

Public Works Committee Minutes
December 13, 2011 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Grattidge; Supervisors Barrett, Jenkins, A. Johnson, M. Johnson, Southworth, Wormuth, Peck and Wood; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Joe Ritchey, Tom Speziale, Public Works; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Hans Arnold, Gerhardt, LLC; Kevin Voorhees, Luann Meyer Barton & Loguidice; Press.

Chairman Grattidge called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mrs. Southworth the minutes of the October 11, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Grattidge said the first item on the agenda is requesting a resolution authorizing the Chairman to execute a supplemental agreement with NYSDOT in regards to a HBRR grant for additional Engineering and Right of Way necessary for the replacement of the Central Avenue over the Anthony Kill Bridge in the City of Mechanicville. The total amount is \$43,302 with funding splits of 80% Federal, 15% State and 5% local. The \$2,165.10 County share is available in the 2011 highway budget.

Mr. Ritchey said the county, through resolution 231-09, originally accepted this work and the State DOT directed the additional work, realizing there was an additional right of way needed. They are also requesting an historic american engineer report be done, for an additional \$49,302. Mr. Ritchey said there is \$600,000 that was leftover from the original grant.

Mr. Ritchey requested a resolution authorizing the Chairman to execute an amendment to the design contract with Greenman Pedersen Inc. in the amount of \$49,302. The \$2,165.10 county share is available in the 2011 Highway budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Southworth authorizing the Chairman to enter into an amended agreement with Greenman Pedersen, Inc. in the amount of \$49,302 for additional engineering and right of way expenses necessary for the replacement of Central Avenue (Route 4) over Anthony Kill Bridge in the City of Mechanicville. Unanimous.

Mr. Grattidge said that work continues on a draft of the solid waste management plan. Louann Meyer, from Barton & Loguidice, distributed an outline of the proposed Local Solid Waste Management Plan and gave a brief review to the committee. She said all the reports that are required to be submitted to the State have been reviewed and the amount of solid waste that the county, as a whole, is generating, and the volume of recycling has been determined. The state wants to see in the plan what you think your goals are for the diversion rate and recycling rate in the future. She said the DEC is going to want to know how the county is going to reduce the waste they are generating. Currently the

county's diversion rate is 15%. The DEC is going to want to see a diversion rate in ten years of 75% to 80%. The report will need to show where the county is currently and that progress is being made.

Ms. Meyer said if the committee was comfortable with the solid waste management plan the next step would be to submit it to State for their review and issuance for public review can be done at the same time. Once comments have been received there will then be a SEQRA review and then approval by the DEC.

Mr. Ritchey said the proposed plan is a logical approach, but budget considerations will have to be considered when moving forward. As long as it is justified and quantified the DEC should be happy. Mr. Ritchey said he is comfortable with the implementation schedule that is being proposed.

Mr. Grattidge said suggested moving forward, submitting the proposed plan to DEC and releasing it as a draft to the public to gain comments.

Mr. Ritchey said as soon as the committee is comfortable they can submit the plan to DEC and Public Works will work with the consultants to proceed with the path to submit it for public review and comment.

Mr. Grattidge asked the committee, if they were comfortable with where they are, and should the plan be processed or should it be moved on to next year's committee.

Mrs. Wormuth said, we are just analyzing it and there is nothing that we can't back away from as we move forward, so there is no reason not to move forward with the draft plan.

Mrs. Southworth said she agreed. There are a number of implementation things that we may want to look at further, especially the costs associated with some of them and the extra burden that it will be putting on Public Works and how they are going to be funded in the future. If this is just going to be put out to receive feedback and review to make changes, there is no reason why we can't move forward.

The committee unanimously agreed to have the consultants move forward with the approval schedule.

Mr. Arnold, from Gerhardt Consultants, gave a brief overview of the future options for the Saratoga County Landfill.

The landfill is a 106,000 ton per year facility. It was stipulated in the permit that no sludge or construction or demolition debris would go into the landfill. There were 23 cell acres approved with 9 cell acres constructed with a 25-acre expansion area for a total of 130 acres.

In 2008 Malcolm Pirnie assessed the condition of the landfill. In the report there were a number of regular maintenance improvements needed that totaled between \$111,000 to

\$144,000 by their estimate. Barton & Loguidice inspected the site on November 16, 2011. If the county continues to be responsible for this facility, it will be important to have a full engineering review of all the components of the facility to make sure there is no deterioration of the basic systems, he said.

Mr. Arnold said the limitations that would have to be considered if the facility were to be opened today, and was required to handle all of the non-recyclable waste generated in Saratoga County would be a 159,000 ton per year shortfall. In addition, there would have to be additional equipment, materials, supplies and tools procured in order to operate the facility. The estimated costs to bring the facility up and operating would be between \$2.5 and \$3 million.

