

INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 25, 2007
County Office Building, Oswego, NY
4:30 P.M.

Present: Committee: Legislators M. French, Chairman, C. Brewer, B. Brown, D. Chalifoux, A. Gearsbeck, P. Natoli, L. Ponzi, M. Potter, P. Vasho
Department Heads: Interim DPW Superintendent K. Ospelt, B&G Superintendent Joe Taormina, Airport Manager Bruce Bisbo, Director of Solid Waste Programs Frank Visser
Staff: D. Burrige
Guests: Legislators Shawn Doyle, Barry Leemann, Arthur Ospelt, County Administrator Philip Church, County Attorney Richard Mitchell, Purchasing Director Fred Maxon, Mr. and Mrs. Pringle, and members of the press.

1. Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman French. A motion to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2007 meeting was made by Legislator Brown, seconded by Legislator Ponzi with all in favor. Motion carried.

2. Bids and RFP's

Fred Maxon, Purchasing Director handed out a report listing the bids and RFP's awarded for the month. Bid #35-07 Hopper-Type Spreader, a total of two (2) bids were received. The lowest responsive bidder was Chemung Supply of Elmira, NY for \$16,340.00. The second bid came in at \$2,100.00 higher. Second on the list, RFP #15-07 Engineering Consultant Hastings Transfer Station Rehab, a total of four (4) proposals were received. The lowest proposal meeting all specifications was received from Thomas Arctander Architects from Fulton, NY in the amount of \$18,000.00. Amounts for other proposals received were \$21,300.00, \$27,500.00 and \$32,300.00. Legislator Vasho asked if the committee voted to rehab this transfer station. Frank Visser advised that is was part of a capital project that was awarded for transfer station upgrades. The last item was RFP #14-07 Airport Restaurant Operation, which was re-sent out by direct mail to 305 vendors, along with legal advertising and the website with only one responsible proposal returned. Mulcahey Enterprises proposed compensation be paid to the county at \$100.00 per month. Bruce Bisbo advised that the restaurant will be opened the same hours, be consistent to what was there before and will offer a full menu. Mulcahey Enterprises will be responsible for all utilities and expenses with the exception of the water which the County has always provided. Motion to accept all bids and RFP's as presented was made by Legislator Brown, seconded by Legislator Potter with all in favor. Motion carried.

3. Solid Waste

Chairman French wanted to compliment Frank Visser on how well he felt the second household hazardous waste day was handled. He noted that when he arrived at noon, there were no lines, no crowds and no complaints. Director Visser advised that the person, who had a long letter to the editor after the first one, actually had a compliment on how well this one was. There were 580 cars that came through and the gates were opened at 7:00 a.m. to get the cars off the road. The Sheriff's Department had 2 people there, there were two extra unloading lines and by 11:30 a.m. the lines were gone. Director Visser noted there were still a few complaints but overall, everything went very well. Legislator Natoli asked if the volume taken in was different from the first one. Director Visser noted that the numbers were not in yet but there was less.

a. Solid Waste Fees 2008

Frank Visser, Director of Solid Waste Programs, noted that he has had a budget meeting with the County Administrator and as part of his budget he is proposing some fee increases. The consideration to bring these fees to the Committee for approval is based on his understanding that the goal for the Solid Waste Department is to be free from the tax base so that the taxes will not support the Solid Waste System anymore and the Solid Waste System is paid for by the users. One request is to increase the residential sticker fee by \$25.00 for a new total of \$125.00. But as part of the budget being proposed, the proposal also includes to open the facilities back up on Monday and go to a normal five (5) day week with Saturday mornings also. There are still a number of complaints being received regarding not being opened on Monday. Director Visser commented that if we want to run like a business, most businesses are open on Mondays. Certainly all the industries are open on Monday, as well as, all of the haulers work on Monday. As far as the recycling effort, Director Visser feels that the majority of haulers were turned away from their collection routes on Monday or had to fend for themselves with their recyclables on Mondays because we are not open to collect them. Director Visser advised that if the County ever wants to get to an equitable situation where a resident pays for the service of the transfer station, it will never happen unless we raise that fee by a substantial amount over a few years. It is in his opinion that the fee is still approximately \$50.00 - \$75.00 short of people actually paying for the service that they are receiving. Compared to the costs for private haulers throughout the county, the proposed \$125.00 fee is substantially less than what someone would pay a hauler but is still substantially subsidized by other income of the department and the tax base.

Also being proposed is the increase to the tipping fees at the landfill and the Energy Recovery Facility by 4%, which is more or less the inflation rate. This would be an increase of \$2.00 per ton. The present charge of \$50.00 pays for the cost to operate these two disposal sites. The budget does not include some of the employee benefits or capital improvements; so the tipping fees cover just the operating budget as it stands right now.

Director Visser is also proposing to start a new fee for clean construction and demolition wood waste. He noted that they could use the wood waste at the Energy Recovery Facility to help in the burn process. It reduces the emission, which means it would reduce the amount of lime and carbon that is spent to scrub the gases. He feels that there is a considerable amount of clean wood that leaves the county and is proposing to charge a fee of \$35.00/ton.

Additionally, Director Visser is asking to increase the punch cards from \$25.00 to \$30.00 and the tipping fees at the transfer station from \$75.00 to \$80.00. Motion to accept adjusting the fees and move for discussion was made by Legislator Brown and seconded by Legislator Vasho. Discussion followed.

Legislator Brown noted that she would rather see the tipping fee go to \$85.00 and not so high on the residential sticker. The residential sticker figures out to be \$2.31 per week versus the \$248.00 she pays to a private hauler. The \$125.00 is not unreasonable but not sure where in this budget it would fit in.

Legislator Gearsbeck advised that he does not agree with these fees. He feels that the County should be really looking to see if everyone is paying. From what he has heard, he believes that there are people who do not pay at the transfer stations. He feels that this needs to be checked out first before any of the fees are raised. Director Visser was not sure how to respond. He does not want to say that there is no one who gets away without paying because the system is not water tight. There are times at the transfer stations when employees will catch people trying to drive away with a punch card without getting their card punched.

The punch card is supposed to be a 13-gallon bag; people will bring in a 55-gallon bag and try to get away with one punch. Director Visser agrees that it does happen but does not believe it happens all the time. Legislator Chalifoux asked about the hand-pass sticker that is not affixed onto a vehicle because of owning a company. Director Visser advised that there is a hand pass policy and does not believe that there are a lot of them out there. He advised that these policies were put in place before his time and he believes that they were developed to accommodate people. Some of these hand passes are intended for people who have a company car and claim that they are not allowed to put this type of sticker on them. Legislator Chalifoux stated that he is hearing from Solid Waste employees that this policy should be abandoned because these passes are being purchased and used by a number of different people. Director Visser noted that they are following the policy as created by the Committee.

Legislator Vasho is sure that nobody wants to raise these fees but the Committee gave Frank the direction to set up an Enterprise Fund and to make the Solid Waste Department self sufficient. These costs are actually cheaper than it would be for the rural areas to have their garbage picked up and he feels that the Committee should support this. Legislator Vasho asked if this increase would cover the cost of opening back up on Monday and now having to pay overtime for Saturdays. Director Visser advised that it is included in the budget.

Legislator Potter agrees that the dump should pay for itself but feels that the fees are being raised too quickly and asked what the actual cost to operate these transfer stations is. Director Visser advised that they have a pretty good idea and the approximate cost to run the transfer stations is \$1.8 million. This is a deceiving number because it costs \$1.8 million to operate the stations, but that does not include the tipping fee. Legislator Potter asked to what extent is the county still subsidizing. Director Visser noted that they are within \$100,000 of the operating budget being covered by the revenues but then again not all the employee benefits are included in the budget and the revenues do not cover capital improvements. The entire budget, including all benefits and capital monies, is somewhere close to being \$1 million short of breaking even.

Legislator Gearsbeck would like to see someone from the Solid Waste Department go to each transfer station to spend the day monitoring what goes on. He would also like to see cameras installed so that the committee would know what is going on before voting on raising the fees. If everything is running smoothly than the fees will need to be raised.

Legislator Brown feels the problem is that everything was let go to meet the budget and make the legislators happy for so many years, Frank inherited a mess. Everything is worn out, broken down, needs to be re-concreted and it was all let go to meet a budget that the legislators decided they needed to meet, with no regard to what happened to the buck. Director Visser agreed stating that there is a trade off to how much money you can spend to enforce all the rules. You can put additional guys at a transfer station to get 100% enforcement but 3% to 4% abuse is not worth the return. Legislator Gearsbeck wanted to know what if there was 25% abuse. Director Visser stated that they know that's not the case because they know tonnages, they know the averages that people bring in, they know what they weigh, and they can figure out what gets brought in on the stickers. There isn't a lot of abuse and certainly not to the extent that we can make hundreds and thousands of dollars more through stricter enforcement.

Philip Church, County Administrator wanted to point out to the Committee that a while back it was approved trying out credit cards at the transfer stations. Part of the reasoning for that was to make it easier for people to pay in anticipation that some of the rates would have to go up. The plan is to try and make this happen for next year and the easy paying will help to increase the revenues as well.

Administrator Church asked Frank to comment on the fees that the Committee has jurisdiction over themselves versus the other fees that will have to be part of an amendment to the local law. Director Visser advised that he drafted the amendment to the local law language to reflect the tipping fee changes. The solid waste tipping fees at the landfill and transfer stations and the clean wood construction and demolition fee will need to go through a public hearing and resolution before the full legislature for amendment of the local law. All the other fees are by the approval of this committee in accordance with the local law.

Legislator Chalifoux stated that this Committee directed Frank to do this and knows no one is here blaming him for what he has come up with. He has no problem with raising the fees as long as all of the abuse is cleaned up. If the abuse isn't cleaned up, he cannot support raising the fees. Director Visser again stated that it is a trade off. Is it cost effective, because with attempting to stop abuse comes enforcement. You will hear some screaming when we try to enforce the rules because most people feel it is an invasion of their privacy because we will have to start opening bags.

Legislator Potter advised that next years fish waste is a problem, as well as, this year's fish waste being a problem. The proposal for next year is the same as it is right now and he advised that right now, it is not working. He asked if something could be done this year for instance borrowing a truck from the Highway Department with a liner to help with the collection of fish waste. Director Visser advised that it was not up to him, but up to the Committee to make a decision.

Legislator Brewer asked what exactly the problems were right now; if it was not working out with Butler coming up with their truck; are they not able to dump it in there or are they just not dumping it fast enough. Legislator Potter advised that Legislator Doyle is working closer with it but he was told that today they were there to haul it away and there were maggots all over inside and outside, they were on the cover, under the cover. The bag didn't close up so they had to put a tarp over it.

Chairman French asked Legislator Doyle to give the Committee an overview of how the collection of the fish waste was going. Legislator Doyle started by passing around pictures that were taken early on as well as a price schedule established when the cooperative was formed. The people involved are willing to pay more if there is someplace they can bring it and not have to baby sit the waste anymore. Members of the cooperative all have to take a couple of days to be there. Dumpsters that are being rented are 4 foot high; a ramp had to be built in order to get to the dumpsters; covers were built with money being raised to accomplish all of this. The problem today is that the dumpster sat there for a month with the waste building up. The maggots were tremendous in that they started to eat down the fish waste to a lower level but when they uncovered the whole thing today, the workers at the sewage treatment plant advised that they have never smelt anything as bad and did not know how they were going to deal with this. Legislator Doyle explained that Butler had to wrap the whole dumpster up and cover it with an extra tarp to seal it. Bottom line is that it is not a good situation by doing this at the sewage treatment plant and relying on volunteers. Director Visser advised that he believes that by regulation the County can not keep waste overnight and would have to get it out of there; that's a cost.

Legislator Potter believes that the fish cleaners would be willing to bring the waste on any day during the week, by noon, so that it could then be hauled away in the afternoon, instead of it having to sit there. Legislator Doyle explained that the proposal they are asking for is that this committee and/or county consider naming three days a week and set a fee schedule, even if it is higher, so that the fish waste can be locally and responsibly disposed of. If something hadn't been done this year, there would have been more roadside dumping. There has been some waste found over the fence of the sewage treatment plant before it is opened.

Legislator Natoli stated that the issue is still about transportation. He suggested that Frank figure out, like he did with the transfer stations, amount coming in versus how much it costs. Figure out what the trucking would be, if you have to mix it and even if you're able to truck it and come up with a number. Director Visser advised that his first reaction would be that if you bring it to the transfer station, the tipping fee is \$75.00. Legislator Potter advised that they would like a break. Director Visser noted that this would be a break because his department would have to do extra work and right now he is not even sure how they would handle it. He was thinking for next year when they get the new tanker, then they could modify one of their existing tankers with a dump on the bottom, use the tanker to dump the fish in and at night you could close the whole thing up and you wouldn't have to haul it everyday.

Legislator Doyle noted that they built covers thinking that they would only be keeping it for a couple of days. From today forward, he feels that they will be moving waste more and not letting it sit so long and develop so badly. The volunteers have also been fairly responsible about trying to drain a lot of the fluids off. If we had the volume and moving of the fish waste it would work, or if there was a better facility where it was capped it would work. Legislator Doyle feels strongly that it is something that the county should be doing and the people are willing to pay for it. Director Visser stated that in his mind it is a hauler issue and not a solid waste issue because really all they ask is that people bring it to Volney. Almost every business in the County makes those arrangements so why should the fish cleaners be any different.

Chairman French noted that his understanding of the problems that they have experienced is because of the slow start of the season and the fish waste sitting around so long. He asked Legislator Doyle that now that the volume has picked up and they will be moving much more quickly, won't this help to alleviate the problem. Legislator Doyle advised that it will still be a problem as well as a problem with the people who handle them. Chairman French asked if these volunteers could rotate and take turns making trips to Bristol Hill. Legislator Doyle noted that a number of these people just don't have good transportation.

Legislator Natoli asked Rich Mitchell if it was legal for the County to get involved because this is a hauler issue; whether it is coming from Pulaski to Bristol Hill or going from Pulaski to the City of Oswego to use their grinder. County Attorney Mitchell advised that the county is not permitted to receive waste at locations other than the transfer stations, nor is the county permitted to haul from areas other than the transfer stations.

Legislator Potter asked that if they could somehow get through this issue this year, would it be possible for the County to help next year. Chairman French noted that his recommendation to Frank would be to see if we could work with the co-op on some suggestions for next year. It would be tough to put Solid Waste in a bind right now with the season already started.

Legislator Brewer noted that he would like to help these legislators in anyway possible and if there is some way to help them this season he would gladly go out of his way to help. These legislators have put a lot of time into this, they have done a lot of research on this, they have tried hard for everyone and are also up there working. He appreciates the job these legislators are doing up there along with anyone else that is working and would really like to see some way to help this year.

Legislator Natoli noted that at another committee meeting, discussion was brought up on a digester which is more or less a big septic system. For the future, his recommendation would be to look into getting a digester and putting it up there.

Chairman French noted that through all of the conversations today, there was a suggestion made that possibly the committee would want to move on. Kurt Ospelt said that he could put a dump truck there and line it. He does have one available to help out for the rest of the season. Chairman French advised that he would need a motion to accept this offer, which was made by Legislator Ponzi and seconded by Legislator Brewer. Director Visser advised that right now there is a fee policy that would also need to be amended as part of this motion. Fee costs for fish waste will only be accepted at Bristol Hill for \$25.00. If we are going to do this at transfer station, the committee will need to make a motion for the fee. Chairman French asked if sending a truck and changing the fee policy could be done all on one motion.

Legislator Chalifoux and Legislator Vasho asked about the motion presently on the table to accept the changes to the fee schedule for 2008. County Administrator Church noted that the reason these proposed increases are coming now is that this is part of the budgetary process for 2008. To make clear what the impact is on this budget, the positives would be that it will take the operational costs, the net county cost for the Solid Waste Department's Budget and half it; the part that comes from the tax fund. Also, the revenue increases will result in improving public services by opening on Monday and staying open on Saturdays as well. He advised that the committee needs to realize that fees are not the only thing that Frank has been looking at to make Solid Waste self sufficient. He has recently found a vendor that will take batteries and pay us for it. He is also engaged in a study on how to separate metal from the ash in order to be able to re-sell the metal. Administrator Church advised that because of the direction the Legislature set for Solid Waste, the fees would eventually have to go up along with the benefits of being able to improve the services through expanding the hours. The question really is a budgetary one; do you want this to happen in 2008 or wait until 2009.

Chairman French called for the vote on accepting the changes to the fee schedule for 2008. Legislator Gearsbeck asked for a roll call vote:

Aye: Brewer, Brown, Natoli, Ponzi, Vasho, French
Nay: Chalifoux, Gearsbeck, Potter

Aye: 6
Nay: 3 Motion carried

Legislator Arthur Ospelt asked if these changes were going to be put in the paper right away because the last time changes were made constituents complained that they were not notified. Administrator Church advised that the committee just changed the user fees that the committee has the power to change. At the next legislative meeting there will be an amendment to the local law, which is setting the date for a public hearing in November. The public hearing and vote will then be at the November meeting. Any fee structure changes will have a press release done to inform the public.

Before moving on, Chairman French stated that if fish waste is going to be accepted at the transfer station, the committee would need to change the schedule for that fee today as well. Motion to accept the Highway Department's offer of a dump truck this year to handle the fish waste for the remaining of the season, plus raising the fee to \$75.00/ton to handle it this year, was made by Legislator Brown and seconded by Legislator Potter. During discussion, Director Visser advised that fish waste is still classified as a special waste and suggested what the committee could do is say fish waste now becomes subject to the regular tipping fees. This will allow the fish cleaning stations the option of either going directly to the landfill and paying \$50.00/ton or to come to the transfer station and pay \$75.00/ton.

The motion was amended to include that fish waste will now be subject to the regular tipping fees. Chairman French advised that according to Frank, this change will take effect immediately but they will need a few days to get a vehicle ready. Kurt Ospelt asked to be given until Monday to get a vehicle ready and asked for any liners or ideas of where to get them. A call for a vote was made with Legislator Brown requesting a roll call vote.

Aye: Brewer, Brown, Chalifoux, Gearsbeck, Natoli, Ponzi, Potter, Vasho, French

Aye: 9

Nay: 0 Motion carried

Legislator Potter and Legislator Doyle thanked everyone on the Committee along with Kurt Ospelt for their support with this issue. Legislator Brewer wanted to make one statement on raising the fees. He feels it is awful easy for someone like Art to say no, no, no, no and when it comes time to spend money, he doesn't spend any. It's just an awful thing that some of the people that voted yes here today, to vote yes and other people who voted no still get the services for the people. They could have stuck their neck out to vote yes. Legislator Brewer ended by saying this was his opinion and informed Legislator Gearsbeck that it was expressed to him. Legislator Chalifoux advised that he also voted no.

Legislator Gearsbeck stated he wanted to give Clayton a chance to vote on spending some money. When the County bought the blacktop plant, one of the selling points was that we could save up to 25% on recycling the old blacktop. To this point we have not recycled anything. All that is needed is a conveyer and grinder, if he is not mistaken. Interim Superintendent Ospelt noted that the current quote done on 9/24/07 the cost would be \$173,474.00 to put our plant into operation. Legislator Gearsbeck feels that the County could recycle probably every bit of grindings that is taken up. Interim Superintendent Ospelt advised that at the present time Oswego County does not own its own milling machine. In his five-year equipment plan he plans to introduce a milling machine. It is a costly machine but he believes that it will pay for itself over the years because of the fact that the county spends anywhere from \$50,000 - \$80,000 a year on the rental of a milling machine. When the milling machine comes to the facility to work on the highways, the cost is paid per day or per week. The feeling now is it is a better resolve of grinding mill in the road, selling the grindings within the five mile radius in order to keep the machine going, because it costs so much to rent. Interim Superintendent Ospelt advised that if the county opted to buy a milling machine, the milling could probably be done earlier in the spring where there would be time to truck it back to the mix plant to recycle. He is not against recycling, but at the present time to do the milling that they do, and 90% of the roads they do it on is because they are profiled for them before they pave them, they are actually benefiting right now by selling the grindings instead of trucking them.

Legislator Gearsbeck asked how long it takes to load a 10-wheeler. Interim Superintendent Ospelt stated that if you run the average milling machine which has a 7-foot cut on it, and you run about 2-inches deep on it, his guess would be less than 5 minutes. Legislator Gearsbeck suggested that any extra 10-wheeler dump truck could be brought down, parked and loaded until ready to be hauled away. Interim Superintendent Ospelt noted that the majority of the 10-wheelers are utilized everyday. Legislator Gearsbeck stated that there are different ways to handle this and suggested that the grindings be stocked piled somewhere and hauled in later because after all we are talking big dollars here, up to ½ million dollars a year that can be saved by recycling. Interim Superintendent Ospelt is not sure what the savings potential could be because the average recycling costs varies in the industry.

Legislator Brown stated that the \$173,474.00 is bare equipment and does not include the installation. You have to add the labor costs for installation, as well as, the fuel and depreciation on the vehicles to haul the stuff; you don't end up saving that much money sometimes.

Legislator Natoli noted that last year he said to this committee that they should buy a milling machine. This is the machine that grinds the road. Another thing, when making new asphalt, you cannot use 100% of recycled asphalt in your aggregate. You would have to do the math to see if it is even worth it.

Legislator Brewer advised that when they purchased the plant, he was on the highway committee and at that time they wanted to buy this part to go with the plant. It was voted down at that time. Legislator Ospelt was asked his recommendation since he was present when the plant was purchased. He feels that the milling machine is more important at this stage of the game right now. You can't do everything at once because once you get on the other side of the river it would cost too much to haul it back.

Legislator Gearsbeck made the motion to purchase the equipment necessary for the blacktop plant. This motion was seconded by Legislator Brewer. During discussion, Legislator Potter suggested that this should be figured out a little bit because when he is selling the recycled stuff within five-miles of where it is created, he is getting basically \$5.00/ton for that. When you start trucking it far away you have to add trucking to it. You also need a screen and crusher to get the maximum benefit out of this recycled material. Legislator Potter feels that the committee needs to do a little figuring on this and he made the motion to table this issue for a month to give Kurt the opportunity to bring back more information. The motion was seconded by Legislator Chalifoux with all in favor. Motion carried.

As an informational agenda item, Director Visser advised that they have started the HHW facility process. The first part of that was to evaluate the existing sites for the existing properties in Solid Waste. In reading the description and conclusion, the consultant is recommending that the facility be put at Bristol Hill and Director Visser agrees. This area has the most facilities, the most room and is somewhat centrally located. There are existing buildings there that they considered retrofitting rather than building a new facility. Some of those facilities look good to modify.

Joseph Taormina, Superintendent had a couple of informational items to pass on to the Committee. The bids for the painting contract at the Oswego Court House came back between committee meetings, has been awarded and the work is about half done. Also, the Treasurer's Department has been moved to their new spot at the Legislative Office Building.

Interim Superintendent Ospelt advised that he has talked with Thomas Hilton, Scout Master from the Town of Palermo regarding the fall jamboree that the scouts have every fall. This year it will be held at the Hannibal Firemen's field and they were wondering if the Highway Department would be generous enough to send a snowplow and maybe a snow blower for the scouts to look at during their weekend outing. Motion to approve sending a snowplow and snow blower to the Hannibal Firemen's field for the scout's fall jamboree was made by Legislator Vasho, seconded by Legislator Brown with all in favor. Motion carried.

Interim Superintendent Ospelt discussed the price received for the sander which he believes covers the purchase for one or more. They have been in the process of putting the snowplows together and there is one sander that definitely needs to be replaced for this winter. He is asking for approval to purchase a sander and to forgo the purchase of one (1) chipper that is requested on his current equipment list. Motion to approve the substitution of one equipment item for another was made by Legislator Chalifoux and seconded by Legislator Brown. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Interim Superintendent Ospelt advised that salt for this year is still through American Rock Salt but they have increased their price by \$1.75/ton. Oswego County will now be paying \$35.09/ton for salt this year. Also, last year, APWA gave the highway department an award on the reconstruction of the Minetto Bridge. Next month at the state-wide conference of local bridges, Chris Baldwin and the engineers that helped design the retrofit on the bridge, will be a topic at the conference.

4. *Adjournment*

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Legislator Chalifoux, seconded by Legislator Gearsbeck with all in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Burrige

Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds

DATE

Superintendent of Public Works

DATE

Director of Solid Waste Programs

DATE

Chairman

Infrastructure & Facilities Committee
