders are.

Ms. Christmann stated that in terms of timeline with the County's budget, the District's budget is due July 23, 2018.

Mr. Ingram complimented staff for creating a balanced budget and stated that he was excited about the organics.

Mr. Portune asked what is being planned to engage some of the larger residential potential users whether it is apartments, condominium complexes, etc. Within the budget recommendations, is there sort of a sub-fund amount in terms of trying to bump up numbers with respect to those future participants?

Ms. Christmann stated that within the 2019 budget, which was developed as part of the Solid Waste Plan, funding was increased towards the commercial sector and multi-family and condominiums are included in the commercial sector. The amount was increased to \$48,000 to spend on commercial business to reduce their waste stream.

Mr. Portune asked if this amount of funding will lead to increased recycling. Ms. Christmann stated that almost 60 organizations were provided assistance from the District last year and gave examples. Ms. Christmann stated that she would anticipate similar or better numbers.

Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve. Mr. Ingram moved to approve the 2019 budget as presented by staff. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

B. Food Waste Prevention Initiative

Ms. Christmann stated that in the Solid Waste Plan organics was identified as the priority waste stream and as such, \$85,000 was budgeted in 2018 and 2019 focused on this initiative.

Ms. Christmann stated that so far in 2018 that \$85,000 pot has been spent on the residential sector and has included an awareness campaign targeted to residents and a residential food waste challenge. To date about \$60,000 of the \$85,000 is remaining.

Ms. Christmann stated that in the 2018 budget and in the Solid Waste Plan staff stated that a new program would be developed for the commercial sector aimed at reducing food waste. After much research by Ms. Sticklen and Ms. Balz, staff is recommending the development of a Smart Kitchen Initiative that is modeled after Alameda County, CA.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District would collaborate with Green Umbrella and work with high volume kitchens to reduce how much food they are throwing away. It is really focused on pre-consumer food waste.

Ms. Christmann stated that the District will fund up to 50 percent of a waste tracking system, an automated food waste prevention system that keeps track and measures pre-consumer food waste in a kitchen. The idea is that once you know and measure the waste, you can change your behavior and your purchasing habits.

Ms. Christmann stated that this program will be available throughout the entire Green Umbrella region which is about nine counties in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, however, District funds will only be used for the large volume kitchens in Hamilton County.

Ms. Christmann stated that as we all know, there is no infrastructure in southwest Ohio for generators to cost-effectively compost their food waste; they have to send it to Springfield or Columbus. This will give the District an opportunity to work with large generators of food waste to help them reduce waste, which is better than composting and anaerobic digestion and save them money at the same time.

These types of waste tracking systems are effective programs but cost can be a barrier and this is a barrier the District can help reduce. The District would not fund the whole system; the company would pay up to half the cost as well as the District paying up to half. This program would be on a reimbursement basis.

Mr. Portune stated that he could immediately see how this could work locally and gave examples.

Mr. Portune stated that he would like to make arrangements for Ms. Christmann to present on this to the Board of County Commissioners.

The Committee discussed the program.

Mr. DiPuccio asked if the information will be shared back to the District. Ms. Christmann stated yes and that the organization and the District would enter into an MOU and one of the requirements is to share the percent of the food that was reduced.

Mr. Ingram asked if this was a cloud-based product. Ms. Christmann stated that she thought so. Mr. Ingram asked if staff would have access to monitor whoever is using it. Ms. Christmann stated yes. Mr. Ingram discussed the positive aspects of being able to do this.

A brief discussion ensued regarding different organizations that could potentially benefit from this system.

Mr. Portune asked if staff was just sharing this report or was action required. Ms. Christmann stated that she did not think any action was required because the money was already budgeted.

Mr. Portune stated that for the next meeting, try to quantify and identify potential users and what is the structure, how will staff make certain that word gets out about this so that it will be used. It is a great initiative and exciting to see but if it just sits, people are not aware then only a portion of the benefit staff is looking for is used.

Mr. Portune stated that establishing goals and guidelines related to this system should be thought about and asked Ms. Christmann to provide this information at the next meeting for the Committee discuss.

Ms. Christmann stated that pending approval today, staff was going to start rolling this out in the next two – three weeks. Ms. Christmann stated she could send something out if this is OK with everyone because she would hate to stall this until September. Mr. Portune stated no and this would suggest to him that staff already has a plan in place. Ms. Christmann stated that staff is working collaboratively with Green Umbrella to roll it out.

Mr. Portune stated that staff will have its work done with Green Umbrella prior to rolling it out. Ms. Christmann stated yes. Mr. Portune asked to let the Committee know what the District has come to terms with regarding Green Umbrella and what the broad general outline of the outreach would be.

Mr. Portune requested that this item be included for the September meeting as a Policy/Information item to get an update on what has happened and to have any further discussion around what has been worked out with Green Umbrella to see if there are any additions from a matter of policy the Committee might suggest.

Mr. Ingram stated that there will be several facilities that will be using this product inside Hamilton County and Green Umbrella is going to be coordinating that and asked if this was correct. Ms. Christmann stated that the District will fund the programs in Hamilton County if there are more programs in Hamilton County than the initial funding allows, Green Umbrella's funding can kick in as well.

Mr. Ingram asked if there was intention to create a learning collaborative among the entities that are participating to share the learnings of what they have begun to reuse or reduce, and perhaps recycle. Ms. Christmann stated yes. Mr. Ingram gave an example of how this could work.

C. General Interest Representative Recommendation

Ms. Christmann stated that a new member, if approved, will be starting in September. This was a very competitive process with ten applications being received.

Ms. Christmann stated that the applications were narrowed down to three and those three were interviewed with the help of Mr. Turchiano and Ms. Magness. Ms. Christmann stated that Karen Hurley is being recommended.

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Ms. Christmann stated that this vote was just for the statutory members so it would be Mr. Portune, Mr. Ingram, and Mr. Rajagopal. Mr. Portune entertained a motion to approve Karen Hurley to serve as the General Interest Representative. Mr. Ingram moved approval. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. All in favor and the motion was approved. Ms. Christmann stated that this would also be going before the Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

D. Student Representative Recommendation

Ms. Christmann stated that, if approved, Sydney Sauer from Cincinnati Christian Hills Academy will be the new Student Representative beginning in September.

Mr. Portune asked about the process for finding the student representative.

A brief discussion ensued about ideas to gain interest for the students.

Mr. Portune moved approval to appoint Ms. Sauer as the Student Representative and forward that recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Annual District Report

Mr. Portune stated that with respect to Ohio EPA's comments on the Solid Waste Plan, will the District receive a summary in the fall? Ms. Christmann stated yes and that every year, staff submits the Annual Report to Ohio EPA and this report has been submitted. Comments will not be received until about October and at that point Hamilton County's recycling rate will be received.

B. Community Recycling Meeting

Ms. Christmann stated that Ms. Balz organized a meeting with communities and Rumpke Recycling yesterday. Ms. Christmann stated that this was a great community meeting about the global issues with recycling and to talk about the issues facing recycling right now and what communities could do to help.

C. Village of Silverton Curbside Recycling

Ms. Christmann stated that the Village of Silverton began contracted curbside recycling and this was the first time they have had it for all residents. Ms. Christmann congratulated Ms. Balz for her work.

D. OEPA Grants Approval

Mr. Portune stated that it looked like a couple of grants came in. Ms. Christmann stated that both MadTree and Tri-State Escrap were approved from Ohio EPA.

6. TENTATIVE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

-Food waste tracking system

7. POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Ingram welcomed Mr. DiPuccio back on the Committee and spoke of what an asset he is. Mr. DiPuccio stated that he has always enjoyed working on this Committee and thanked the Committee for the appointment.

Mr. Portune welcomed Mr. DiPuccio back as well and briefly spoke of his knowledge, perspective, etc. on the Committee. Mr. DiPuccio complimented Mr. Portune as Chair and his consensus building skills.

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Mr. Rajagopal complimented Ms. Christmann on her thinking into the future and going in a nice direction with the Smart Kitchen initiative. He would like to see more things involving the schools and have the younger generations see the importance of recycling and not being wasteful. Mr. Rajagopal stated that he very much admired her work.

Ms. Christmann stated that it was because of the amazing team that the District has.

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 20, 2018. 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

Mr. Portune moved adjournment. Mr. Rajagopal seconded. Mr. Portune stated that by rising vote our votes at adjourning are recorded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

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