Mr. Arnold said the five future options would be as follows:

- Maintain the landfill as an insurance policy – this option would preserve the county investment and would be a cost stable option if private market prices were to increase sharply. The cons to this idea would be significant expenses would be incurred to complete the necessary maintenance upgrades. There could also be significant future expenses if the facility components, including operating equipment deteriorate from inactivity.
- Open the landfill - Opening the landfill remains a viable option for the county. This would compare favorably to the cost of getting rid of non-recyclable waste. The estimated cost of running 106,000 tons per year would be in the range of market \$32 to \$45 per ton. Opening the landfill would keep \$2 million annually in the local economy and allow for the closest inspection for managing recycling and screening out household hazardous wastes. In the future there would be the creation of a new source of revenue from the sale of methane gas recovery, allowing the county to sell carbon credits. The cons on this idea would be a cost to the county of approximately \$3.4 million annually for a new cost center to operate the landfill. There would be an additional expense between \$2.5 to \$3 million to acquire the necessary equipment, supplies and tools to get up and running. The county would have to deal with regular and difficult associated issues such as traffic, odors, litter, perception of hazards and complaints. Opening the landfill would require a resolution to the difficult capacity shortfall issue and could trigger negative public reaction. Once the landfill is opened it would be difficult to change that decision, and once opened ground water monitoring, leachate management and post closure responsibilities will be county responsibilities forever. In terms of cost risks, if the DEC changes construction and operating requirements for landfill facilities that risk would be the counties.
- Privatize the landfill – This option would utilize the county investment. The county could achieve a favorable tipping fee for in-county waste. If the county can successfully negotiate the agreement with the successful private operator, it may be possible to shift responsibility for closure/post closure and regulatory changes to the private operator. The cons of privatizing may still require resolution of the issue of

securing adequate capacity for in county waste. This would be a long-term commitment that would be difficult, if not impossible, to reverse. This may trigger public opposition and the county would still have to respond to complaints on operations such as traffic, odors, and perception of hazards.

Mr. Arnold said if you did a privatization with a municipal solid waste disposal company, it could potentially bring \$10 million for the sale or lease and an annual payment of up to \$400,000.

- Limited privatization - This would be a sale or lease to a company that has a single waste stream and would be primarily to that company's use, and would create a new source of revenue for the county. The county might be able to negotiate an up front payment that would go to offset the county's initial capital investment. If the county could successfully negotiate the agreement with the successful private operator, it may be possible to shift responsibility for closure/post closure and regulatory changes to the private operator. The cons to this idea would be that it would eliminate the county's insurance policy against the risk of a significant price increase in the cost of disposal in the private market. The county may still have to respond to complaints on operations, and it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to discontinue the operation. On a limited privatization, because it is for a smaller single waste stream, it would be approximately \$5 million for the sale or lease with an annual payment of \$200,000, with a municipal solid waste disposal company.
- Relinquish the landfill permit – This would eliminate all the ongoing responsibility for the maintenance of the landfill facility, as well as all responsibility for regulatory compliance, and would end any public opposition. The cons to this idea would be the loss of the investment and insurance policy against private market risk. The county would be significantly more vulnerable in the long term to increases in the cost of fuel. Local businesses and waste generators could unknowingly incur long term environmental liability caused by the disposal facility used by a private hauler.

Mr. Barrett presented a motion to immediately move to put out an RFP to privatize the landfill to its fullest extent and capability. "We don't know what the landfill is worth until we see what somebody is willing to pay for it". Mr. Barrett asked how long the RFP process would take? Mr. Arnold said approximately four to six months.

Mr. Grattidge proposed taking a look at all the different options and consulting with the town that the landfill is located in. He suggested forwarding the information on to next year's committee with the understanding that they would take direction on which way to go.

Mrs. Wormuth said more information is needed from the County Attorney with regard to the other huddles, such as turning over the 2001 resolution and the steps that the Board needs to take to do that.

Mr. Barrett said, it is important to get the information as quickly as possible, i.e., what is the landfill worth.

Mr. Peck said he appreciates the consideration of the Chairman and the committee and the thoughtfulness and considerations of the town of Northumberland. He said from his prospective, he would be curious to see the 120W RFP option because there may be someone who would want to use it for something other than municipal waste.

Mrs. Southworth said all the options are important, but if we don't do it in the right order and right process and have all the legal steps in place, we are just going to open ourselves up to a legal challenge, which could potentially put a lot more cost on the county.

Mr. Barrett said his concern is that this could go on for a lengthy amount of time, and it has already gone on for too long. We need to know what this facility is worth, which is incredibly important to finances in Saratoga County.

Mr. Grattidge said this is going to have a high priority going into next year.

A motion was made by Mrs. Southworth, seconded by Mrs. Wormuth to move the information on to next year's committee with the understanding that they take on the tasks of developing options for this property, and request Gerhardt, LLC to develop some budgetary numbers for different options. Unanimous.

Mr. Voorhees said their current contract with the county is to help get the solid waste management plan prepared and submitted to DEC and work with the county to try and get the approval from DEC with regard to the plan. As a part of the scope it was agreed that Barton & Loguidice would look at what the options were for possible future use of the landfill.

On a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Jenkins the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom